The Impact of Polygamy Upon the Life of James Yorgason: A Nineteenth-Century Mormon Bishop

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THE IMPACT OF POLYGAMY UPON THE LIFE OF
JAMES YORGASON: A NINETEENTH-CENTURY
MORMON BISHOP

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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by
Blaine M. Yorgason
August 1980
This thesis, by Blaine M. Yorgason, is accepted in its present form by the Department of History of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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3 July 1980

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Though it is customary at this point to give thanks to all those who helped with research and writing, including teachers, committee members, library staffs, correspondents, interviewees, and so on, and though it is also common practice to express deepfelt gratitude and appreciation to long-suffering family members who have been deprived of the normal behavior of a family member for a certain length of time, and though this writer feels all of these things most deeply, such gratitude will be implied rather than stated.

Instead, explicit appreciation will be extended only to James Yorgason, the man who survived the experiences related hereafter, who somehow endured to the end, and who finally provided the material upon which this work is based. Grandfather, you make a man proud to be your descendant. Thank you!
INTRODUCTION

Plural marriage among the Mormons, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, became public, flourished and essentially passed away during the last half of the nineteenth century. Though apparently Brigham Young felt that he and the Mormons were far enough removed from the United States to be able to practice plural marriage as they wished, it is obvious that they were not isolated enough from the larger society around them. Nor did their practice of polygamy exist in a vacuum. Mormon society was a small but significant part of the society of the United States, and the actions of each group had profound effects upon the other. Orma Linford points out that, among other issues, the practice of polygamy had not only a great effect upon Congress and the passage of laws, but on the courts of the land and their interpretation of those laws.\(^1\) On the other hand, Stanley S. Ivins points out that while plural marriage began and was carried out as a religious issue of doctrine, it seemed to flourish most when the society of the United States, the "Gentiles," were putting the most pressure to bear against it, trying to stop it.\(^2\) Because this thesis deals with the experiences of one man who was involved with plural
marriage, and because it details how the social system in which he lived, both within and without the Church, affected his practice of plural marriage, this writer feels that it would be helpful to examine the larger social and cultural trends of the day before discussing plural marriage and the specific issue at hand.

The history of the United States between the end of the Civil War and approximately 1917 is best understood as the expression of a profound cultural crisis caused by the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the United States. Modern historians, i.e., fairly current ones, have coined the term modernization to describe this cultural crisis, thus enabling them to turn historical development into a process which allows for greater simplification of study.

... modernization is understood as a process in which people turn to new, more productive methods in virtually all economic spheres. Sustaining these changes in economic activity is a value structure emphasizing rationality, specialization, efficiency, cosmopolitanism, and an interest in a future that can be better than the present in material and social terms. Such a value structure, while manifest in the economy, obviously possesses more than purely economic consequences. Politics, the family, community, indeed society in general, become modern as components of this value structure are internalized by a population.

The beginnings of modernization are misty, though obviously by colonial times the American Dream, that all men might own property and experience economic...
success, was being formulated. This prospect of economic reward was fundamental to the rise of modernization. Also essential was the development of machinery, which speeded manufacturing, which in turn increased economic rewards, and which developed rapidly through the entire eighteenth century. Thus, by the time of the Civil War, weapons, ammunition, clothing, and transportation were being mass-produced in large factories by people trained to run machinery and produce as rapidly and efficiently as possible.

David A. Wells, economic advisor to Presidents Lincoln, Garfield and Cleveland, wrote a book entitled Recent Economic Changes, published in New York in 1889, in which he defended the use of machinery. He said, "Machinery is now recognized as essential to cheap production. Nobody can produce effectively and economically without it, and what was known formerly as domestic manufacture is now almost obsolete."

But this shift from agrarianism to industrialization was a painful one for most nineteenth century Americans, including and perhaps most especially Mormons, whose agrarian society was based on the premise that the larger a man's family the more successful would be his agricultural operation. Polygamy fit well into that premise, with its plurality of wives and multiplication of children. Furthermore, as long as Americans, and
Mormons, remained agrarian they could avoid the terrifying cultural changes experienced by most Europeans whose societies were becoming industrialized. But such was not to be the case. Americans were just as inclined toward culture building, gaining the better life, as were all other men. And so came the American crisis. Factories were built up, machinery was put into motion, thousands of people were placed in jobs where from daylight to dark, day after day, they performed one minute task. Factory towns and slums sprang up, farms were abandoned for the lure of big city glitter, and all occurred in the name of progress. Trusts and monopolies abounded, huge fortunes were amassed by capitalists while millions groveled in abject poverty, and it seemed that most people continued to shout hurrah for progress.

But then a few people began to notice the plight of the average man and woman; they made their observations public, and soon most of the nation was beginning to recognize problems. Was everything progress, or was America, in fact, going downhill so rapidly that it might never recover? For years people threw these questions and their respective answers back and forth, proving to themselves time after time that progress was great and that it was terrible. Men like Ignatious Donnelly wrote that America was moving away from the God-given simplicity of the Jeffersonian Republic and
that if it did not repent then God would likely destroy it. Capitalism was to him a gross evil which tempted men away from honest work and into the field of usury. Donnelly was countered by people such as William Graham Sumner, who believed fervently that business and industry were not threats to America and were natural to progress.

The historian John Weiss has written that at this time absolutes were done away with, that post-impressionism, pragmatism, symbolism and revisionist socialism were coming to the fore, and human experience was gaining ascendancy over absolute and irrefutable laws which had never before been questioned. This new questioning affected every aspect of life, including religion, and brought about what historian Paul Carter calls The Spiritual Crisis of the Gilded Age. This crisis derived in part from the impact of Darwinian theory on American Society and religious thought. Like everything else, evolution had both support and opposition, but the main point is that it helped bring about this sense of questioning. Faith at the time was both declining and growing, assuming specialized direction and moving away from supernaturalism. The membership of churches grew while faith and belief dwindled. It was assumed that scientific reason was the enemy of religion, but Carter states that materialism was the greater enemy. America was moving into the age of gadgetry.
holdouts, of course, and the Mormons were a classic example. Theirs was a religion of absolutes which were not to be questioned, of supernaturalism which was not only accepted but encouraged, and of seemingly moving backward in time by preaching and practicing the ancient philosophy of plural marriage. Yet interestingly enough, the Mormons were quick to become involved in the materialism of the time in the age of gagetry. Despite their much-touted differences they could not completely separate themselves from the society around them.

Political institutions in America were coming to be questioned also, and a young man named Woodrow Wilson wrote a Ph.D. Dissertation entitled "Congressional Government" where he made the following statement:

We are the first Americans to hear our countrymen ask whether the Constitution is still adapted to serve the purposes for which it was intended; the first to entertain any serious doubts about the superiority of our own institutions as compared with the systems of Europe; the first to think of remodeling the administrative machinery of the federal government and of forcing new forms of responsibility on Congress.8

Social systems themselves were in a state of upheaval. Men such as Herbert Spencer of England and his "Spencerians" elevated \textit{laissez faire} into a law as irrefutable as that of gravity, and twisted the ideas of Darwin to mean that society could be changed only by the force of evolution.9 Spencer was countered by Lester
Ward and others, who felt that society could be changed by cold calculation, and that as men improved their lot in life they were making progress and doing it wilfully, not through evolution.  

For years Americans had been taught that the Anglo-Saxon race was superior. Josiah Strong taught that this race was the formulator of two great ideas, civil liberty and pure spiritual Christianity, and must stand as a beacon to mankind, reminiscent of Puritan theology.  

Theodore Roosevelt, in an address concerning the Indians, made the following remarks, "It was wholly impossible to avoid conflicts with the weaker race, unless we were willing to see the American continent fall into the hands of some other power." And now even that concept was being questioned.

The period from the Civil War to well into the twentieth century was a period of questioning, of seeking, of struggle. Instead of blind acceptance, people began looking into the "sweatshops" of the fabric industry, the meatpacking business, the company towns, child labor situations and apprenticeship laws. They could no longer sit back comfortably and declare that every word of the Bible was truth, and they were no longer able to sit in their little offices in their little businesses in their little towns, or in their little homes, and feel that they knew the whole world. They were suddenly questioning
statements such as the following made by A. S. Wheeler to the Commercial Club of Boston in 1886:

And so in every department and kind of human activity. A few have the capacity to obtain more of the product, and they use that capacity and realize its fruits. The inequality in distribution results from the inequality in the individuals. The strongest mentally or physically always get the largest share, and where the mental and physical are united there will be the largest share of all. The discontent in our country which are arguing for this to change arises from ignorance, and the efforts they have made in the way of strikes, boycotting, and the like, while they have done harm to the employers, have done more harm to the laborers themselves. 13

Historian John Higham in "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890's" describes what could almost be called a backlash by the American people against the comfortable stoicism of the decades previous, when they had adapted so totally to the discipline of machinery. The reform he speaks of was a hunger to break out of the routine, to escape from the ordinary day-by-day drudgery of their lives. They craved adventure, sought the wide-open spaces, voiced patriotism and militarism, and supported the new woman, who was athletic, energetic, and was striving for political power. Intellectually there were feelings of defeat, pessimism, and liberation from age-old fetters, and the latter seemed the strongest. 14 By the 1880's, people were beginning to become important to other people.

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The novelists of this time wielded a powerful influence upon the American mind. By the 1880's realism was blossoming, and novelists were examining current social problems, such as slum life, capital-labor conflicts, and political corruption, creating as they did so multidimensional characters who used local slang and existed in elaborately described common settings.

Henry James, writing in London in 1883, felt that American authors did this because high civilization, which existed in Europe and elsewhere, was non-existent in America.\(^{15}\)

Probably the best known of these authors was Samuel L. Clemens, better known to most as Mark Twain, who used humor to point out the inconsistencies he saw in society. For instance, in 1875 he was voicing his dissatisfaction with machines and the way people would not let them alone in his piece entitled "My Watch."\(^{16}\) Also in 1875 he published "The Curious Republic of Gondor" in which he poses as an average man who is also a traveler. This story deals with the plight of an imaginary nation which is moving toward oligarchy, which Twain at this point feared the United States was doing.\(^{17}\) In his novel *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* Twain deals with the clash between modern progress and medieval darkness.
Another powerful novelist of the time was Edward Bellamy, who wrote the novel *Looking Backward*. William Dean Howells, a realist, gradually moved from romantic silliness to social commentary, and his work *The Rise of Silas Lapham* deals with some of the ethical conflicts faced by businessmen in a competitive society. He also deals with the problem of poor people rising in society when it is essentially closed to them, and pushed the philosophy of the poor being as good and usually better than the elite. Howells' English grammar was common, and in 1891 he defended his usage of the language by stating that God made language for the use of the common people and not for the elite.

Russell H. Conwell, in his *Acres of Diamonds*, again told the people that happiness was in their own yards and in their own lives and not out somewhere else. He delivered this, as a lecture, over 6,000 times.

Theodore Dreiser, another naturalist, promised in his writings that all mankind would eventually be absorbed into the ultimate evolutionary triumph of nature, but until then people were going to suffer as they were forced to compromise their lives with the institutions and conventions of their times.

The Mormons were themselves involved somewhat in the movement for modernization during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Mormons had always
at least partially supported the principle of urbanization, which was evidenced by their community developments in Missouri, Illinois and finally in the Great Basin. They had also gone along somewhat with industrialization, for Brigham Young and others went to great trouble and expense to import into Utah Territory as much modern agricultural and industrial machinery as they could obtain. Yet such obvious evidences of Mormon involvement in modernization are deceptive. Jonathan Hughes, in *The Vital Few*, points out that Brigham Young, and so the Church under him, were of the earlier age. Young was a staunch believer in self-sufficiency, in "manufacturers out in the deserts," and he abhorred the great market economy of the United States. Yet he taught his people to take advantage of it in their own unique way.24 In *Great Basin Kingdom*, Leonard Arrington presents an illustration of Young's feelings regarding the American economy by quoting the following remarks Young made in a Church conference in 1852.

If all the people of the territory would dispense with every article of manufactured good, except such as were manufactured in their own families, until they could be produced by Manufacturies established among themselves within the Territory; even if it had to be done at the sacrifice of a few comforts in the first instance, and at the expense of raising a little less grain, or cultivating a few less acres of land, they would in my opinion find their own interest materially advanced, and the circulating medium would soon find its home in the Territory, instead of traveling to Eastern cities, to defray the expense of imported goods.25
Arrington traces the origins of Mormon cooperative economic enterprises, "Jacksonian communitarianism," back to their true American roots, showing that the apparently backward economic and social life-styles of Mormonism in Utah were virtually the last strongholds of the utopian and idealistic social and economic schemes so well known in an earlier America.\textsuperscript{26}

Howard R. Lamar, in his article "Statehood for Utah: A Different Path," agrees with Arrington, and concludes that long after the rest of the nation had abandoned millenialism and communitarianism, the Mormon people continued to pursue the idea of isolationism and the practical gathering of the Kingdom.\textsuperscript{27}

So the Mormons, and their almost unique ways, seemed to most nineteenth century Americans a throwback to older and definitely not better ways, a threat to the hard-earned and much-touted progress of the age.

One of the most obviously unique characteristics of Mormonism in nineteenth century America, and one which ultimately aroused the ire of the entire nation, was the doctrine of plural marriage, or polygamy as many chose to call it. There is some controversy about when plural marriage actually started, but Joseph Smith caused it to be recorded as a revelation on 12 July 1843. Very briefly, plural marriage was first announced publicly in 1852, the Republican platform of 1856 linked it with
slavery, calling them both the twin relics of barbarism, and the first law passed against it, the Morrill Act or Anti-bigamy Law, was passed by Congress in 1862. From then until 1874 there was much legal maneuvering on both sides of the issue, and in that year the Poland Law was enacted. In 1882 Congress passed the Edmunds Act, and in 1887 the Edmunds-Tucker Act became law. Finally, in 1890, Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto, which began the process of ending church-sanctioned plural marriage and of bringing the Church into line with modern American society.

During the thirty-eight years that polygamy was before the public it was vigorously prosecuted almost continuously, and this writer believes that much of that prosecution can be explained in terms of the social trends mentioned above. Prior to approximately 1882, when the Edmunds Act was passed, the Church as a whole represented a political threat to progress generally. Richard D. Poll points out the political overtones of Mormon polygamy, especially its public announcement by Mormon leaders. Many politicians linked polygamy and slavery together in their minds as un-American activities, and thus the Republican platform of 1856 came about. Mormons as a whole then were viewed as either un-American or anti-American, people in revolt against progress and enlightenment, terms synonymous with America.
After 1882, polygamy was prosecuted more because the process of modernization had proceeded to a point where Americans were developing a social conscience, an awareness of the ills of the downtrodden. According to historian Davis Bitton, Americans perceived the women and children of Mormondom as being victims, the same as were tenement dwellers and workers in meat packing plants and textile sweatshops. They also saw the Church as a giant trust, monopoly, and political machine all rolled into one, denying those around it of fair economic opportunity while at the same time it denied its own members the same thing as well as the political freedoms that Americans so richly deserved. Legislation and court action against polygamy, then, gradually become more social rather than political. This development seemed to cause what Mormons called persecution to grow in intensity, developing finally into the continual harrassment of polygamists that Leonard Arrington and others have called "The Raid."

Orma Linford concludes from her thorough study of court actions and decisions regarding polygamy, that between 1856 and 1887 Congressional and judicial attitude shifted from the opinion that polygamy was an evil and should be outlawed to the "... conclusion that since it was practiced by the Mormons, the entire Mormon system was evil and should be broken." She continues:
Having fined and imprisoned polygamists, barred them from the polls and public office, and eliminated them from juries, the nation abolished the Mormon Church, and not satisfied with this, seized its property . . . (and) thus destroyed a church, the first and only occurrence of its kind in the history of this country. 30

Polygamy then, and the political pressure brought to bear against its practice, had a great impact on the lives of those who were involved in living it. Fernand Braudel, the French historian, has stated that the only way to understand history as a whole is to study individuals and people. 31 That is the intent of this thesis, which details the life of an individual involved for most of his life in polygamy.

History as a record of large movements, the working out of abstractions like modernization and Manifest Destiny, does not interest this writer overmuch. What does interest him--makes great sense to him--is history as an attempted rendering of felt experience. When he reads, he wants to know, in as accurate a manner as possible, what it felt like to be a European emigrant seeing America for the first time, what it felt like to be a Union soldier trying to stop Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, or how it felt to be a polygamist lying in a rain-filled ditch hiding from a federal marshal. History does not exist as an abstraction; it exists, and existed, only in personal perspective, as actual people lived and experienced it.

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This thesis deals with an actual man, the writer's great-Grandfather, James Yorgason. Where possible, the sources consulted, both primary and secondary, are verifiable. But James Yorgason left little written information about himself, and so the writer has relied where necessary on the memories of those who were contemporaries of Yorgason. One may, of course, question the accuracy of memory, but both oral history and folklore are gaining greater prominence as disciplines. In fact, both go a long way toward filling in the important chinks in the wall of a biography of this nature, thus helping to block out the draughts of uncertainty which blow so regularly through more rigidly structured biographies. And so, as Davis Bitton suggests it be done, both have been used here.  

Additionally, because of the diversity of sources on James Yorgason's life, because the various events of each year of his life affected so profoundly the events of the following years, and because, like each of us, he lived his life one day and one year at a time, the writer has determined to make the following narrative chronological in nature. At the conclusion the salient points of the narrative will be summarized and compared to other studies.

Finally, while Mormon plural marriage, the marriage of one man to more than one woman, is correctly
termed polygyny, in this study it will not be called such. Plural marriage will either be called that or polygamy, because those were the terms used during the nineteenth century by Mormons and non-Mormons alike to cuss and discuss their peculiar institution.
Chapter 1

THE LIFE OF JAMES YORGASON PRIOR TO PLURAL MARRIAGE

It was Tuesday, May 18, 1847. It is said that the afternoon sun glittered off the ruffled surface of the Platte River which was spreading its muddy way across the flats below the bluff. Brigham Young, prophet-leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, pulled his team to a halt to observe once more the emptiness of the Great Plains. Behind him the pioneers, the advance group of 147 Mormons, carefully drove their wagons and livestock through a creek where just a few moments before a rattlesnake had struck at Brother Thomas Woolsey, whose wagon was directly behind Brigham Young. Because of the incident they had decided to name the creek Rattlesnake Creek. As it usually did, Young's gaze shifted to the West. He claimed he had seen in a vision the valley they were to settle in, and yet he knew not where it was, except that it was in the midst of the mountains to the West. So always they pushed onward, away from the problems and persecutions in the East.

That same day, halfway around the world, Karna Joransson (pronounced Yeranson in Swedish) gave birth to
her seventh child, a boy. Her husband Soren decided immediately that the baby be named Jons, the same as his older brother who had been born and then died almost two years before.

The Jornassons and their five living children, Pehr (Peter), Botilda, Anna, Elna, and Jons (James), were living then in the parish of Lyngby, Malmohus Lan, Sweden. 35 They were situated approximately 30 kilometers east of Malmo, the capital of the Skane (pronounced Skona) Province. Skane is located in the extreme southern end of Sweden, and has a colorful history going back to before the time of Christ. 37

A farmer by occupation, Soren and his family were members of the Lutheran Church, as had been both his parents and the parents of his wife. Yet Mormonism was coming to Sweden, and these people would be among its earliest converts. 38

Kama, the first to join, was baptized on December 31, 1854, by Elder Lars Nils Larson. Her husband Soren followed a week later. 39 Peter was the first of the children to join, being baptized on June 11, 1855. 40 By this time the family had been swept up in the spirit of emigration and were doing all they could to ready themselves for the journey to America. There must have been many reasons for their desire to leave Sweden, but one of them most certainly was the persecution the Swedish members were encountering. 41
On October 12, 1855, a few days following the baptisms of their three daughters, the Joransson family left Lyngby on the first leg of a journey that was to take them two years and would ultimately lead them to the territory of Utah.

The year 1855 was difficult for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wherever they happened to be. In the territory of Utah there was drought, and as if that were not enough, three times during the summer the country had been invaded by crickets, great black insects which devoured any green thing they happened upon. And in 1855 no seagulls came to eat the insects, so the plagues continued almost unabated. Many of the Mormons were reduced to eating pigweeds, thistle roots, and mustard leaves. Many were also mixing bran or shorts (the husks from wheat kernels) with what few vegetables they had and were subsisting on that.

Of course, they were blessed in ways also. In Provo a strange white substance suddenly appeared on the trees which, when shaken off and boiled down, congealed into very good sugar. Many declared it was manna from the Lord.

Throughout the world large numbers of Mormon converts were leaving homes and friends to brave the perils of the sea to get to America and to their Zion, unaware, at least partially, of some of the problems that
awaited them there. And, of course, there was always
the realization that many who started the journey would
never finish it, for the mortality rate was very high,
not only on the ocean but during the overland journey
to Utah as well. 48

For the Joranssons, as well as for others, emigrating was no simple thing. It required disposing of
all their property and belongings, keeping only those
things which were absolutely necessary for their journey,
such as food, clothing, and a few simple treasures to
remind them of their homeland. Then they must bid fare­
well, perhaps forever, to family and friends, and set out
on a journey of over eight thousand miles that would take
months and perhaps years to complete, if completed at all.
The winter months would be spent crowded into an emigrant
ship being tossed about the freezing Atlantic, taking
chances with dysentery, scurvy, measles, brutal captains
and unsympathetic crews, shipwreck, seasickness, and
storms.

Another major threat would be cholera in the
river bottoms of mid-America, and if they could survive
that and equip themselves, then all they had to do was
walk 1,500 miles, avoid or fight off Indians, keep track
of their livestock, ford a few hundred streams—avoiding
the quicksand and rapids, which seemed always right next
to the fords—and get to the valley of the Great Salt
Lake before the first snows of winter fell. Once there,
shelter must be found and food procured that would sustain life until crops could be harvested the following fall.

Emigration was something that one did not take lightly, though neither was it avoided because of its difficulty. For with conversion seemed to come the spirit of gathering, and true converts felt they might as well try to fly as to deny the promptings from within to gather with the Saints in Utah. Still, the Saints were not allowed to think that the trip would be easy.

The Millennial Star in Liverpool published a poem by Eliza R. Snow that carefully pointed out to the Saints these difficulties.

Think not, when you gather to Zion,  
Your troubles and trials are through--  
That nothing but comfort and pleasure  
Are waiting in Zion for you.  
No, no; tis designed as a furnace,  
All substance, all textures to try--  
To consume all the "wood, hay and stubble,"  
And the gold from the dross purify.  

From Lyngby the Joranssons traveled to Halsingborg and then to Copenhagen, the point of departure for all Scandinavian Saints. There they secured clothing, bedding and eating utensils for the journey, though the church provided food and the ship provided cooking equipment.

On Thursday, November 29, 1855, the Joransson family boarded the steamship, Loven, set sail down the
sound, turned west through the Kadet Channel and finally northwest through the Fehmarn Strait. After landing at Keil, a coastal city in Holstein, northern Germany, they traveled by rail to Glukstadt. From there they crossed the English Channel to Grimsby, and then went by rail again to Liverpool, where they joined other emigrating Saints who were under the direction of Elder Charles R. Savage. They had traveled from Copenhagen under the direction of Elder Canute Peterson, who was returning from a mission to Norway.

In Liverpool Franklin D. Richards, President of the European Missions for the Church, immediately took charge of the emigrants. In a letter which he wrote to President John Van Cott in Denmark the next day, he reported that he had them all on board the emigrant ship, John J. Boyd, by nightfall of December 6, 1855, the same day as their arrival in Liverpool.

President Richards was famous throughout Europe for his effectiveness as an emigration agent, but he explained that he merely worked through local Priesthood leaders to insure that his people got in Liverpool at the same time as the ship they were to sail on was ready to be boarded. In that manner they were able to avoid what he called the landsharks and human vultures that were to be found in any seaport town. It was due to his great care that the mortality rate on Mormon ships was never more than 2%, while others were very excessive.
The Saints were not immune from death, though. In almost every company someone would suffer, a last-minute disappointment or disaster, like Soren Sorenson, forty-four, a farmer, who with his wife and three children was held up in Liverpool.

This family did not go per "John J. Boyd" in consequence of the surgeon refusing to pass them, children being sick with measles. Laborer Neils Christian Nielson's family was similarly afflicted; his little Anne Marie died at Chapman's Temperance Hotel 17 December 1855. Interred at St. John's Church 20 December 1855.56

When all the Saints had boarded the John J. Boyd Richards came on board to organize them for their overseas journey. He first called Canute Peterson to be President of the ship. He then chose two counselors and their names were presented to the emigrants for their sustaining vote. The Presidency of the company, the ninety-first to leave Liverpool for Utah, proceeded to divide the ship into wards or branches, with a bishop or presiding elder over each, and assigned to each a particular part of the ship. Soren and his family were placed forward in the upper-between-decks portion of the ship, where they were listed as ordinary passengers to differentiate between them and those traveling with the assistance of the Perpetual Emigration Fund. They were then assigned ticket #84, and shown to their places. 57
On the Tenth of December the John J. Boyd cleared with Port Authorities to sail for New York, and the register said that it had on board 509 Saints, of whom 437 were from Scandinavia, 30 from Piedmont (Italy) and 42 from Great Britain. The ship set sail the morning of the Twelfth of December, 1855, and little Jons was to learn quickly that sea voyages were not all glamorous adventures.  

The John J. Boyd was a square-rigger, or a ship that had square sails on its mainmast. It was registered as having a burthen of 1311 tons, making it a fairly small ship, though it was still of the type that were later referred to as clipper ships. It carried three masts, the foremast, mainmast, and mizzenmast, as well as carrying sail on its bowsprit and jibboom. It carried between 9,000 and 10,000 square yards of canvas in a single suit of sails, its length was a little more than 200 feet and its beam around 40 feet. As with most passenger ships, it had been built originally for trade, but because of its unseemingliness it was pressed into passenger service. 

Records indicate that the Mormons used the John J. Boyd only twice for their emigration; in 1855-56 and again in 1863. One possible reason for this lack of use by the Church was the nature of its captain and crew. Charles R. Savage reported that Master Thomas
Austin, Captain of the vessel forbade any singing or prayers on board, and the first mate stated that all ships with preachers on board were sure of a bad passage.62

John Jacques had an opportunity to speak with many of the passengers after the voyage, and he wrote to President Richards of what he heard.

While at the camp, I heard a little more about the captain and mate of the "John J. Boyd." They were truly bad, bad, bad! They would make nothing of knocking a sailor down with their fists, a cable, a handspike, or whatever first came to hand. And where they hit was no matter, whether on the face, or head, or anywhere else. I was told, by those who were passengers on board, that the captain actually ran the sailors about with a naked cutlass in his hand. The Saints fared, of course, a little better, but I believe they were not all wholly exempted from corporal punishment, by those brutal fellows who had guidance of the ship.63

For five days the weather held good for the emigrants, but then, at longitude 15 degrees, the weather broke and from then on the voyage was one continuous journey of cold and misery, with hurricanes and gales blowing the entire time.

Conditions steadily worsened. Measles broke out on board about two weeks out, no doubt due to previous exposure to the two families left in Liverpool. This dread disease spread rapidly and on the small crowded ship there was no way to avoid it. The Danes suffered many deaths from it, especially among the children, and
the English and Italian companies lost three children also.

About five weeks out of Liverpool, when the emigrants should have been nearing New York, but were in reality only about half-way across, they fell in with the clipper ship *Louis Napoleon*, from Baltimore to Liverpool, laden with flour. It had had all its masts and spars carried away, while its leeward bulwarks had been stove in by the fury of the storm. Upon nearing it they found it was in a sinking condition, and her captain and crew were very desirous of being taken aboard the *John J. Boyd*. Charles R. Savage reported that the acquisition of these men proved of great advantage, for the crew of the *John J. Boyd* had been decimated by bad weather, frostbite, sickness and exhaustion from overwork.

If possible, the weather grew still worse after crossing the Banks, about two-thirds of the way over. The ship was driven into the Gulf Stream three times, and many of the sailors were frostbitten. It was so bad, and the passage was taking so long, that Captain Austin grew quite superstitious and ordered that there should be no singing of hymns on board. It was at this point that the mate referred to preachers and bad passages.

The Saints continued in prayer, however, and in due time arrived at their destination, anchoring off
Sandy Point, New York, on February 15, 1856, having been sixty-six days out of Liverpool. It had been a very long passage.

On February 16 the weary emigrants disembarked at Castle Garden, the United States Immigration Depot, which was located on the southern tip of Manhattan Island. The Depot was an unkempt, filthy, vermin infested place, and was enough to shake even the stoutest hearts of the newly-arrived Saints. On the Twenty-first, after spending five days at Castle Garden, the immigrants commenced their journey westward across America by rail.

Upon their arrival in Chicago the company divided into three groups for ease in traveling, the Joranssons being placed with a group who went south to Burlington, Iowa. They spent a year there and in Keokuk, earning what money they could and adapting to American living. There young Jons changed his name to James, and there, on May 30, 1856, he was baptized by Lars Nils Larson.

In May, 1857, the Scandinavians traveled north to Iowa City, Iowa, the jumping off place for Mormon immigration that year. There they joined the Mathias Cowley Company, which was the only wagon company that year, all the others using handcarts. Elder Cowley's company left Iowa City on June 15, 1857, for their journey to the Great Salt Lake Valley. The company consisted of 198 souls, 31 wagons, 122 oxen and 28 cows, with no mention being made of horses.
One can imagine the confusion as they began to roll, and the excitement that James felt. Amidst billowing, choking clouds of dust, the wagons slowly fell into line. The noise was almost unbearable. Everywhere whips were cracking, oxen and cattle were bellowing, the teamsters, new at their trade, fought unruly animals, "Geeing" and "Hawing" the whole time, nearly half of them uncertain what the two terms meant, and over and above all else the noise of the shouting of the children as they scampered about and ran ahead of the wagons, ever impatient because of the lumbering slowness of the oxen. Young James was immediately assigned the task of herding the milk cows along the trail, and this task kept him busy for the entire journey.

A few hours out of Iowa City the Cowley Company met Elder Joseph Young and a party of missionaries bound for Europe. Elder Young reported that this company was supplied with as fine teams as he had ever seen, and were making fine progress on their journey.

The Mormons were instructed to limit their daily ration of food to about one pound of breadstuff per day, plus what beans, milk, butter, dried fruit, bacon, fresh meat, or whatever they had. This meant that they would use up about 100 pounds of flour per person, assuming that the trip took about three months.

The company reached Florence, Nebraska, about 300 miles from Iowa City, on July 2, having averaged just
under eighteen miles per day. Here they halted for four days to make necessary repairs on their wagons and prepare in other ways to begin the final and longest leg of their overland trek to the Salt Lake Valley, which they started on July 6.⁷⁷

It was sometime after leaving Florence that they learned that the United States was sending an army to Utah to bring Brigham Young and his followers into submission to the laws of the land. This army, ordered out by President James Buchanan and assembled under orders of General Winfield Scott at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, consisted originally of 2,500 men, plus all the freight teams and teamsters necessary to support such a large body of soldiers. By the middle of July these various companies of soldiers and freighters were spread out over hundreds of miles of prairie, slowly wending their way toward Utah.⁷⁸

The news reached Utah on July 24 that an army was invading the territory,⁷⁹ and from then on rumors ran rife. The problems seemed especially acute for the Saints then crossing the plains, as the logical assumption was that, as these men seemed bent on destroying the Mormons, the best place to start would be among those still on their way.

The first official movement of Utah forces under the direction of Brigham Young was to send Colonel Robert T. Burton and 75 men as a "corps of observation" to
observe the approaching army and to aid and protect the Saints then on the trail. It was not long before the Mormon immigrants and the soldiers and freighters were within sight of each other. Then it became once again apparent that Brigham Young had acted wisely when he determined to make a new trail on the north side of the Platte River from the Oregon Trail. That river was now all that separated the two groups of people. Each watched the other closely, always prepared for hostilities, and yet none immediately developed.

There were rumors, of course, but they were worse than the facts, for though the soldiers boasted and bragged, the officers hastened to point out that they were to go to Utah merely as a military escort to insure that the new governor, Alfred Cumming, was accepted. They were in no way to molest the people. Apparently, however, communications broke down between Washington, the soldiers and the Mormons, for neither group understood any of this, and the misunderstandings did much to push the conflict along.

On August 18, Elder S. W. Richards and others, bound for Europe as missionaries, met the Evans and Martin Handcart Companies about five miles east of Independence Rock. About 10 miles east of there they met the first government train, filled with stores for the troops of the Utah Expedition, consisting of twenty-six wagons, each drawn by six yoke of oxen. That evening,
at the upper crossing of the Platte River, they came upon two more government trains encamped, and three companies of the Saints, including Mathias Cowley's. Elder Cowley's company ultimately forged ahead of the slower government supply trains and troops, and on September 13, 1857, they entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

Winter began early in 1857, but young James probably had little time to think of that, for he began school almost immediately. Then too the war was going on in the mountains around him, and that affected everyone. On September 29, Brigham Young activated the Nauvoo Legion, which marched to Echo Canyon to aid God, they believed and Brigham Young taught, in the protection and preservation of the Saints. Even the inclement weather was seen as divine providence.

In early December rumors began spreading that the Saints might once more abandon their homes. Lot Smith and his men became heroes as they harrassed the government trains. There were also Indian troubles, and so life was very unsettled for the Joransson family.

In March 1858, after a "council of war" the move south was organized. The Joransson family members, then living in South Cottonwood, were assigned to Spanish Fork, and along with approximately 30,000 others, gave up their homes and fled south.
Peace Commissioners arrived in Utah June 7, 1858, and by June 11, all difficulties had been adjusted. On June 26, the army marched through the nearly deserted community of Salt Lake City, and by August most of the Saints had returned home.

In 1859 James' father Soren was ordained a High Priest in Cottonwood Ward, and in 1860 the family moved south to Moroni, Sanpete County. Once there the family became part of the Mission Branch of the United Order, which meant that all those in the one-year-old community got along equally, fighting severe winters, flooding, too little food, lack of communication with other areas, and Indians.

The family home, a two-room log cabin, was built in the area of Duck Springs, to the north of town. As a young man, most of James Yorgason's time was spent in agricultural pursuits, helping to provide food for his family. And yet the people made time for a surprising amount of entertainment. James himself played the drum in the town band, wandering gypsy bands entertained, medicine shows came regularly, and circuses came occasionally.

On April 9, 1865, when James Joransson was eighteen, what came to be known as the Black Hawk War broke out just a few miles south of Moroni in Manti, the county seat. According to most accounts, Chief
Black Hawk was in town attending church with the settlers, while some of his more rowdy sub-chiefs, including one Yene-Wood were having a parley with some of the men of the community. According to John Lowrey, who is often accused of starting the war, events had been building up since the winter before, when many of the Indians had died of smallpox. They blamed this on the white men, saying that the whites had written their names on slips of paper and given them to the devil. Yene-Wood's father had been one of those who died. Yene-Wood could not be reconciled, and swore in the parley that he would kill Mormons and eat Mormon beef. Lowrey, at this, became exasperated and told Yene-Wood authoritatively to be quiet, after which he turned away in mock indifference. Suddenly someone shouted that Yene-Wood was going to shoot. Lowrey, at this, wheeled his horse near that of Yene-Wood, grabbed him by the collar, and threw him to the ground where he reprimanded him sharply and released him. The Indians then rode off, Black Hawk was appraised of the situation, and he immediately began preparations for war. The actual fighting began the next day when Peter Ludvigsen was killed south of Manti as he was going after the livestock. Of course, the alarm was spread immediately throughout the area, and to one degree or another each town began preparations for its own defense.
In Moroni, both James and his older brother Peter were sworn in as Minute Men, and on April 11, 1865, they departed for Salina, Utah, where Blackhawk was reportedly hiding. The next day these men took part in what came to be called the battle of Salina Canyon. This was not really so much of a battle as it was a rout, for the Indians set a clever ambush for the 85 men, and though only one soldier was killed during their headlong flight back down the canyon, still the others were lucky to get out alive.

Back in Moroni James helped build the fort and another large structure called the Bastion. This was an observation tower with a circumference of 60 feet and a height of 20 feet. It was completed in 1866.

During the winter of 1865-1866, which was long and cold, there was little fighting. James Joransson no doubt enjoyed this respite, for he had become quite fond of a young woman named Christina Johnson, who had recently moved to Moroni with her family. This relationship apparently looked promising, and so Joransson, with an eye to the future, set about improving his lot in life. Although he was a big man, over six feet tall, he believed in working with his mind rather than his body whenever possible. In fact, throughout his life he stated that he could make more money sitting on a fence whittling than any other man he knew could earn by working for wages.
He began his growth by acquiring small amounts of livestock and property, and he carefully shepherded these acquisitions, picking up more property as he could, dispensing with that of lesser value and beginning what became for him almost a passion in later life, the careful breeding of his livestock to produce better animals. 118

Apparently fun loving, he seemed to enjoy showing off his great physical strength. It is said that he would frequently challenge the youth in his town to races and that while they were allowed to just run, he would run carrying a large pole over his shoulder, and he usually beat them. Another of his favorite stunts, which shows further his physical prowess, was to squat down and have a man climb on him and sit astraddle his neck. He then would pick up another grown man in each of his arms and walk home from Church or wherever, carrying the three of them with him. 119

In the spring Indian troubles began again, and the Moroni boys got involved when Sanpitch and others escaped prison in Manti and fled north. The Minute Men were ordered out and located the Indians in the hills just west of Fountain Green, near Snow's Mill. Several sharp encounters occurred. At one point an Indian, realizing that he was about to be captured, was found beating his head against a tree in a suicide attempt. It was reported that he was assisted in his task. 120
Gradually all of the other Indians were accounted for except Chief Sanpitch. He was later killed on the Cedar Hill, south of Fountain Green.\textsuperscript{121}

On June 24, 1866, James was involved in the battle of Thistle Valley,\textsuperscript{122} where a group of regular soldiers under Captain Dewey from Salt Lake City was attacked and pinned down by a large band of Utes. The Indians fled only when the Minute Men arrived.\textsuperscript{123} Shortly thereafter Brigham Young instructed the Saints to gather together for safety, and so the citizens of Fountain Green and Wales moved into the large fort at Moroni.\textsuperscript{124}

It is difficult for us today to understand the concern and fear the people in Sanpete and elsewhere felt during this time, but perhaps the following journal entry will help.

We must picture a great, silent, brush-covered valley with narrow trails winding from one settlement to another. Imagine, if you can, the danger lurking along these lonesome trails and wagon roads. Picture yourself behind a plodding ox team, or horses, on your way to Provo or Salt Lake City, or even to Manti. It takes days and weeks to make the trip, and all that time the danger is there! Death is in the thicket beside the road! Death is watching from a hill-side or near a watering place! Death is there, cold and brutal and without sympathy and without reason! Sometimes life assumes a sordid value . . .\textsuperscript{125}

Yet still the people went on living. In Moroni there was a large pioneer celebration on July 24, with a parade, the band, songs, and speeches, with volleys of rifle fire to begin and end the day.\textsuperscript{126}
Through 1867 Indian troubles continued, with James and the other Minute Men always on the alert. In August, however, Black Hawk appeared on the Uintah Reservation where he talked to Colonel Head, Territorial Indian Agent. Following that event, the fighting gradually diminished.\(^{127}\)

Peace was finally brought about in the summer of 1868 when Apostle Orson Hyde conducted a peace meeting in the bowery just south of the First Ward school house in Fort Ephraim. Peace was concluded, but even after that sporadic fighting occurred for several years.\(^{128}\)

On December 8, 1867, James Joransson brought to a successful conclusion his courtship of Christian Johnson, and they were married.\(^{129}\)

James and Christina made their home near the north end of Moroni in the Duck Springs' area. The home that he built was a large home, beautifully constructed of adobe and lumber,\(^{130}\) and it was here that their first child, a daughter, was born on September 17, 1868. She was named Mary Caroline Johanna Yorgenson, and she was blessed by Lars Swenson on November 5, 1868.\(^{131}\) On September 30, 1870, Christina gave birth to her second child and first son, whom they named James Sanders.\(^{132}\)

The town of Moroni was growing, and James was growing with it, slowly accumulating property and livestock. James' main interests at this time were sheep and horses, and he was quickly accumulating what had already
become the largest herd of sheep in the valley, which he was doing in partnership with Joseph Julley, his longtime and best friend.\textsuperscript{133}

Records kept by various organizations in Moroni indicate that in 1871 the Moroni Cooperative Mercantile Institution was incorporated, and Soren Joransson, James' father, was one of the initial subscribers or members.\textsuperscript{134} Moroni received its city charter in 1872, and at this point city records began to be kept. In 1872 Christina gave birth to her third child, another girl. She was born September 14 and was named Elinor Cecilia.\textsuperscript{135} Also, at this time James began making donations, along with others in town, so that some of the brethren could go to work on the St. George Temple. In 1872 he donated $10.00 cash, which was quite a bit of cash at that time, another sign of his growing prosperity.\textsuperscript{136}

On November 24, 1874, another son came into their lives, a son whom they named Parley Peter.\textsuperscript{137} Also that fall the first County Assessment of Record was taken, and James was assessed the following:

\begin{tabular}{lc}
City and Farm Property & $ 50.00 \\
4 Cattle & 130.00 \\
2 Horses & 100.00 \\
2,000 Sheep & 4,500.00 \\
1 Vehicle & 35.00 \\
Cash Money & 35.00 \\
Total Value & $ 4,850.00 \\
\end{tabular}
At this time his assessed value was higher than that of anyone else shown on the records.\textsuperscript{138}

Another problem arose (not for the first time according to family tradition) in 1874, and it was to affect the lives of James and his family in a profound way for the remainder of their lives. James was approached again about the matter of taking a plural wife--entering into polygamy.
Chapter 2

THE WHYS AND HOWS OF PLURAL MARRIAGE

Though there are no primary records extant giving reasons why James Yorgason entered the practice of plural marriage, there are several family traditions and supportive secondary sources available, and these enable one to draw some fairly strong conclusions.

According to information handed down through various branches of his family, James and Christina Yorgason were first approached about the prospect of entering "The Principle" by Daniel H. Wells, counselor to Brigham Young. At first hesitant, Yorgason was soon persuaded by Christina to be obedient to Church authority and to do as they counseled. How much encouragement he needed is not known. What is known is that he felt, throughout his life, that the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were true, and that the Church in all ages had been and was being directed by actual prophets. Throughout his life he bore strong testimony of his feelings regarding this, the following being examples.

On May 5, 1882, during a missionary conference he was conducting in Malmo, Sweden, Yorgason said that:
... he, together with his brethren, had left Zion in sincerity to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the habitants of the earth, and he brought forth the similarity between the reception by the people against (the) Lord's humble servants in former days and now.140

In Stockholm, during another conference, he stated that he felt the success of the work was assured, for God had appointed its existence. Both that day and again the next he stressed his convictions that what he and the other missionaries were doing was scriptural, and that each of them labored under the direction and protection of a God who loved them and who was blessing them for their diligent sacrifice in His behalf.141

On November 29, 1886, he wrote a letter to N.C. Flygare, President of the Scandinavian Mission, further expressing his feelings and his courage in doing what he felt was right, despite opposition. In the letter he spoke of new converts, the interest of "strangers" in their message, the school of free english which the elders were teaching, and finally he described an opportunity he had made for himself to bear his testimony in a Methodist hall at South Adolph Fredricksborg before a minister and congregation who were apparently stunned by what he had to say.142

It is obvious, then, that he felt strongly about his Church membership and Church responsibility. Such feelings would easily be expressed in a willingness
to obey counsel from Daniel H. Wells. Besides the encouragement of his wife, then, and the impetus of his own personal convictions, there was yet a third factor which contributed, at least in a minor way, to his decision to enter polygamy. James Yorgason had learned that many women found him attractive. 143

For fairly obvious reasons, little has been said about this aspect of his life by family members. However, two sources who spoke out at the time of his death shed some light on the idea.

Another who helped to take care of (James Yorgason) while he was dying was his old friend and neighbor, Mercie Ivory, who was my mother. She at one time stated to me that had the opportunity ever presented itself, she would gladly have become one of the many wives of James Yorgason. 144

When (James Yorgason) had his funeral, Flo Draper, who was a daughter of Amy, his fourth wife, wanted to go to the funeral, because she wanted to know how he was able to get so many women. She said, after she had seen him laying there in his casket, "Well, now I know how he was able to do it. He got them because he was able to, or looked so good. He was just nice looking." 145

With such impetus it was logical that he start immediately, and so he did.

Prior to August 2, 1875, when Yorgason was sealed to Francis Margaret Tilby in a plural marriage relationship, there was little besides his growing wealth to distinguish James Yorgason from other Utah Mormons. 146 On that date, however, he joined other local leaders, men like Aaron Hardy and Mons Nielson, 147 who were
considered the elite of the Church in the local area, and became a polygamous Mormon.

According to family tradition, James Yorgason's first wife, Christina, suggested the woman who would become the first plural wife in their family. Her name was Francis Margaret Tilby, she was sixteen years old, and her family lived near the Yorgasons in Moroni. Yorgason apparently felt reluctant about the idea because of the youthfulness of the girl, but his wife was adamant and so preparations were made. Yorgason's wife prepared a meal, Miss Tilby was invited to eat, her manners and demeanor were observed closely, and then as Yorgason walked out the door with the young lady, his wife Christina whistled a tune. They had agreed previously that one song would mean that she gave her approval, another would mean that her vote was no. Following that meal Christina must have whistled the "yes" tune, for Yorgason and Francis Margaret Tilby were sealed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City by Daniel H. Wells on August 2, 1875.

For Yorgason, courting prior to that first plural marriage had been brief with little extravagence. It consisted simply of several meals, after each of which there would be a long walk home, the two adults accompanied by Yorgason's five-year-old daughter, Nora, who went along to help still any wagging tongues. In this he established a pattern which held true for the next
two wives, and which to a certain extent would hold true for all his plural wives.

James Yorgason continued to be involved economically in the community of Moroni. Earlier in 1875 he had personally donated sixty pounds of wheat to the Indians, who, since the Black Hawk war was basically over, camped in the town whenever they could and begged food and clothing from the settlers, occasionally getting quite obnoxious. In 1875 James and his father, Soren, were also issued ten shares of water by the Bishopric, to irrigate their land.

The Mission Branch of the United Order was still functioning in Moroni, but it seems never to have been a complete way of life, at least for most of the residents. For instance, in the products section of the Mission Records, at the end of December 1875, James had a balance of $299.45 to his credit. During the next year he drew from the storehouse cash, $148.00; one old wagon with cover, $33.00; an order on beef, $6.50; an order on the treasury, $3.00; 3 head of sheep for B. Bonson, $10.50; transfer of cash to G. P. Simpson, $29.93; and finally, one treasury order of $39.02. Thus, at the end of 1876 he owed $167.13. This amount fluctuated back and forth until January 1879, when he balanced out the products section at $320.53 in both the debit and credit columns.
In the livestock section the story was much the same, except that the figures were higher, with his closing balance in 1879 being $3,669.52. At this point all of the records end, and so it is uncertain whether the United Order in Moroni was discontinued at that point or whether records of further activity have been lost.

At the same time that James was participating in the United Order, however, he was accumulating his own properties. In 1875 he was assessed for 43 cattle, 5 horses, 1200 sheep, 1 vehicle, $75.00 stock, and $225.00 cash, his total assessed value that year being $3,865.00. This was down a little from the year before, mostly because of the apparent sale of his sheep, but it was down significantly, still being higher than anyone else recorded.

The changing nature of the family was shown in other ways also, for on February 15, 1876, Parley Peter, the Yorgason's youngest son, passed away at age 1-1/2. Also, on November 9 of that same year Christina gave birth to another daughter, whom they named Annie Laura Christina. The year 1877 brought more changes. Francis was expecting her first child and a home had to be prepared for her, or at least so it was originally planned. The lot was purchased, but that was as far as things seemed to go. Something else was always coming up to take priority. For instance, on April 25, 1877, President Young dedicated the ground on which the Manti Temple was to be built.
brethren sent out a letter instructing all the Bishops in Washington, Kane, Iron, Piute, Beaver, Millard, Sevier, Sanpete, and Juab Counties to call all their people in and ascertain how much each one was willing to do in labor and means, monthly, quarterly, or annually, toward the erection of the Manti Temple. 166

James had, prior to this, been made President of the Young Men's church group in Moroni. 167 He received a call one evening during a meeting informing him that one team and five men were needed to go to Manti to work on the Temple. By the time the meeting ended he had five teams, and twenty-five young men had volunteered to go. 168

Frequently, Yorgason went to Manti to help on the Temple, working either in the quarry or in Ephraim Canyon at the sawmill where the brethren were preparing the lumber for the building. 169

Yorgason's main interest at that time appeared to be his livestock. James was a believer in thoroughbreds; in purebred stock. According to tradition, he felt that if a person would just spend a little more money on good breeding stock, then the whole community would benefit from the effort. The sheep would produce better wool, be larger and better able to handle the winters, the cattle would be larger, produce more beef and milk, and also stand the winters better. Horses too were important to him, and he sought out the best in both saddle and
work stock, paying for them what some around him considered exorbitant prices.

He was well beyond his time in his efforts to improve the livestock of the area, and he frequently tried to educate his friends with his theories. Usually, however, these arguments were wasted. Mostly he remained alone in his endeavors. 170

On November 4, 1877, Francis, Yorgason's plural wife, gave birth to her first child and son, whom they named John William. As near as can be determined, he was born in the big house in Moroni, as Francis was still living with the rest of the family. John was James' sixth child. 171

At the end of that year, at assessment time, James had increased his total value back up to $4,036.00. His changes during that year included purchasing another wagon, buying 600 sheep, and selling 40 of his cows. He was also assessed $10.00 value for two clocks or watches he had purchased. 172

In 1878 James, apparently on his own, decided to take another wife, a young girl of 17 named Emma (Amy) Christine Jorgansen, who lived in Moroni. 173 James and Christina then followed the pattern they had established with Francis. He informed Christina that he had found another possible candidate for a wife. Christina prepared a meal, and James invited the girl home. During the meal, Christina apparently questioned Amy closely,
listening not only to her answers but also to how she spoke to the rest of the family, watching her manners, and so on. At the end of the meal Christina approved, and James went forward with his plans. Amy was sealed to Yorgason on August 8, 1878, again by Daniel H. Wells, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City.

This marriage was apparently a rather difficult one for Amy, for she was in love with a young man named Brigham Draper. However, it seems that she did not know whether Draper loved her. So when the opportunity presented itself to marry James Yorgason, who was well off and an old and good friend of her parents as well, she accepted, never realizing that this decision would cause her many heartaches in the years to come.

In the fall of 1878 Yorgason decided to go into politics in a small way. He was elected one of two Fence Servers for the Moroni Precinct. His duties in this position were of a limited nature, and included seeing to the community properties and fences and making certain that no difficulties arose between the community and private parties.

In 1879 James Yorgason's family grew dramatically. On March 16 Christina gave birth to a son whom they named Joseph Soren Adam. Then on June 1 Amy gave birth to a son whom she named Orson LeRoy and finally, on September 1, Francis gave birth to the third son of that year, who was subsequently named Andrew Washington.
Such a large family necessitated the purchase of another home, which was soon procured, and in the fall of 1879 Amy took up residence there. Francis, however, continued to live with Christina. In 1879, Yorgason's city property value doubled in the annual assessment records, being assessed at $300.00. It was a rough year in other ways, though, for livestock prices had dropped dramatically. Yorgason had, since 1877, increased his cattle herd from 3 to 75, bought two more horses, two swine, and 200 sheep, and yet his total value of assets only increased $174.00.

In October, 1880, James Yorgason went to Salt Lake City on business. While there he met an old friend who told him of a young woman who had recently immigrated from Sweden, and who was doing housework there in the city to sustain herself. Yorgason expressed an interest, the friend introduced him to Maria Lovisa Peterson, and the brief and largely unrecorded courtship began. In a matter of days the young woman found herself in Moroni where she won quick approval from Yorgason's first wife.

Maria was born in 1857, and so was 23 years old. She had been converted, along with her girlfriend, just a year or so before, in Stockholm, Sweden. None of her family wanted to hear more of the Church, so in 1880 she and her girlfriend came to Utah, trusting their fate to the Lord. She was a gifted seamstress and dressmaker, as
it seems were most of the women who married James, and some of the dresses she made were outstandingly beautiful creations. Yorgason was sealed to Maria on October 28, 1880, and like the others, this sealing was performed in the Endowment House by Daniel H. Wells.

Yorgason now had four wives, and it was becoming increasingly hectic to care for all their wants and needs. He set about buying or building two other homes, so that each of his wives might have a home of her own. He also picked up 30 acres of meadow ground north of Moroni that would serve as year-round pasturage, sold all but twelve of his cattle, sold 300 sheep, and bought 8 more horses and two more pigs. He finally registered a brand in his own name, going to Nephi on June 14, 1880, where he registered the Quarter-Circle Y on the left hip or thigh. James also made an appointment that spring with the Stake Patriarch, William McBride, to get his Patriarchal Blessing, which was given him on June 13, 1880.

On January 11, 1881 Amy gave birth to a daughter, who was given the name Hilda Jane. Yorgason and his wives now had had ten children, nine of whom were living.

And then on March 14, 1881, Yorgason received a call to serve a two-year mission in Sweden, and he was directed to prepare for departure in the fall. Spring and summer were spent by the family getting James ready
to leave. He showed Christina what had to be done with his livestock and properties in order that she would be able to support his four growing families. Maria, Francis and Christina were all expecting children again, Francis' home was not yet finished, and there was much to be done. On August 6, 1881, after what must have been a busy summer, Yorgason and his family boarded their wagons and set out for the railroad depot in Fountain Green, where he would begin his two-year mission.

Yorgason was set apart on August 8, 1881, by Joseph F. Smith. Thereafter, he traveled by rail to New York and thence to England on the S. S. Wyoming. From there he sailed to Sweden.

While crossing the North Sea enroute to Stockholm, he composed a little song which he sent to his family back in Utah. It is sung to the tune of "Oh Babylon" ("Ye Elders of Israel"), and is as follows:

On the 14th of March in the year '81
I was called to fill a mission, which I have begun.
I left my home in Moroni on August, the 6th,
Many tears in the eyes of my friends did exist.

Chorus--Dear Friends, wives and children,
I bid you adieu,
I've gone to preach the Gospel, for I know it is true.

The brethren, they got sick and they sought for their couch,
But I stayed on top deck for fresh air and looked out.
Before we got to England the brethren had got well,
And we were ordered to scatter, our message for to tell.
Chorus--

Our leader went to England and others as well. But I was sent to Sweden my message for to tell. My dear wives and children, I hope you'll keep from shame, And then in due time I will meet you again.

Chorus--

Temptation is present to lead us astray, But if we are prayerful it cannot betray. Dear friends, wives and children, I bid you adieu, I've gone to preach the Gospel, for I know it is true.195

James was assigned immediately to work in the Stockholm Conference, but on November 1, President C. D. Fjeldsted, President of the mission, reassigned him to the Skane Conference, in Southern Sweden.196 The headquarters of missionary work in Skane were located in Malmo, and there Yorgason spent his mission, serving primarily in leadership positions. In November 1881, he was called to preside over the Lund and Trelleborg branches,197 and in April 1882, he was called as President of the Skane Conference,198 which position he held until his release from missionary labors in 1883. During that time he was obviously effective as a proselyter also, for he baptized and confirmed sixty-one people,199 one of whom, Katarina (Catherine) Olson, was ultimately to become Yorgason's sixth wife.200

On June 1, 1883, James Yorgason received his formal release,201 and he arrived in Salt Lake City on July 8, just five weeks later.202
Chapter 3

FAMILY GROWTH AND CHANGES

Upon James Yorgason's return from his mission, his four wives, displaying a sense of humor which could only be manifest that particular way in a polygamous household, switched their three baby boys and requested that he match children with mothers. He had never seen these boys, Robert, Hyrum and Wilford, yet according to tradition, Yorgason matched them up correctly. 203

Many things had changed during his two-year absence, not the least of which was the size of his family. Of course, it had grown with the addition of the three new sons, but in a very important way it had grown smaller. While he was in Sweden two of his children had died. Hilda Jane, Amy's little daughter, passed away November 14, 1881, when she was less than a year old, and Andrew Washington, the second son of Francis, was drowned in an irrigation ditch in Chester on March 8, 1882. This occurred almost immediately after Francis had moved into her new home in Chester. 204

The family also grew smaller when Amy, Yorgason's third wife, left him and remarried, taking her son with her to this new union. Prior to her marriage to Yorgason she had apparently loved a young man named Brigham M.
Draper, but he had remained somewhat aloof from her for financial reasons. Amy misinterpreted this action and so married James Yorgason. Four years and two children later, while James was on his mission and she was lonely and just 22 years old, she met Brigham Draper at a dance. The old feelings apparently were stirred up in both of them, and she shortly left James Yorgason to marry Brigham at Mt. Pleasant on January 23, 1883. Difficult as this must have been for the family, Yorgason went out of his way to be cordial and friendly with Amy and Brigham, and helped them out whenever possible.

During Stake conference that year in Mt. Pleasant, James Yorgason was called out by Elders Francis M. Lyman and Erastus Snow and interviewed, following which he was called to be the Bishop of the Fountain Green Ward. On August 19, 1883, he was sustained in Conference and then ordained by Elder Erastus Snow, after which he was inaugurated into the Fountain Green Ward by Elder Lyman.

James' mission had been an economic hardship for his families, but now they were being asked to give up even more, for the call to be a bishop meant giving up their homes and moving everything to Fountain Green. For James this involved either buying or building at least three new homes, and there was the distinct possibility that they might need five, for he and Christina were considering two more women as possible wives.
It seems that the brethren in Salt Lake had for years practiced the benevolent policy of providing homes for older women who were without families by marrying them. The women, of course, became wives, but only in the sense that a home and livelihood was provided for them.210

Such a woman came into the Yorgason family shortly after James' return from his mission. However, it is unclear whether Yorgason understood that this was the type of relationship he was getting involved in. The woman's name was Hannah Nielson, she was nearing forty, which was almost twice the age of Yorgason's other wives, and yet she was very striking, with extremely dark hair and a noble dignified demeanor. She and James were sealed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on November 8, 1883, by President Daniel H. Wells. According to family legend, almost immediately after their marriage Hannah's hair began to grow out, showing that the true color was almost totally white. This became a rather malicious family joke, and she was ever after known as "Old Gray" because of this combination of black and white hair. Apparently she and Yorgason never lived together, they had no children, and neither she nor the family considered themselves a part of each other.211

Then, just over a month later, on December 20, 1883, James returned to Salt Lake City. On this trip he was sealed to Catherine Olson, the vivacious young lady
he had met and baptized in Sweden the year before when he was on his mission. 212

As quickly as possible James took over his responsibilities as Bishop, calling two counselors, conducting meetings, and trying to get to know the people of his new ward. As was probably to be expected, people in Fountain Green thought of him as an outsider, and were not too warm towards him. 213

Plans were made to move to Fountain Green, and the move started on September 17, 1883. That day, however, Johnny, 6, son of Francis, decided to roast some potatoes in a haystack. Accordingly, he made a hole in the hay, put the potatoes in it, and started the fire. The result was that all the crops of hay and grain harvested that fall were burned. This proved to be a great loss to the family. James' large barn, not yet completed, was also burned down in this fire, and so he left the foundation there and never bothered to rebuild it. 214

James purchased some property in the little community of Fountain Green 215 and began building homes, a large one for Christina and smaller ones for his other wives. 216 His reputation as a builder and a doer quickly spread, and people began to take note of his economic practices and growth. 217

One of his first economic moves, on settling in Fountain Green, was to unite with Andrew Aagard, another up-and-coming man who was quite well off, 218 in building
up a sheep herd, and they ranged this herd in the mountains during the summer and then down near town during the winter. As the herd grew, Yorgason formed a co-op, he and Aagard being the principal owners. They then formulated the policy of helping others to start out in the business by lending them sheep on shares. The man who took the herd agreed to care for it for a certain length of time, having complete responsibility for it, and at the end of that time a certain number of the lambs that had been born to the herd belonged to him as his pay. It was a good deal for the co-op owners to have their sheep taken care of, and it was also a good way for a man without capital to build up a herd of his own. Then eventually he too would join with the co-op and another would take the herd out on shares. Also, as the herd kept growing, more than one man might take a part of it out on shares at a time. Everyone involved benefited.

Yorgason felt that entertainment was important for the people, and so once he was established in Fountain Green, this became a primary concern for him. The people built what was called the Pavillion, a large log building with a stage in one end where local and traveling theatre groups performed. But the thing most remembered about the pavillion was the floor.

That old pavillion had a good floor in it, that was sure. It was a good dance floor, and they used to
have all their theatres that come to town. There used to be lots of them in those days. There used to be lots of traveling companies that would come, and Fountain Green was noted for supporting the shows. And so they had a lot of them. Oh, it was muddy in those days, and it would get tracked in there, and you couldn't hardly see across the room there'd be so much dust flying, and they had two stoves when it was winter, and everybody'd crowd around them two stoves because it would be so cold. They had those red hot.

Early in 1884 a red brick schoolhouse was completed, and Yorgason, with characteristic abruptness, made the point very plain that his sons should get an education, but he was not too concerned about his daughters. In his opinion, their place was in the home, and what education they needed could be gleaned from their mothers.

As was common in small communities in Utah, Fountain Green began to bestow names upon some of her sons, names that stuck, and names that always seemed to fit. These were given for various reasons, such as how a man looked, how he acted, or merely to help keep his mail straight. Some that James had to deal with were One-Armed John, Limpy John, Hans Weegin, Hans Boge, Hans Tinker, and two of his own sons, who became Yergie and Joe Spin. In fact, Bishop Yorgason is said to have disfellowshipped Hans Tinker for smoking a pipe too much.

In 1885 Fountain Green was incorporated, and James reported to Salt Lake that a new meetinghouse of brick 60 x 45 feet was finished at a cost of $4,000.00. Although the building was new, it was by no means comfortable. Flooring was
not put in or the stand built until 1899. A ceiling was installed in 1897 and the choir, as well as the congregation, sat on benches with slats for seats and backs until the new benches were installed in 1901.229

The Fountain Green Choir was a locally famous institution by Bishop Yorgason's time. In the new building Yorgason had an interesting way of seating the choir, as well as the rest of the congregation. According to tradition:

[T]he Priesthood and Bishopric occupied a stand at one end of the room; in front of them was the sacrament table, and in front of that the choir, still seated on a rough square on the main floor. The congregation was . . . divided with the men on one side and the women on the other. The bass singers sat with their backs to the Bishopric, the tenors on the side of the square that ended on the men's side of the congregation. The altos sat opposite the tenors, leaving the bench with its back to the audience for the sopranos.230

Yorgason, himself, instituted some peculiar programs in Fountain Green while he was bishop, and one of the best remembered of these came to be known as the "Bushwackers." He was apparently concerned about the youth of his ward, and he felt that many of them could avoid trouble if they were in their homes by a reasonable hour each night instead of out wandering the streets. So he, his counselors, and others in the ward were given the responsibility of patrolling the streets and imposing this curfew upon the unhappy youth of Fountain Green.
He (James) was the bishop, and you never heard nobody growl about him, but he was the guy that started what they called the bushwackers up there. Everybody had to be in by a certain time of night when he was the bishop or he'd catch them young fellers and beat the snot out of 'em. 

They imposed this curfew in various ways, such as riding a horse around, just checking out if there were any kids on the streets, or walking the paths of Fountain Green themselves. By far the most famous and unpopular method, however, was for Yorgason or others to go out along one of the many trails or paths that wound through the town, crouch down behind one of the sage brush that grew there, and eavesdrop on the youth as they walked past. Occasionally these men would even take along their own brush, for convenience of parking, so to speak. Of course, the young people took this as a challenge, and so as they walked along they checked out the various bushes, and if one happened to wiggle at all, or to even look suspicious, the kids would take a large stick, a handful of rocks or mud or whatever was handy, and give that particular bush a whack. Then, of course, they ran, for oftentimes they scored a direct hit on one or another of the brethren, who, as would be expected, were not too happy about it.

Uncle Tom Allred, my Dad's brother, and course there was nobody darst to tackle Chris Lund because he was a pugilist. And Yorgason took after Uncle Tom, and down by Tinus Jensen's Uncle Tom jumped a mudpuddle, and Yorgason had on one of these white dicky collars; they used to wear vests that cut
down here and they had what they called a white
dicky in there, and Uncle Tom stopped on the
other side of the mud puddle and grabbed a rock
about the size of your fist, and Yorgason was
stopped there and he could see that white collar and
he says he hit it right in the middle. And he said
down he went. And Tom knew he'd better get out of
it, and he whirled and broke and run, and when he
got just across the road from where his Dad lived
he run into Chris Lund. He says, "Chris, for
----- sake, Yorgason's after me." And Chris
said, "I been with you all night. Yes, sir!"
Cause Lund and Uncle Tom was pretty good friends.

Memories of incidents with the Bushwackers are
legion, and all of them encountered by the writer show
Yorgason getting the worst of the confrontations.
Interestingly, even his own children caused him grief
and despair.

The main problem in Yorgason's life, however, was
still polygamy. He had had more than one wife since
1875, and finally the government was starting to make
things a little warm for him.

Polygamy actually had been illegal since 1862,
and the Church had attempted a sort of surface compliance
with that law by calling all polygamous marriages
"sealings."

In 1882 Congress passed the Edmunds Act, which:

Provided heavy penalties for the practice of
polygamy; defined cohabitation with a polygamous
wife as a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of
not to exceed $300, by imprisonment not to exceed
six months, or both; declared all persons guilty
of polygamy or cohabitation incompetent for jury
service; and disfranchised and declared ineligible
for public office all persons guilty of polygamy
or unlawful cohabitation.
The Church fought this law in every legal way possible, but on March 3, 1885, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the law, and territorial officials commenced the systematic and intensive persecution of Mormon leaders known as "The Raid." "Polyg hunts" for "Cohabs" became the order of the day, and Mormon officials made a grave decision to fight these charges under the law. According to their feelings, each polygamist had made a sacred oath to remain true to his wives and children "for time and all eternity." This was no light matter to them, and so when the government declared that they should abandon their polygamous families, rather than submit, most church leaders from the prophet on down went "underground." Prior to the passage of the Edmunds Law, only two Mormon polygamists had ever been indicted. However, the Edmunds Law included a provision for "unlawful cohabitation," a provision that made conviction almost a certainty. This law was enforced not only by the deputies, but also by some of the Mormons themselves, turncoats or spotters as they were called, who seemed to be everywhere. Raids were conducted constantly, and the war of nerves became so great that even President John Taylor, head of the Church, decided to go into hiding.

James Yorgason came to the conclusion that the best place he could hide out in total safety, and at the same time hopefully do some good, would be on another
mission. Accordingly, he recommended himself, and received another call to serve in Sweden. He was set apart on April 2, 1885, by F. J. Richards, and left immediately for his field of labor. He crossed the continent by train, took a ship from New York to Liverpool, crossed England by rail to Hull, and then shipped out to Copenhagen, where he arrived on April 29, less than a month after he left home.

Shortly after his arrival in Sweden, James was called to preside over the Goteborg (Gothenburg) Conference. Yorgason presided over that conference from June to October, writing regular letters and reports to A. H. Lund, President of the Scandanavian Mission.

On June 20, 1885, Yorgason baptized his first convert of his second mission, a lady named Berta Maria Wissman. She would be the first of at least 46 converts James Yorgason would teach on his mission, 26 of whom emigrated to America.

On October 4, 1885 Yorgason was sustained as president of the Stockholm Conference. That afternoon, following a talk by Elder Charles W. Penrose, James spoke on the First Principles of the Gospel, gave a good testimony, and admonished the Saints to be faithful and chaste. Following his talk, President Daniel H. Wells spoke to the assembled brethren.

Early in January, 1886, Yorgason and his companion, August Johanson, met a shoemaker whose name
was Johan Victor Thelin. He was baptized on February 9, 1886. This man's descendant has informed the writer that other descendants of Thelin have given, since 1886, over 96 years of missionary work.²⁵⁰

Though little is left of record, James' thoughts must have returned occasionally to home, where he had left his family. Prior to his mission, his wives had given birth to four more children, giving him a total of seventeen, of which two were dead and one was living with Brigham Draper as his son. His four newest children were Francis Victoria, born to Francis on May 16, 1884; Ernest Alonzo, born to Christina on June 12, 1884; Charles Edward, born to Maria on July 10, 1884; and Augusta Polene, born to Catherine on August 7, 1884. This little girl died shortly after her birth.²⁵¹ He even managed to carry on a little business by instructing Christina, through the mail, to buy 10.34 acres from George Livingston for $525.00 and 1.09 acres from Jasper Robertson for $100.00. And this was in addition to her duties as presiding authority over his family.²⁵²

At Christmas time in 1886 Yorgason wrote to his daughter the only letter which the writer has found which is in his own handwriting. This letter clearly shows the frustrations he was feeling because of the separation from his family--a separation brought about because he was a polygamist.²⁵³
Stockholm Dec 23rd 1886
Elinor C. Yorgason

Dear little daughter,

or big, which is it? I suppose that you are very large as James said something about it some time back. Thanks for all the news you sent me. Please to continue . . . You speak of that Draper and where he has gone. I hope that name of mine will never be found guilty of any such doings. I often think of James for fear that he might get in bad company. I suppose that you girls will be looked after by your Ma, but it is harder for her to look after the boys. I wish to see you soon and I hope that when I do so and meet you again that I will have the privilege to stope with you all the time without being disturbed by the Marshals or anyone else. Here we have pretty good meetings of Sundays and nearly every night but the Sundays we have the house full generally, mostly strangers not in the Church. I hope that you will wright often and much . . . tell all the news what happens in our little town. Good by for this time from your Father and Friend

J. Jorgason

On May 30, 1887, Yorgason departed from Sweden, and he arrived in Salt Lake City on June 23.254 One wonders how he felt, knowing that he was returning to a political situation which was, if anything, worse than when he left.
Chapter 4

TROUBLES WITH THE FEDS

James Yorgason was a wanted man for several reasons. First of all, with his current six wives he stood second in the whole Church among Scandinavians in total numbers of wives. So the marshals wanted him. Also, because he was so powerful economically, it appears that there were many men in the community who would have gleefully watched him captured, simply because they wanted to get their hands on some of the things that were his. These men did their best to destroy him.

Yorgason was not the only one with troubles. The whole Church was experiencing difficulty with the federal government. Not content with the results of the Edmunds Law of 1882, those who desired the annihilation of Mormon polygamy pushed through Congress the Edmunds-Tucker Act on February 19, 1887, which dissolved the legal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This brought all of the property belonging to the Church under federal control, abolished woman suffrage in Utah, and disinherited all children of plural marriages.

President John Taylor, head of the Church during this period of time, counseled all of the men living
in plural marriage to evade the law, rather than submit to it. Said he:

... avoid them as much as you possibly can. Get out of their way as much as you can--just as you would wolves, or hyenas, or crocodiles, or snakes... What! Won't you submit to the dignity of the law? Well, I would if the law would only be a little more dignified.258

President Taylor anticipated the passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act, and to keep Church properties fairly intact, he and other leaders secretly decided to place Church properties in the hands of individuals and local congregations. By 1887 these local wards had title to all meeting-houses, tithing offices, granaries, capital stock in community stock herds, general stores, irrigation projects, and other local enterprises in which the Church had a financial hand. Then, after the law was passed but before it became effective, President Taylor ordered the personal property in all the tithing offices of the Church transferred to the local ecclesiastical leaders where these stores were located.259 Thus, Yorgason, as Bishop of the Fountain Green Ward, became the legal owner or guardian of all the property belonging to the Church and located geographically within his ward.260

With the problems of wives, marshals, "friends" who wanted him down and out, and the added ecclesiastical responsibilities brought about by the recent decisions
of the Church authorities, Yorgason apparently found himself over the proverbial barrel. To avoid the marshals so that he could remain free to take care of his responsibilities meant that he must hide out; to take care of all that needed to be done he had to devote a great deal of time to working with the people, and this most usually had to be done out in the open, where he was vulnerable to the law. It was an interesting dilemma, one which he attempted to solve in an equally interesting way.

His first strategic move was to take another wife, a young Swedish girl whose name was Anna Svederus. She moved into the main house with Christina and the rest of the family, and if anyone asked any questions, she was only the hired girl.261

Marrying Anna was a bold move, for just previous to this, Judge Orlando W. Powers of the First Judicial District had declared that:

An indictment may be found against a man guilty of unlawful cohabitation, for every day, or other distinct interval of time, during which he offends. Each day that a man cohabits with more than one woman, as I have defined the word cohabit, is a distinct and separate violation of the law, and he is liable for punishment for each separate offense.262

Simply stated, this meant that every time Yorgason walked into his front door he was guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by not more than six months in prison and not
In effect, James appeared to be flouting himself, and his polygamous status, before the law.

Apparently Yorgason determined to spend most of his time in the open, performing his duties as bishop, living with his families, and increasing his property and livestock holdings. Stories of family activity during this time are legion, and all involve him. On one occasion he took all of his wives with him to the sheep herd. There he taught them how to shear the wool from the sheep. Then he held a contest to see who could shear the most sheep in a day. The winner was given the privilege of sitting beside him on the wagon seat as they went home. The others had to ride in back.

It seems that Yorgason also loved to sing, and his huge voice boomed out at night when the family gathered around to sing together. Nora would play, and the entire family sang along together.

Yergi, and Joe Spin, that was Yorgason's boy
Joseph, and Ollie Allred, and Peter Anderson, and Neillie Aagard, John's wife, they used to come to my Dad's home night after night and sing, and I'd listen. Never heard better singing in my life. And old Yorgason'd come too. Pete Snoot and Joe Spin, that was Pete Anderson. They called them Joe Spin and Ticket Pete. Joe was kind of a spindly guy, and quite a dancer. I guess that was why they called him that. And his son Hy used to be there too. He was kind of crippled on one leg, but he could sing too.

One of the difficulties Yorgason encountered as a polygamist was fairness. He found that it was extremely
difficult to be always impartial. With the children this was usually no problem, but with the wives, if he was not careful, he experienced great difficulties. Each of these women were proud ladies, women of distinction in Fountain Green. At least four of them were expert seamstresses, and they all wanted to look the best they could, especially since they were the wives of the bishop. Yorgason soon realized how easy it was to appear to show favoritism even when he wasn't aware of it, merely by bringing home some small gift for one of the wives, or by purchasing another one a piece of cloth.

When Pa returned from his second mission to Sweden in 1887, Nora was about sixteen years of age. Pa brought back two lovely pieces of dress material for his two older daughters, Mary and Nora. They were very thrilled as this was something rare to have cloth for a dress direct from the east. Unfortunately, this happiness for Nora did not last long as Kate, Pa's fifth wife, insisted she be given one of the lengths of cloth. And since she was his youngest wife at that time, Pa had Nora give up her material to Kate. This was a big disappointment to Nora and one she never forgot. From then on, Kate's name was low on Nora's totem pole, and whenever she mentioned Kate's name she mentioned it with a great deal of disgust in her voice and face.

To solve problems of this sort Yorgason began buying cloth by the bolt. He would then roll it out and divide it into six equal sections so that each wife would see that she was receiving her fair share. At the same time, each wife could use her material the way that she wanted, and each could appear in their own
favorite style. Yorgason also used this method of equal division when a beef or some other animal was killed. All were allowed to share the meat, but it was given according to the needs of each family.

James Yorgason tried in any way he could to make things as nice and convenient for his wives as possible. One thing he did was to make certain that his wives had enough money so that they could take regular baths.

Back in them days there weren't no bathtubs in Fountain Green, and so I put one of 'em in my barber shop. All the ladies in town came into that shop to take their baths. There weren't none in any of the homes back then. A lot more ladies than men used it. I charged two bits for a bath. Well, then women could come and lock themselves in, and there was no windows to look through, so they could take a bath in there and no one could bother them at all. Bishop Yorgason's wives used it regular.

Of course there was plenty of work for the wives to do, and records indicate that they were busy constantly just keeping up with the necessities.

... making clothes ... was quite a chore ... Ma (Christina) could get wool right from the sheep, wash and dry it, then cord it and spin it. Now this was quite a job. She would try to teach us kids how to cord and spin but we weren't very good at it. She would knit all of our socks, which were many, as we wore wool socks summer and winter. Of course, the feet seemed to be the only part that showed wear, but Ma taught us how to darn them, and when they got too many darms she would have to refoot them.

Bishop Yorgason's business ventures kept whole families busy almost day and night. He would have as
many as twenty to thirty men working for him at a time, and the job of feeding them apparently fell to Christina and the children.\textsuperscript{270} Nor did Yorgason hesitate to call his wives to Church positions, calling Christina to leadership positions in the Relief Society, his daughter Mary to be a temple worker in Manti, Nora to be tithing clerk, and Francis to work with the children.\textsuperscript{271}

All of this family activity and interaction was bound to inspire stories and legends about the Yorgason family. Some of these stories were funny, some were sad, and a good many were inspired by awe more than anything else.

Do I remember Bishop Yorgason? Oh, I wonder. I knowed him. He was a polygamy man, I'll tell you. He had so many wives he couldn't hardly keep track of them ... I heard he had 18 or 19 women, whether it was true or not I don't know. He was a good bishop. He was a big man, full of life. I can remember he was sandy complexioned. I can remember that too.\textsuperscript{272}

Oh, I remember Bishop Yorgason and all them. Well, I should say! I can see him right now, as a matter of fact. He was a polygamist. He had two women. I'll never forget it.\textsuperscript{273}

Bishop Yorgason? He had so many houses here. Why, he had 8 women right here in this town. I knew Steenie, that was his main wife. Then there was Francis and Mariar. She had two nice boys. I remember Catherine. He had four within that block down there. Hannar lived down on that corner, Catherine lived on across the road west of me. Then there was a couple in Moroni. I don't know them too well.\textsuperscript{274}

Bishop Yorgason? Well, his wives used to, when they found out he was coming, make a big pot of stew broth. Then they'd boil it down for about two days until all that was left was pure vitamins.
Then he'd eat that when he got there so's he could have strength. He had a lot of wives! 275

His wives and families were not the only aspect of Yorgason's life. He continued buying better strains of livestock to build up his herds, and this caused people to talk. One man claimed that Yorgason brought more purebred livestock into Sanpete Valley than any other man. 276 Of all Yorgason's livestock, however, his horses inspired the most stories. His daughter, Mary, recorded the astounding fact that one day James bought a large gray horse for $1,800, and the very next week he paid $1,100 for another one. 277 One day while talking with a group of men in Fountain Green someone casually mentioned that it would be impossible for a man on horseback to get from Fountain Green to Salt Lake City in one day's time. Yorgason immediately accepted the challenge, and the following morning at sunrise, amid the shouts of onlookers, he disappeared across the divide. Much to the consternation of some of the onlookers, his telegram arrived from Salt Lake City prior to sunset, informing them that he had made it. 278

Yorgason at one time purchased 150 head of blooded Belgians from out of California and Arizona. He also purchased many Kentucky horses, and always claimed that Ingersol and Sailor, his other favorite horses,
Finally, his horse herd grew so large, that he was forced to winter the entire herd out on the desert just like a band of sheep. At one time there were over 200 mares in that herd.

The year 1887 passed quickly into 1888, and James found that he was spending a great deal of time working as a bishop. First of all, he found that he and Christina must play host and hostess to all the General Authorities of the Church who passed through Fountain Green. He found also that he must still deal with the Indians, for a tribe of them lived up Big Holler. He adopted the policy of the former bishop, Bishop Johnson, which was to feed them rather than fight them.

As a bishop, Yorgason is remembered as a man who cared for the needy and the inactive members of his ward.

Well, anyway, I never seen nothing wrong with him at all, that fellow. No! As far as I can remember my Dad used to think the world of him. Course my dad wasn't much in the Church, but he liked Bishop Yorgason. Yep! He was a good man. Very good, I'd say. And he was a very fine built man. I judge him six feet tall, and very well built. My father really liked him a lot. Oh hell, yes, I should say. Yes, they were very good friends, my father and him. That was George Ivory.

And the youth all seemed to like him too, despite his unusual bushwhacking procedures.

I sure used to look up to him. To me at that time he was just like an angel, or something like that,
because everybody, all the kids and everybody, looked up to Bishop Yorgason.

There was one problem, however, that Yorgason seemed unable to do anything about. Fountain Green, Sanpete Valley, and the whole State of Utah was in the throes of a severe drought. Average annual rainfall in the State varied between 12 and 16 inches, but in 1887 one station reported 1.38 inches, while another reported 4.36 inches. The years 1888 and 1889 brought only more of the same, and many of the little farmers and ranchers found themselves in real trouble. While there was enough water for the people and livestock, there was nowhere near enough to grow the crops necessary to feed the people and the livestock both, and so many were forced out of business, while others had to cut way back on their activities.

They had a few real bad years... drought years in the late '80's and early '90's, when so many of them went broke, they had a real bad time. I remember Pete Olson telling me how his dad, a large shareholder in the Big Springs Water Company, had to put his water on eight minute turns so everybody could get a little water because the drought was so bad. They could only grow on their land about 50 yards down from the top, because the water didn't have time to go any farther.

Yorgason likely spent a great deal of time thinking and worrying about this, for at length he came up with a solution that was characteristic of him, both for his desire to help others and for his own desire
to grow. He went to the people in his ward who were facing bankruptcy and ruin, the small farmers and stockmen, and offered to buy up some or all of their property at a price they would all agree upon as fair, considering the situations both were facing. He began this buying of property in the winter of 1888, and by the spring of 1892 had purchased over 2,000 acres scattered around the little valley, investing just under $60,000.00 in the venture. As with all else that he did, this ownership of property became legendary, and the story is still common in Sanpete Valley that a person could walk from Moroni to Fountain Green on either side of the road and never get off Bishop Yorgason's property. And again, characteristically, he usually bought the best when he bought property. He bought the Cedar Hill Pasture, the Dairy Pasture, which is below the Cedar Hill between Fountain Green and Moroni, and which some people claim to be among the best pastures in the world, plus many town lots, buildings, and other small pieces of land situated throughout the valley. The story is told that he even went so far as to make arrangements to buy the whole town of Freedom, which is nestled up against the West Mountain about six miles south of Fountain Green, but one woman refused to sell, so he did not buy any of it. He apparently had some idea of moving all his families up there and forming his own family community, an idea which would surface later on a grander scale.
In 1888 he also bought the property on which was located the old flour mill in Fountain Green. This mill was originally built in 1867, burned down in 1871, and rebuilt on a larger scale the following year. When Yorgason purchased the mill in 1888, he had it remodeled and adapted to the roller process, a new method of milling grain. And then he decided that since he owned such good pastureland, it was foolish not to go into the dairy and creamery business. In either 1888 or 1889 he organized the James Yorgason Fountain Green Dairy Association, with himself, of course, being the principal owner.

But he had a corner, I guess, or owned, the Dairy Pasture Association, we finally got to calling it the big hay meadow; anyway, he either owned it or was president of it. That was hundreds of acres of that meadow bottom down there about half way between Fountain Green and Moroni on the west side of the road. And then he had . . . I don't know how many milk cows. He was always after the best strain, and if he could hear of or go get a pedigreed bull or some sire or a pedigreed stallion or something like that, that's what he would do. He was building things up, and my dad said that if they'd kept their hands off Bishop Yorgason he'd have made it. But he was in command of a huge dairy herd, and he used to hire, now Mariar Coombs told me that she worked for Bishop Yorgason, and what a fine man he was, and how fair he was, and how he'd have a man follow them along and strip the cows for them.

He supplied milk and butter for the area, but, he also shipped it as far north as Salt Lake, to sell at ZCMI.

My mother used to milk cows for him. He had about 8 girls from Fountain Green that did his milking.
He built a creamery down there, and he had a peg-leg fellow come there, his name was Anderson. He run the creamery, but Bishop fetched him from Denmark. He had, oh, I guess I don't know how many girls that would go down there to milk cows down there for him. At that time he owned the whole thing down there, that is all whittled up now and different people own it.

The creamery was a large yellow brick building, surrounded by sheds and corrals for the cattle and other livestock. Yorgason spent a great deal of time and expense fencing up the meadows with elaborate fences and gates so that he could have better control of his livestock. His philosophy was "Right is Best and Best is Right." In living up to this he was always thinking of ways to save time and therefore money. One idea that later paid off was to build his gates so that he could open them merely by pressing a hidden release which could be reached from astride a horse. This apparently worked a system of weights which would open the gate and then automatically swing it shut once he was through.

Yorgason did his best to involve his families in his various projects, hiring James S., Joseph, and Johnny, his sons, to work with the horses and sheep. He also used his daughters Mary, Elinor, and Laura to help with the cooking, dishwashing, and milking at the creamery. Anna, his seventh wife, also worked there, and of course, Christina was in charge of most of the cooking. Even Ernest, who was only five years old,
helped the family, riding his horse down twice a week to deliver the mail. 305

Anna seems to have been a rather spirited wife, and several interesting accounts of conflicts between her and other members of the family have been recorded.

Tues May 12 Anna Sve. sat up nearly all night and slept under the table.

Thurs May 14 Agnes and Laura and Anna had a quarrel. Pa told Anna to leave; he said for her to go in the morning.

Fri May 15 Annie and I did not speak all day but she did not leave. 306

... I imagine it was during the summer when they were at the dinner table (down at the creamery) and they were evidently seated all around eating dinner. And Bishop Yorgason had a letter in his pocket. And my father said it was his seventh wife (Anna) reached over and grabbed it out of his pocket and my aunt, being just a child of 12, looked at her, maybe not right, just wise, with a look of disgust, and so the wife reached out and slapped her. So my father jumped up and poked the wife in the eye. He blacked her eye. It could have been a problem, and I don't know just how it was settled at the moment. But later Bishop Yorgason said, "Well, you did just right to defend your sister. You should take her part." It seemed that this new wife was being just a little bit of a disturbing element at the time. Whether she wasn't quite accustomed to everything or settled down, I don't know what it was. 307

Yorgason's family was continuing to grow, and reached six wives and eighteen children when Christina gave birth to a baby daughter, Ida Rachel Minerva, on March 5, 1888. 308

In spite of the demands on his time made necessary by bishopric work, and the constant harassment
by marshals, James did try to spend time with his families. Mary, in her Daybooks, recorded that at various times James and Christina and the family went Sunday visiting, picnicked out in the meadows, went up to the Big Springs to explore the old tunnel there, went fishing, held family nights and family sings, went to the theatre, killed tithing chickens, killed and cleaned 118 turkeys, which were then given away to the needy in town for Thanksgiving dinner, attended Church, played chess, roamed the streets of town at night singing, sat up with ill members of the family, played with the boys, went on outings to the sheep herd, played cards, and played jacks for slaps with $20 gold pieces. 309

With all of this activity it is hard to imagine that Yorgason was still being hunted by the federal marshals. The strain he and his family felt must have been tremendous. As an illustration of this, the first item recorded in the Daybooks of his daughter Mary reads:

Monday, June 4th, 1888--about 1 o'clock P.M. we were going to start back to Manti and just as I was ready to go to Bro. Carter's (as we were all to meet there) a man whom I thought was a gentleman came to the door and asked for my father; I told him he was not at home and he turned to my mother and asked her where he was and she said he was not at home, so he made his business known. He said he had a warrant to search the house for Mr. Yorgason and as soon as I found that out I said goodbye and walked off. As soon as I got off I had the news spread over town that marshals were in town and it was not long until it was pretty much over town. We did not start because there was such a rain storm so we put it off until the next morning, so I went home to see what the marshal
had done; I found that they had been very sassy to my mother and sister Elinor but had not found the person they were looking for, so they supposed. (They found) my mother and my sister Elinor and our hired girl, Anna Syderus. Their names were McLellam and Norrell.310

And Ernest recalled:

. . . how we had the marshals to contend with. They would be very insulting and abusive and would ransack the house from top to bottom, which was very heartbreaking for me as a little child, seeing what Ma had to put up with. We had this to contend with for many years.311

The stories about James and his narrow escapes from the marshals are both numerous and interesting. They point out quite plainly that the polygamists relied on two things to aid in their escapes; their own quick wit and the information spread by a sympathetic (and biased) populace.

The little boys were sent to watch for the approach of the marshals from the divide to the north of Fountain Green, and at the first sign of dust were to signal Pa and other offenders so that they could hide or get out of town.312

This of course made Yorgason and other polygamists vulnerable to practical jokes, and stories about that abound also.

Some of the young teenagers in town loved to play practical jokes on the polygamists and would announce the approach of the marshals when there were none, just to see the guilty ones run for cover.313

Most likely as a result of this, Yorgason and others did all in their power to avoid dependence upon
friends and neighbors, preferring their own wit and the aid of their families to get away.

I remember those marshals that was after the polygamists. You bet I do. They would come to the homes and want to know if you was home. But they . . . your Grandfather Yorgason never was without a saddled horse. Always saddled. Why, they couldn't a ketch him never. They never did catch him. He wasn't really fast, he was shrewd. He knewed the ropes. And knewed where to go, and how to, but they couldn't ketch him in the carts. Them fellows would ride around in carts, mostly. They'd come, and they'd go into the house, and sound the floors and see if there was a basement. You bet. He may have had a cellar there in his home where he could go and hide. I don't think he ever left town to go and hide, unless maybe out in the alfalfa or up on Polly's Peak. He had so many houses here. Bishop Yorgason was coming from his place, over here, by where Mercy Ivory lives, right down there pretty close to the creek. That's where he had one of his women, and he had just went in there when the cops came. And they asked me if I had seen Bishop Yorgason and I said no, I ain't seen him. I could have told 'em, right then, right where he was, but I didn't dare to. I didn't want to see him get arrested.

Dad used to talk about a large gray horse that Yorgason owned. He said it could jump any fence in the county, and the marshals could never catch him if he got on that horse. He kept it saddled about 100 percent of the time, just in case.

Yorgason spent many hours training his horses to guide without a bridle, to come to his whistle, and to do other tricks. This training, as well as his special gates, proved useful when the marshals surprised him in the dairy. After they had captured him he slipped the bridle off his horse, spurred it ahead through one of his trick gates, and rode off laughing while the marshals watched him go, unable themselves to find the
way to open the gate. Apparently he had ridden two miles before they got it open.

In addition, Yorgason was aided whenever possible by his children. The younger ones stood as observers when their father was home, and the older ones did their best to lead the marshals astray. One son even took his father's pistol, got the drop on three officers, and offered to whip them all if they did not leave. He was later arrested and fined for his efforts.

Yorgason himself went through a trial, one which dragged along for over three years. During that time a group of marshals invaded his home while he was away, abused his wife who was nursing her baby, mistreated his daughter, and left his home a shambles. About three weeks later the baby died, and the family concluded that its death was due to the marshals, causing them to become quite bitter toward the law.

On September 25, 1888, an indictment for unlawful cohabitation was filed against James Yorgason by the U. S. Attorney, and the same day a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was chased for over two years before the marshals apprehended him, and then it was done in a rather humorous way.

When Bishop Yorgason was caught it was here on the street in Fountain Green. The two marshals dressed up as women and approached him dressed as women and he was caught completely unaware because he didn't expect that these women would be federal marshals.
He was taken to Provo before the First Judicial Court, where he filed a bond on November 19, 1890. In order to raise this money quickly he took the deed to his and Christina's home to the tithing office, signed it over to the ward, and took out some of the tithing money in trade for his deed. This money was used for his bond.322 On November 25, he entered a plea of not guilty, and on February 20, 1891, he was tried. The following are minutes of the court.

First District Court Minutes, September term, 1890. Tuesday, the 25th day of November, 1890.

United States Plea
vs.
James Yorgensen for U.C. (Unlawful Cohabitation)

Defendant herein, having been duly arraigned at the bar in open court and the indictment being read to him, pleaded thereto not guilty.

Ordered that court stand adjourned until Friday morning, December 28, 1890, at 10 o'clock a.m.

John W. Blackburn Judge

First District Court Minutes, February Term 1891. Thursday, the 20th day of February, 1891.

United States Trial
vs.
James Yorgensen for U.C.

This cause coming on for trial, then cause the following jury--Francis Webb, R. W. Bennett, Peter Erickson, Peter Nilson, Jos. J. Jensen, Wm. Horner, Wm. J. Thomas, Geo. Porter, John Brown, Jr., Robt. Bridges, A.L. Hamilton, and Grant Lummens, who being legally impannelled and put together and heard the evidence of the witnesses and at the instructions of the Court issued the following verdict: "We the Jury impannelled in the ______ case find the defendant James Yorgensen not guilty as charged in the indictment. W. E. Horner, foreman."323
Interestingly, though he was found not guilty, Yorgason knew that it was not over. He certainly was cohabitating and he knew that the feds knew it and so they would be after him again. But that was not all of his problem, not at all. Economically he was also beginning to struggle.

The drought, which had brought problems to many in years previous, still lay heavy upon the land, and though Yorgason had done his best to use the drought by buying property and livestock at low prices, he had gone heavily into debt to do so. He had made his decision fully aware of what he was doing, taking a calculated risk, and feeling certain that the drought would end before it got to him. He was wrong. The summer of 1890 was as dry as ever, and James found himself in serious trouble. It was so dry that he was only able to keep his animals just alive, and there was no thought of sales for profits. Nor could he raise enough grain and hay to sell to others that fall. In addition to that, on November 15, 1889, late in the evening, Yorgason's roller mills burned to the ground. Everything was destroyed, and it proved to be a great loss to him.

It seemed that he was experiencing one setback after another, and he was beginning to feel a severe financial pinch. To make matters worse, several people in town had cosigned with him on his notes and they were
starting to get apprehensive. This was reflected when, on Sunday, May 4, 1890, in meeting, a call was made on the membership of the ward to sustain the bishopric. Yorgason had eighteen votes or hands raised against him, but he "... carried the day."\textsuperscript{326}

Apparently optimistic about the end of the drought, Yorgason persuaded more friends to cosign with him, borrowing money to make payments on notes he already had outstanding. He was even confident enough to purchase more property (through borrowing), paying $6,700.00 for 160 acres as late as August, 1892.\textsuperscript{327}

As the pressure began to build, Yorgason's anxieties began to be manifest through his behavior. Mary recorded that her father was hiding out more and more from the marshals, spending a great deal of time down in the meadows or out at the herd. On the rare occasions when he was home he was growing increasingly irritable. He refused to let Mary go out on several occasions; he became anxious and upset when the children were out late, and for the first and only time, Mary records that her father shouted at her, telling her to "... dry up!" He then slapped Wilford, following which both Mary and Wilford had a good cry and then went to bed.\textsuperscript{328}

James even began to sell some of his land, disposing of some $15,000.00 worth by 1892, no doubt using most of that money to make payments on remaining
outstanding notes. One such sale was the mill, which was purchased by a company composed of A. J. Aagard and others. They then rebuilt it in 1890. He even started taking out new mortgages on his better properties which were free and clear of liens, such as the dairy pastures and some of his property, such as his sheep herd, that he had let out on shares to other men. This was done in the hope that he could turn his herd into some desperately needed capital. He also sold his horse herd to his son, and then both determined to get the herd out of the country by trailing them into the little used Eastern Utah desert.

It is not known when Yorgason first developed an interest in the Green River desert, but he had obvious reasons for doing so. The country was rough, many places were almost inaccessible, and this feature would play an important part in any hiding from the marshals which he might have to do. It was also attractive because, while it was mostly desert, there were breaks and bottoms along the Green River that were ideal pastures, watered constantly by the river, and always green. These bottoms were lonesome places, few really knew of them, and they would make ideal places to locate and perhaps even hide some of his horses. The remainder, the grade stock, he and his son James had decided should be shipped east to market. James S. would then take the money, pay his father for the horses and keep the
profits. Yorgason would then use the money to pay on some of his loans.

Accordingly, Yorgason moved his best stock to the eastern desert. On Friday, October 17, 1890, he, his horses, his two oldest daughters, his wife Anna, and a few hands, left Fountain Green for the East. The diary account of the journey, recorded by Mary, is instructive for several reasons, but shows especially some interesting family relationships.

Fri Oct 17 1890 Pa, Tom Warner, Dolph Taylor, Tom Mathews, Charlie Johnson, Anna Svederus, Laura and I left home for the East with 225 horses we camped N.W. of Fairview. I rode a horse. (The) horses all went home the first night.

Sat Oct 18--Laura and I walked up Cottonwood Canyon 10 miles in the afternoon. We rode horses and took dinner to T.M. & C.J. & camped in Gooseberry Valley.

Sun Oct 19--L & I rode horses all day & camped by an old saw mill in Huntington Canyon.

Mon Oct 20--A & I rode horses all day. T.M. got his horses leg cut on a wire fence so Pa had to leave her in a field. We camped... of Huntington. Pa had to pay Al Guyman $5. for having his horses on the stubble.

Tues Oct 21--L & I rode horses all day. We camped on Cedar Gulch.

Wed Oct 21--The horses were so scattered we did not get started until 1 P.M. Anna & I had a quarrel and it almost ended in a fight. A hit L with a whip 4 or 5 times. L said A was like K.T. & A said L was, and that she would knock her dam devil head off, & I had to go between L & the whip, & A said she would kill us both. I told her to shut up & not say another word till Pa came, & I would tell him all I had heard, & she must not touch L again, but she was just crazy. I was writing a letter to Ma & she kept on jawing
so I told her I had not done nor said a thing for her to get mad at me but I did not want to see her tootch L again, but she said when she got home she was going to take Nora and L up, but I did not listen and kept on writing to Ma & the girls in the Temple. We camped in Cottonwood Wash.

Thur Oct 23--I drove a team in the forenoon but rode a horse after. We camped on the banks of Green River. The men tried to drive the horses over but could not so they corelled them. In the morning the gates were open & the horses gone.

Fri Oct 24--We crossed the river about noon. L got in the wagon & covered up her head. D.T. and C.J. had to go back for some horses that were gone. We drove ten miles south of Little Grand Station & camped 2:30 A.M.

Sat Oct 25--in the morning when I put my head out of the wagon there stood an Indian Man. I was very frightened but jumped out of the wagon and said Helloo. There was 17 others and Pa came back to camp. I drove team all day. We camped at the Court House rock. Dolph & Charlie had not come.

Sun Oct 26--D & C came as we were going to have breakfast. We stayed here all day. All the folks went rambling around but I stayed at the wagon and read a novel Guy Earlcourt's Wife.

Mon Oct 27--We started for home. We crossed the river at 12 o'clock at night we camped at Green River station.

Tues Oct 28--We went about . . . miles and camped this side of Cottonwood Wash. Tom M. fell down and broke his bottle.

Wed Oct 29--We crossed the Buckhorn Flat (was Buckboard Flat) passed the holes in the rock and camped at Thomas Kirbys. We had supper there and . . .

Thur Oct 30--We had breakfast at Jim Rowberrys & went about . . . miles and camped in the canyon. Pa traded Mouse for a horse of James Bradley. I rode a horse.

Fri Oct 31--Tom M. and Charlie J & I got on our horses & started for home. We rode about 53 miles and reached home about sundown. There was a party & James & Nora wanted me to go. I went and we danced until 2 A.M.
Sat Nov 1—I helped with the cleaning. Dolph, Pa, Laura, and Anna came home about 3 P.M.

Courthouse Rock, where Yorgason left his horses, was a beautiful little oasis in the midst of a great deal of dry desert. It was fed by the Courthouse Springs, and there was a stage station there where horses were kept for the stage run. But James did not plan on leaving his horses at Courthouse Rock. Instead, very shortly, he moved them to a bottom on the Green, which was lovely and remote. It was level and grassy, with some large cottonwood trees growing along the river, was about three miles in length, going around the curve, and was from one-half to one mile wide, from the river to the rimrock. The place was a natural corral, and with just a little fencing his horses would be secure.

The men Yorgason hired to care for the horses at the ranch included Charlie (Chuck) Johnson, Andrew Allred and his brothers, Tom Mathis, James S. Yorgason, and others. As soon as everything was settled, Yorgason returned to Fountain Green, where his son James S. was getting 50 grade horses ready for shipping. Yorgason consigned the stock to T. H. Spaulding Co., professional livestock traders, but lost money when the company turned out to be "... a perfect band of anything but straight dealers." (See Appendix A.)

The drought in Utah continued during 1891, increasing the financial pressures Yorgason was
experiencing. The creamery was producing well, even earning him a gold medal at the Territorial Fair when he displayed his butter. Yet the mortgage on the creamery was held by Provo First National Bank, whose officers were threatening foreclosure, as were several other lienholders.

Sometime in the latter part of 1891 Yorgason determined to attempt to preserve at least part of his property by doing what the Church had done a few years before. One by one he approached his closest friends and asked them to hold his property for him, in their names, until the drought and federal pressures were over and he could return to a more normal life.

Some of the acreages and amounts he worked out were 3 acres for $36.00, 10 acres for $75.00, a one acre town lot for $50.00, 3 acres for $50.00, and 3 acres for $75.00. These were the same properties for which he had paid up to $3,500.00 not more than a year or two before. There were a number of complicated details to the agreement, but Yorgason was apparently endeavoring to make his idea as fair as possible for all concerned. Obviously not all thought that such was the case, however, for in October, 1891, Yorgason was voted out of office "protem . . . for good and sufficient cause."

Deeply hurt and discouraged, James Yorgason continued to fight. President Wilford Woodruff had
issued a manifesto to the Church membership declaring that no plural marriages would be sanctioned after November 1, 1890. Apparently what he meant was that no one else would be sealed, but those already sealed would continue to live together in a plural marriage situation.  

The government felt otherwise, and declared that only those who left all cohabitation relationships, including wives and children, would be pardoned. Anyone who refused to do so would be vigorously prosecuted.

Though Yorgason apparently did not agree with the government position, evidence indicates that at least one of his wives, Maria, took this opportunity to "get out." Evidently Maria was unhappy with her lot in Fountain Green, and when Yorgason declared to her that no matter what the law said he still planned on going contrary to it, she quit. She wanted no part of an arrest as a plural wife, nor did she want anything to do with his rather risky financial involvements. Maria took her two boys, Charles and Robert, and moved to Benjamin to live with her brother.

The year 1892 was as dry as ever, and by early summer Yorgason's economic situation looked grim. To complicate matters, he had to move his wife, Catherine, out of Fountain Green. She was expecting a child and the marshals were watching each of his wives for just such evidence, hoping thus to be able to prove that he
was still living in cohabitation. To prevent this from happening James moved Catherine to Spanish Fork, where she gave birth to a baby girl, Sylva Merady May, on June 25, 1892. At about this same time Francis informed Yorgason that she was expecting in December, and then, in what must have seemed a final blow, Anna told him sometime in July that she, too, was pregnant. In addition, Yorgason was past due on at least eleven different mortgages, and he could get no more cash anywhere. It was only a matter of time before the foreclosures began.

Finally the stick was placed which "... broke his back." Maria returned to Fountain Green and informed Yorgason that legally two of the homes which the marshals were threatening to take from him were hers, as the deeds plainly showed. Would he please, therefore, pay her for each of the homes and have the deeds transferred to his own name. She could wait no longer for she needed the money immediately. She was moving to West Jordan to set herself up as a cook in the smelters, and she would need the money. James Yorgason, by this time obviously resigned to the attitude that nothing would ever turn out all right, agreed to buy them. The papers were signed, he scraped together $1,200.00, and the deal was finalized. Maria received $600.00 each for the properties, and Yorgason capitulated.
He decided that it would be better for all concerned if he dropped out of sight for awhile, at least until Anna had her baby. It was obvious that by following such a course he stood to lose a great deal, for he would forfeit all the property that was mortgaged. However, he could see no reasonable alternative. It would help his families by relieving pressure on them, for all felt responsible for his safety; it would help Francis, who could show herself in public and have her baby without fear of arrest as a witness against him; Catherine could come home if she chose to; Anna could, as the youngest and strongest, go with him into hiding and have her baby without fear of arrest. And finally his creditors could all become satisfied if he could get someone who could move without fear of the law to dispose of his properties. The money from these sales would more than pay his debts, he was certain, and then he could return home and feel at ease again. All he needed was the right man, with James’ power of attorney, to take care of the legal technicalities of selling. To James Jorgason it was the obvious answer, for it would clear him and still leave a little property now in the hands of his friends that he could start over with.

In the fall of 1892 James Yorgason and Anna Svederus went into hiding somewhere on the bottoms of the Green River, where they lived in a rude hut built under a rock overhang. No details of this experience in
pioneering have been left, except that the winter was spent there. On February 14, 1893, in the wilds of the eastern Utah desert, Anna gave birth to a little son whom she and James named Enoch. This was Yorgason’s 21st child, though James and Anna were both likely unaware that it was so, for Francis had herself given birth to a boy, Royal Leon, on December 14, 1892. Royal Leon had been number 20.354

Meanwhile Yorgason chose the man to whom he would appeal for help. It was Rasmus Clawson, U.S. Deputy Marshal. In an open letter to the Ephraim Enterprise (See Appendix A.), Yorgason gave a detailed history of his financial dealings, and then suggested that since he, himself, was not allowed to dispose of his properties and repay his creditors, that the Marshal could do it for him, thus honorably discharging Yorgason’s obligations.355

Marshal Clawson either could not or would not take the action that Yorgason requested of him, for published in the same issue of the Enterprise was the following notice.

MARSHAL’S SALE

Pursuant to an order of sale to me directed by the First Judicial Court of the Territory of Utah, I shall expose at public sale, at the front door of the County Courthouse, in the city of Manti, county of SanPete and Territory of Utah; on the 25th day of February, 1893, at 12 o’clock, all the right, title, claim and interest of James Yorgason and Christina Yorgason, of, in, and to the following
described real estate . . .
To be sold as the property of James Yorgason and
wife Christina at the suit of J.A. Goodhue and A.
VanMeter.
Terms of sale, cash.
Irving A. Benton, U.S. Marshal
by R. Clawson, deputy.

This notice was one of many which were to appear
in the following months as Yorgason's name and domain
were carefully picked apart and disposed of.

He had the Cedar Hill and lots of other stuff. Of
course, they accused him of everything that they
could think of, the people, so they could cut him
off the Church, I guess, and get his stuff. He
did have quite a lot of property.

But you know, in a little valley like that, there's
only so much choice stuff. Well, as other people
came along, and they became prominent, and they
wanted to reach out too, and they wanted part of
this. So when Yorgason was a little bit too
heavily involved maybe . . . they saw their chance,
and prevailed upon the people that loaned him money
to call for it. Well, Yorgason had all his money
tied up in livestock and property, and it was at
that time that they closed in on Yorgason. Several
of them did it to him, and they caught him at a time
when he was helpless, and all he had was the property
he had purchased with the money he had borrowed.
He just got in over his head, and when the circum-
stances for foreclosing was right, and the bankers
wanted a harvest, they took it.

He wasn't dishonest, and he didn't get kicked out
of the Bishopric. They closed in on him, and he
couldn't pay his bills, and so when they picked his
property up, the little fellow, like Andrew Berentson,
and there was a lot of them that had signed with him
on the notes, the bankers and the money lenders held
these fellows to that, and Yorgason was helpless,
and his property was raised down, because they had
him in command, and he couldn't do anything about
it. But he was gone, with one of his wives. He
didn't abscond with any money, and he wasn't a
crook.
Between September 3, 1892, and July 14, 1893, at least eleven different lawsuits were filed against Yorgason, ranging in amount all the way from $600.00 to $4,200.00. One notable suit was filed by Peter C. Christensen of Moroni. Yorgason owed him $624.55 for goods, wares and merchandise purchased in his store. Mr. Christensen went to court, obtained a judgment, and in June 1893 the marshal went to the ranch on the Green River, rounded up 142 head of blooded Belgians, branded \( y \) on the left thigh, and sold them at auction on May 20 in Blake City (Greenriver) to none other than Mr. Christensen, who paid a whopping $750 for them. The court then issued him a check for $600 after expenses to pay off his debt, and Mr. Christensen ended up with approximately $10,000 worth of horses for $150.  

Another case involved the First National Bank of Provo which ended up with his whole creamery except for the building for a debt of $2,200. They paid $800 for it at auction, and the entire amount was returned to them to apply to the debt.  

Some had to scratch a little harder, such as the Co-operative Wagon and Machine Company, to whom James owed $552.99. To get their money they had attached $138 they found in a savings account, 50 tons of hay, 1 Jersey bull 4 years old, 24 head of hogs, 20 chickens, 10 geese, 6 ducks, 128 cheese, 1 Imperial cookstove, and $108 in stock in the Moroni and Mt. Pleasant Ditch Co.
The creamery closed on December 1, 1892, ending the family's last source of income. A daughter Elinor described their situation thus:

All were as well as could be expected when I got there, considering everybody is trying to take everything away from us. But we all trust in the Lord as he is our guide and helper.

1893
Sunday, Jan. 1
I wish a "Happy New Year" to all. Ours does not seem to be a very pleasant beginning, but I hope and trust in the Lord it will be a very pleasant ending. "All is well that ends well," so the saying is, & I sincerely hope that it will be the way with us. For although everything looks very dark now, I will pray that everything will soon look brighter. Ma is sick in bed, but I have faith that she will soon be better. We have all been in bed sick but thankful we are now improving in health.

Jan. 15 Sunday. I stayed home with Ma she is so lonesome when alone.

In terms of how they were doing financially, two entries serve to explain.

Jan. 21 Saturday. Quince brought us a load of wood. It was very good of him. "A friend in need is a friend indeed."

And the marshals continued to come.

Jan. 24 Tuesday. Mr. Clawsen was here. It just makes us feel sick to see him coming. Trouble, trouble, trouble, will it ever cease.

Earnest adds:

From this time on, we were left to get in and dig, with Pa gone and Mother with us small children and
nothing to go on, which was during the depression of 1892--Cleveland's administration, the worst I ever knew.365

And finally, Elinor's last entry:

Mar. 25, Saturday. The first thing I saw in the morning was the "Daily Tribune." The news of Pa . . . I will trust in the Lord come what will & pray that our troubles will not be any heavier than what we are able to carry them.366

The article pointed out that marshals Clawson and Rex arrested Anna and her baby under a shelving rock in the wilds of Grand County, and that after a heated chase of thirty miles Yorgason was also arrested. It also reported that since no one was willing to post bond, Yorgason, his wife and baby were expected to spend some time in prison.367 Shortly after that release the same event was reported in the Ephraim Enterprise, adding a few interesting details and rumors.368 (These two articles appear in Appendix B.)

Yorgason was now in jail again, along with his wife and baby son, and this time it looked like he would stay. Suits against him continued to be filed, judgments rendered, and properties confiscated, all without the appearance of either James or Christina.369

For over two months Yorgason and his wife and son remained in prison, and then finally Yorgason was released on bond--then promptly disappeared. The Deseret Evening News, on June 15, 1893, reported the following:
Some time ago James Yorgason, a resident of Sanpete County, was arrested on a charge of unlawful cohabitation. After having a hearing he was held over to the Grand Jury, his plural wife being also held as a witness. Subsequently Yorgason furnished the required bond and was released from the penitentiary, but it is believed that he has skipped to other parts. The wife did not obtain her liberty until this morning. The Provo authorities, taking compassion upon her, directed that she enter into her own recognizance, and upon going before Commissioner Greenman for that purpose today she was set free.

Yorgason's whereabouts for the next several months remain a mystery, but wherever he was he was obviously powerless to prevent his properties from disappearing or his families from struggling. His children assert that friends retained Yorgason's properties, refusing to return them as they had agreed to do. Others also made similar statements, including the following by Ralph Anderson and Helen Sanderson.

James Yorgason went off and hid from the Feds, and while he was gone he lost all his property to men who took advantage of his absence to take his property. And those men was his friends, too.372

At the time he left Fountain Green if his property had been liquidated as it should have been, his debts would have been paid and his wives wouldn't have had such a hard time of it. I understand his property was left in the hands of friends for safekeeping, and it just slipped away.373

When Yorgason returned and found what had happened, he determined to leave the area and make a fresh start somewhere else. Approaching each of his
wives, he asked them to leave with him. Each refused, deferring to the one with more seniority. Finally Christina, Yorgason's first wife, turned him down, refusing to leave her home after living so long there. 374

Probably shocked that none of his family would accompany him, Yorgason at last left alone. He gave away his calves to some poor friends, 375 packed a few belongings into an old trunk which Ben Williams and Mr. Parramine, two of those he still considered friends, took to Levan for him, 376 and then he bid goodbye to the ones he dared. Merl Ivory remembers his departure in this way.

When he left for California I remember that he rode that horse down to my Dad's. My Dad used to take care of his stud horses, and he had shipped in lots of fine horses. Well, he come and talked to my Dad, and said where he was going to go, to Los Angeles. That's when he left, and that's the last I seen him for years. I was about seven or eight then, but I don't know what year that was. Hell, I can't remember that. 377

In the years that followed, Yorgason's families constantly struggled to survive economically, and their memories of the time reflect a bitterness that is not surprising. What is surprising is that the bitterness, to a certain extent, was directed toward the Church.

The Church seemed to hold the mortgage . . . (to Christina's home), and they sent the Bishop of the ward with other parties to take over, saying the house was too large for her and that they would find her a smaller home. If it hadn't been for Ma's folks in Omaha, Nebraska, Ma would have been cast out without a home. 378
Yorgason’s sons, trying to help keep ahead, went out into the hills above Big Holler and elsewhere to gather up what loose stock James had left. After several weeks of this work they had rounded up a fair herd of mixed stock. Their plan was to drive it into Fountain Green, sell it, and apply the proceeds to their Father’s debts. However, one of the first men they met as they came into town was Bishop Christiansen, the man who had taken over after Yorgason was released. When he learned what they had, he informed them that he was appropriating the whole herd to apply to the tithing debt their father owed. Being too young then to even think of arguing with a bishop, the boys let him take the animals. This action, as well as the incident with the house, caused a bitterness among some of the children that was to last the remainder of their lives. 379

The story of the families after this is an unhappy one of struggle for survival, both mentally and physically. One of the children has stated:

Many a time I remember Ma walking the floor and wringing her hands, crying as if her heart would break. That is I would find her in this condition when I came home late at night. These were on rare occasions, as she always kept a stiff upper lip and presented to her family and the public a calm, serene expression.

Depression was surely at its worst with us as a family as the folks had been accustomed to plenty prior to this and now everything in a financial way was gone. It seemed as though Ma had all she could do to keep us fed and clothed with no means of support other than what the girls could make. 380
Nora went to Salt Lake when about 16 years of age to work as a housemaid. She obtained a job . . . and stayed there as a general servant for about 6 months. This was something unusual for her as she was never keen about housework or cooking, so it was with much joy that she received a job in the Co-op store in Fountain Green for $10.00 a month as clerk.\textsuperscript{381}

Laura also got a job as a housemaid, working for a family of spiritualists in Provo. It was while working for them that she contracted typhoid fever and passed away suddenly on November 25, 1895.\textsuperscript{382} A son relates the following:

We kids herded the town cows for a number of years. I just don't remember how many years Joseph and Wilford did this until I was old enough to take it over. Joseph, being the oldest, broke away from it first and went to herd sheep for different ones, but Wilford and I stayed with this job for a number of years, taking the cows out into the hills in different directions, so as to have fresh feed . . . There were other boys that went with us at times. Hyrum, our half brother, was one who stayed with us the longest. We would start gathering the cows quite early in the morning and this was quite a job to get them gathered from all parts of town. Our pay by the head was 1 cents a day and that pay was made in anything from due bills to grain, potatoes and credit--some that still stands.\textsuperscript{383}

Once Jorgason himself was gone, the community seemed to divide itself into two camps as far as their feelings for him were concerned. Interestingly, in many those feelings still prevailed when they were interviewed years later.\textsuperscript{384}
Chapter 5

LOS ANGELES, THE SQUAB RANCH, AND DEATH

Upon leaving Fountain Green, Yorgason determined to go to Los Angeles and attempt to build a new life there. One wonders if he considered his departure temporary or permanent, but there are no records extant giving this data, nothing except the fact that he stayed away for over twenty years, and only returned to die.

He rode his horse the entire journey, traveling slowly and working here and there as he went. According to tradition, Yorgason arrived in Los Angeles with eighteen dollars in his pocket. With this amount he put a down payment on a small tract of land along the Los Angeles River on which a chicken coop had been built.

The spot he picked was described by a later visitor as being quite beautiful. It was nearly on the level, just a little way up river from the Pacific, and nestled against the abruptly rising Elysian Hills. Eucalyptus trees and flowers of many varieties covered the hills, while directly along their base the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Santa Fe Railroad tracks had been laid. The river, which had been dammed about eight years previously, coursed its way through the middle of
his property, which consisted of between three and five acres, while from any place on the ranch the gently rolling Pacific Ocean was clearly visible, and the sound of the breakers slamming into the shore could be heard continually, both day and night. Such was the sight Yorgason selected to attempt the regrouping of his fortune, so recently lost.

Because he felt he was still in hiding, one of the first things Yorgason did was to change his name. In this he chose the name of his first wife. To all the residents of Los Angeles, he was James Y. Johnson, rancher.

Now he needed livestock, but all he had were chickens. So he acquired a few rabbits and began to fatten them, at the same time collecting the eggs of the chickens. These he sold for what he could.

An interesting thing occurred, though, as he scattered the grain for his chickens to eat, he noticed that more and more pigeons were flocking in to eat the grain. And here, perhaps, genius flashed through. Most men would probably have rigged up some way to get rid of the pigeons, but not James Y. Johnson. Instead, he thought of a way to capitalize on them. Yorgason was familiar with pigeons, and he was also familiar with the new delicacy being offered by the more exclusive restaurants in Los Angeles. That delicacy was called squab, and it was nothing more nor less than half-grown...
pigeons served steaming hot under glass. And here perhaps was his opportunity. Squabs had to be purchased somewhere, and so why not from him? He knew that pigeons flew in flocks, and if a flock was large enough, any stray birds in the area would automatically join that flock. That was obviously what was happening on his farm, and so Yorgason quickly realized that he merely needed to add roosting and nesting places for the birds, scatter out more grain, and the ranch would grow. He did, and it did.

As the business grew, Yorgason found that he needed help, for not only did the birds have to be fed, a thrice daily job, but the young pigeons needed to be killed and plucked of all their feathers before they were packed in crates for delivery. And he was soon delivering thousands of birds a day, no mean task for one man. So Johnny, his oldest son by Francis, agreed to come to California to help him.

Like most good businessmen, Yorgason turned all his profits back into the business. He built more sheds for nesting and mating, and eventually he had to build a large barn where these birds could find shelter during rainstorms.

It was like a barn, oh, about like this barn right over here, a big barn. And it had alleyways through it, and it had roosts all the way up, and then you'd go around to another tier, and there'd be another row of roosts.
Not all the birds were consumed in Los Angeles. Word spread, and soon orders were coming in from all over the state, as well as some areas in the East. And again his luck held, for his ranch had been built next to the tracks of two railroad lines, who built sidings right there and left boxcars regularly for him to fill with the young squab.\(^{396}\)

The fame of the ranch spread, and it quickly achieved the status of the World's Largest Pigeon Ranch. It even became a tourist attraction, and many postcards were printed with pictures of the ranch or of the pigeons, in color, on their fronts.\(^{397}\)

One tourist, who visited the ranch on March 18, 1906, related that at that time it contained about 60,000 birds which were fed 2-1/2 tons of wheat daily. The income from the ranch was reported to be near $2,500 per month.\(^{398}\)

Though Yorgason had changed his name, word soon got back to Fountain Green of where he was and how he was doing, and occasionally he received visitors from there. One young man who visited the ranch said this:

I had no particular business with Yorgason other than when I went to see him down in Los Angeles. I stayed with him there... on his pigeon ranch. Yorgason would take me out with him, he had a one horse buggy, and he'd take me with him one time; there was a fellow lived right here on this corner then, name of Joe Leslie, he was with me down there. Anyway, he'd take me with him one day, and then the next day he'd take Joe. He'd only take us one at a time, he wouldn't take us both. And then he'd stop...
down in Los Angeles and he went into a place where there was a lady there that gave us some lemonade, and then he'd take us back home, and the next day he'd take this other fellow with him. And that was in about 1907 or 1908, and I was about 19, for I am 87 right now. But he had this ranch there, and when he went he was a good friend of my dad, they were quite good friends, and he said if you ever come down to California hunt me out. So I said to Joe, let's you and I go down and see him, and the other fellows with us didn't go. And so we went out to the ranch. That trip was one of the big things of my life to see it. His ranch was right there by the ocean. He didn't give them squabs to all the cafes, just some of them.

Yorgason also went into the restaurant business himself, but the venture seems to have been temporary, at best. But the ranch continued to grow and to impress those who visited it. "Those pigeons were so many when they'd fly you couldn't see the sun. You just can't imagine, no, you can't, all them pigeons." And a missionary for the L.D.S. Church who visited the ranch at about this time relates:

I was transferred to Los Angeles to labor for awhile. And during the time I was there I visited the pigeon ranch, and talked with some of the men that labored there, watched 'em come in with a four-horse load of wheat one day, in a wagon, and just dump a sack in a place, drive through the yard and dump the wheat out of the sack. And the whole ground was covered with pigeons, pigeons, pigeons, all you could see was pigeon's tails in the air! To further capitalize on the interest of tourists, Yorgason built a large observation building so the many visitors could sit in safety and watch the pigeons.
We were provided with a seat, covered with a roof and furnished with netting so that the pigeons couldn't get in, and the visitors could sit and watch 'em eat the wheat and fly around and swarm like bees. And in the distance was farmlands . . . and there was so many pigeons, that . . . they had a man stationed in these places with an old shotgun, so if the pigeons happened to light in another man's crop or undertake to light, he'd fire a shot and they'd fly on back home.403

Despite the fact that Yorgason had changed his name and location of residence, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints apparently still played an important role in his life. The ranch was an unofficial headquarters for missionaries, who got room and board free while they stayed there.404 Yorgason also went into the ostrich business and many who visited recalled being served a fried ostrich egg for breakfast.405 Yorgason helped the missionaries in other ways also, providing contracts for them and defending them at street meetings when the heckling became excessive.406 Also, during a funeral for one of Yorgason's nephews who died of chicken pox while visiting the ranch, Yorgason reaffirmed his commitment and testimony to the church.407

It is obvious that Yorgason missed his family, for there are records of repeated attempts to get one or all of them to join him.408 There is even a fascinating account of Yorgason attempting to purchase Catalina Island so that his families could all move there and live together.409
His son, Ernest, who visited Yorgason in about 1910, made the following observation.

After deliveries Pa would take me out on the town. It seemed I got to thinking I knew Los Angeles from one end to the other. We went to 2 or 3 shows a week. I got so I hated them, but Pa seemed to enjoy it. I once asked him, if he had this kind of money why he didn't send it home to Ma, and he said that he had to spend it to drown his sorrow and keep from going crazy.®

Yorgason's first wife, Christina, died on September 15, 1912. It is uncertain just when James learned of her death, but he did not attend the funeral. A year later, in his loneliness and old age, Yorgason married again, this time a woman in Los Angeles whose name was Gertrude K. Wing. This marriage took place on May 18, 1913, when Yorgason was 66 years of age.® For a year or more they continued to make their home on the ranch, and business continued to grow. In fact, later that year, or else early in 1914, Yorgason was offered $100,000 for the ranch if he would sell.® No one knows why he turned the offer down, but perhaps he thought the ranch was worth more than the offer. Whatever the reason, he told the prospective buyers no.

Shortly thereafter, on February 21, 1914, disaster struck.® Southern California experienced a major storm. The Los Angeles Sunday Times for that date recorded that Los Angeles had received 19.34 inches of rain in less than two days.
The Los Angeles River, swollen far beyond flood stage, destroyed almost everything in its path. The pigeon ranch of James Y. Johnson was one of those minor obstacles which the water easily removed. The whole ranch, including half-loaded railroad cars, was swept away. Two graphic accounts are preserved in the local newspapers.

THE LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

FAMOUS 'PIGEON FARM' WIPED OUT
Roaring Torrent Engulfs $50,000 Show Place, Familiar Sight To Travelers

The "Pigeon Farm", one of the unique show places of California, was wiped out by the flood yesterday with a loss estimated at $50,000 by the owner J. Y. Johnson, who said he would make no attempt to re-establish it.

The farm was located on the east bank of the Los Angeles River, opposite Elysian Park, at the foot of Avenue Twenty, and its sheds and coops sheltered over 100,000 birds. Wheeling in sun-darkening flights above the feeding grounds, the great flocks of birds for many years provided a startling introduction to travelers entering Los Angeles over the Southern Pacific, whose San Francisco tracks passed immediately by the farm. It was established about twenty years ago by Johnson with a few dozen birds and a single shed.

The swollen flood early yesterday began to tear away the low cliff on which the farm was located, the big nest-sheds toppled one by one into the stream, and by noon only a few small buildings next to the railroad tracks remained.

Thousands of birds had been carried down to death in the sheds, being unable to fly after their wings had become wet, and the remaining thousands circled uneasily above the crumbling cliffs or fought for places on the few roofs remaining, which were literally carpeted with feathered backs.

Hundreds of pigeons were killed and carried off by small boys and their elders in the great crowds which lined the river bank, attracted by the flood.

When the menace to its tracks became serious the Southern Pacific began to dump scrap-iron in carloads, box-car trucks and other material to divert the
current above the farm, which by that time was almost completely gone, however.414

The Los Angeles Sunday Times reported:

HALF-MILLION PIGEONS DROWNED OR HOMELESS

The world's greatest pigeon farm was destroyed by the Los Angeles River yesterday (February 21, 1914). Thousands of mother birds, circling wildly in the air until night, were an evidence of the distressful situation there.

Only remnants of the score of long sheds which housed the pigeons, estimated at 500,000 in number, are left. Hundreds of thousands of pigeons, both squabs and mature birds, were swept downstream when the buildings collapsed.

Hundreds of crates of squabs, ready for the market floated away. Many of the mature birds perished with their young. Persons along the bank used ropes and hooks to snare the crates of young birds. Hundreds of the older pigeons which floated ashore were unable to fly and they and their young became easy prey for the men and boys looking for cheap bird meat.

All day the birds hovered above the site of the noted ranch. When night came they roosted on the bridges and houses in the vicinity and in the trees of Elysian Park.

The destruction of the pigeon farm was one of the pathetic incidents of the flood. For years it has been one of the popular showplaces of the city and has been visited by many thousands of tourists. The distress of the homeless birds was noted yesterday by thousands of persons who visited the flood scenes along the arroyo.415

Following the flood Yorgason sold the land upon which his ranch had been built to the City of Los Angeles, and the city later turned it into an extension of Elysian Park.416 Then he took the money, went to Lancaster, California, and purchased a small ranch, using his money as a downpayment.417 At 67 years of age, Yorgason was ready to start again. From the scanty information available, the farm that Yorgason purchased near Lancaster
was pretty much 160 acres of alkali flats with orange trees on it. In the two years he worked it he never did have a good crop.\textsuperscript{418}

In 1916 Gertrude became ill and shortly after that Yorgason realized that he had diabetes. As there was no medicine known that could help him, his feet soon broke out in open sores, and his blood filled with poison. In April Gertrude realized that things were serious, and so she commenced writing to various members of the family, pleading with them in her husband's name to come and see their father before he died.\textsuperscript{419} On April 7, 1917, Yorgason was admitted to the County Hospital in Los Angeles,\textsuperscript{420} and shortly after that Yorgason's son, James S., traveled by rail to Los Angeles to bring him home.\textsuperscript{421}

Orson, when speaking to his children of his brother James bringing their father home, related the following incident:

When Pa was ill nigh on to death, he told the people taking care of him that his son James would be there that day to take him home. When James and his own son Robert came, he said, "I knew you'd be here today." As the story goes, he had longed to return to Fountain Green, for he wanted to be there when he died.\textsuperscript{422}

Yorgason was delivered to Fountain Green on April 26, 1917 to the home of his daughter, Elinor, now married and with a family of her own. But the timing of his arrival seems to have been inconvenient, for it was planting time and they could not spare anyone to watch
him. They were also a little bitter toward him, as the following from his son Wilford indicates:

I am trying to farm a little this summer and I haven't as yet got my crop in as we are all muddled up here at the wrong time. Suit yourself about coming to see him. It is to me like a "Death-Bed repentance" but he is still our "father" and I feel the best we can do is to honor that principal, if nothing else, as he has had many calls and it is certainly pitiful to see him in this plight.423

Finally it remained for Mercy Ivory, a friend and neighbor, who at one time stated to her own son that had the opportunity ever presented itself, she would gladly have become one of the many wives of James Yorgason, to care for him.424 She did this daily, and reported her experience in a brief letter to James S., who had returned to Wyoming.

Dear Friend James: . . .
He never seemed the same after you left, he tried to keep up a few days built up with the hope that you would get back to take him home with you . . . I did the very best I could for him. He was clean and comfortable. On Monday . . . I went to the store and found a soft white shirt. Made it comfortable by cutting a piece in the back. I washed him thoroughly all over his body and rubbed him with alcohol. He seemed so pleased. I know I was a comfort to him for he got so he would begin asking for me by 7 AM. The folks were kind to him and did all they could for him.425

And then at last, on May 16, 1917, just two days before his seventieth birthday, James Yorgason passed away.426

Following attempts to notify the family members, the funeral was held on May 22, 1917. Thorough notes were
not kept that day, but Mercie Ivory, concerned for those who were not there, did take brief minutes of the proceedings, which she then sent out to the various children and wives of James Yorgason. These notes may be found in Appendix C. It is interesting to note that not many family members attended the funeral. Even four of his wives, still living in the area, refused to attend.\textsuperscript{427} It is apparent that there were still strong feelings in Sanpete County regarding James Yorgason.
Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

At least partly because the sanctioned practice of plural marriage by the Mormons was so controversial, as well as so intriguing, there has been a great deal written about it. Many historians agree, however, that with the possible exception of a master's thesis prepared by Josiah Hickman in 1907, everything written prior to the late 1930's "... can be dismissed as polemical attacks or defenses."

Since that time there has appeared a great deal of scholarly research and writing on all aspects of the subject, (with one possible exception, which will be brought up later), and an excellent annotated review of that literature has been prepared by Mormon historian Davis Bitton. While this writer will make no attempt to duplicate that bibliography, he has nevertheless gone through most of the material listed in an attempt to compare the conclusions of those authors with James Yorgason's own experience with polygamy. In this final chapter those comparisons are made, and some conclusions drawn from them.

1. Vicky Burgess-Olson found a definite correlation between Church or ecclesiastical position and the
practice of polygamy. If one held a significant Church position, then one most generally practiced polygamy.\textsuperscript{431} Yorgason's position as bishop qualified him for placement in this category. Olson also found, in connection with this, that polygamists spent more time away from home on missions than did monogamists.\textsuperscript{432} Yorgason himself was away from home on missions for nearly five years, which Olson determined was average for 35 per cent of her sample.

2. Kimball Young, in his early study of polygamists, ranked his heads of families according to occupation, and found that four-fifths of his sample were involved in proprietary pursuits, including farm or ranch owner-operators, manufacturers, merchandisers, and so on.\textsuperscript{433} Olson places the percentage even higher, at 96 percent proprietary occupations.\textsuperscript{434} Yorgason, from the evidence presented in the text, was obviously of this category.

3. Kimball Young found that the Order of Enoch did not work well among the Mormons for two reasons. First, it was tried in a society where the spirit of capitalism and private enterprise was deeply imbued. Second, with the Church placing such powerful emphasis upon family ties, most cooperative efforts were directed inward, not outward. Family efforts flourished, others did not.\textsuperscript{435} In Yorgason's case, while he was a member of the United Order of Moroni, he continued to grow financially from his own private enterprises. Later, when
he had his mill and dairy, his wives and children were his employees. Thus his families benefited, but as far as most friends and neighbors were concerned, his family cooperatives were simply capitalistic enterprises.

4. Both Kimball Young and Vicky Burgess-Olson determined that religion was the primary reason why most Mormon men entered the practice of plural marriage. 436 As far as this writer has been able to determine, Yorgason entered the practice for that reason also. As previously pointed out, family tradition recalls when Daniel H. Wells, counselor to Brigham Young, encouraged Yorgason and his first wife Christina to go into polygamy. Olson found that this was a fairly common experience for families who appeared to be up-and-coming in the Church. 437 In addition, Lucy Flake recorded in her journal, and Marinda Bateman wrote in a letter to her husband, that each had been counseled, one by Eliza R. Snow and the other by William Clayton, to enter the principle as quickly as possible. 438 Tradition also has it that when Yorgason was reluctant, his wife strongly encouraged him to become a polygamist. Olson has determined that such womanly encouragement was also common. 439 In addition, Eugene E. Campbell and Bruce Campbell record the pressure placed upon the Mormons to enter polygamy by Wilford Woodruff, Orson Pratt and others. 440 There is also the account told within Yorgason's family that Daniel H. Wells, when he approached Yorgason about taking a
plural wife, implied that the Brethren in Salt Lake City might be considering him as General Authority material, and that his entry into plural marriage would enhance his cause. Though there is no way to verify this story, a belief in it certainly seemed to influence Yorgason's subsequent actions. Interestingly, D. Michael Quinn points out that between the years of 1852 and 1890, if a man was not a polygamist when made a General Authority, it was almost inevitable that he would soon succumb to the pressure to become one.

5. Vicky Burgess-Olson concluded that the issue of romantic love was rarely involved in plural marriages. Yorgason took six plural wives, and as far as can be determined, romantic love had little or no part in the choosing of any of them.

6. Kimball Young states that while some courting was done prior to the 1880's, after that the legal situation made such courting prior to marriage very impractical. The men, therefore, simply asked the women if they would like to enter the principle, "... and if we wanted them, we agreed." Yorgason's experience supports this conclusion. He courted his first two plural wives thoroughly, did just a little with his third, and then simply approached the remaining three and asked them. These three were all sealed to Yorgason during the 1880s.
7. Both Kimball Young and Vicky Burgess-Olson found that in families where one of the wives was clearly recognized as dominant, there existed excellent examples of cooperation. In Yorgason's family Christina, his first wife, was clearly dominant. She ran the families while her husband was on missions or in hiding, and she organized cooperative efforts among the other wives when he was home. As a further example of her power, when Yorgason was ready to flee to California he asked each of his wives to accompany him. However, each of them refused, deferring instead to the one next up in seniority. When even Christina refused to go, Yorgason went alone, probably surprised that none of the other wives was willing to break with his first wife simply to please him.

8. Both Vicky Burgess-Olson and James Edward Hulett found that though there was no set pattern for housing arrangements, Mormon men tried to provide each of their wives with her own home. They also found that wives tended to live in communities where other wives of their husband lived. Yorgason's experience supports both of these conclusions. While at one time or another every one of his wives (with the exception of Hannah Nielson, the "old maid") lived in the big house with Christina, Yorgason eventually provided separate living arrangements for all of them. Also, when Yorgason moved to Fountain Green to assume his duties as bishop, all of his wives
moved their families to the new community, even though it was inconvenient to do so.

9. Vicky Burgess-Olson found that in the majority of cases, the first wife gave her consent before the husband contracted other marriages. As near as can be determined, Yorgason's first wife encouraged him into his first plural marriage and gave her consent prior to each of his subsequent ones.

10. As previously pointed out, Yorgason met at least one of his plural wives, and likely three of them, while he was serving missions in Sweden. But he married none of them until after his return to Utah. This not only verifies conclusions in #9, but was also in accordance with Church instruction and policy.

11. Stanley S. Ivins found that it was common for "good" bishops to marry the widows and unmarried adult women in their wards, thus providing them with homes and at the same time "... saving their souls." Kimball Young verifies this occurrence, as does Vicky Burgess-Olson. As near as can be determined, Yorgason did this only once when, as a bishop, he married Hannah Nielson, an "old maid" of 36 years (the same age as Yorgason was at the time).

12. Stanley S. Ivins and Vicky Burgess-Olson noted that more than half of the polygamists in their studies had completed all their marrying prior to age forty. This holds very close to true with Yorgason,
who, with the exception of a woman he married in his old age, had taken his six plural wives by the time he was forty-one.

13. According to Nancy Tate Dredge, following 1887 and until long after 1890, there were many secret marriages among the Mormons, of which no records were kept at all.

Sometimes the new wife was already working in the home of her husband as a domestic ..., which made the transition easier. She was safe from detection--until she became pregnant. Then ... she had to go on the underground, where so many births occurred without adequate midwives.451

This precisely describes the situation of Anna Svederus, Yorgason's seventh wife, who married while living with the family as a domestic, became pregnant, gave birth to her son under a shelving rock in the deserts of eastern Utah, and spent several months in prison, with her baby, on a charge of adultery.

14. Kimball Young points out that, probably due to monogamous expectations, polygamous men did all they could do to eliminate envy and jealousy among the wives. They alternated time spent with each family, they distributed goods equally, they used an elaborate system of rewards for productivity and cleanliness, and so on.452 As previously mentioned, Yorgason did all of these things. He alternated visits to his families, he bought cloth by the bolt and divided it up equally, he distributed meat and other foodstuffs equally, and with a touch of
classical humor he allowed the wife who could shear the most sheep in a day to ride home in the wagon seated beside him. The losers had to ride in back with the wool.

15. Kimball Young noted that many times the wives of polygamists seemed to be in competition regarding child-bearing, and frequently two or more wives would bear children near the same time. This too was a part of Yorgason's experience. In 1879 three of his wives gave birth to sons, in 1881 three more sons were born, and in 1884 two more sons as well as two daughters were born. Interestingly, there was never more than a four month spread in any of these groups of births.

16. According to Kimball Young and Vicky Burgess-Olson, many plural wives earned extra income with their sewing skills. Family legends regarding the sewing skills of five of Yorgason's wives, and of the demands upon their time by the community for sewing services, are legion. Apparently two or three of them specialized with different types of stitching, but all picked up extra income in that manner.

17. James E. Smith and Phillip R. Kunz have concluded that men with two wives had more than twice the number of children as monogamists, but additional wives did not maintain the same rate. In confirmation of this conclusion, Yorgason's first two wives bore him fourteen of his twenty-one children, while four of his other six wives spread the remaining seven children
between them. These children were in a ratio of two, two, two, one.

18. Kimball Young found that polygamous Mormons trained their children to spot marshals, to be devious when answering questions, and to avoid talking to strangers. Yorgason's children all recall being taught these same things, and tell many humorous and intriguing stories about their own experiences.

19. From available evidence, James Yorgason was treated by his families as a true patriarch. Up until the time of his departure for California his families idolized him and did all in their power to make his life pleasant. In spite of the opposition against him he somehow managed to give his children a sense of family, for until their deaths none of them ever considered any of the others as anything but a full brother or sister. In fact, one of the brothers whose mother died while Yorgason was in hiding, was adopted into another family and was never told who his real father was. Yet he grew up hearing rumors, and when at age 72 he finally tracked down his real brothers and sisters, he united with them immediately and changed his name back to Yorgason. Juanita Brooks found in her research that such strong family unity was common among polygamous families.

20. According to various accounts, spotters, skunks and Mormon-eaters (i.e., Mormons and non-Mormons who attempted to turn in polygamists) were paid up to
twenty dollars per person for turning in their neighbors.

They were an insidious lot, capable of perpetrating every conceivable kind of insult and invasion of privacy. They assumed a host of disguises . . . in order to acquire . . . intelligence or to gain entrance to houses. Night-prowlers were common, and became bolder as the campaign progressed. The United States marshals were also often guilty of being less than scrupulous.458

Deputies themselves were given special bonuses for their successful efforts.459 Family legends still recall these neighbors and marshals, and their names are spoken of with derision even today. Many of the Yorgason family feel, as reported in the text, that the deputies who broke into Christina's home and became physically abusive with her did so primarily because they were motivated to do so by money. Yorgason himself was arrested twice during his life, and it is interesting to note that the first time he was arrested it was by two officials who were dressed in women's clothing specifically so they would not frighten him off.

21. Orma Linford, in her study of polygamy and the law, drew two conclusions. First, that judges were not concerned about whether the conduct of polygamists fit the crime decreed as such by Congress; they remedied any discrepancies by making the crime fit the conduct. Second:
That Mormon plural marriage was not polygamy, as it was usually understood, nor cohabitation, as the law had recognized it, nor was it adultery or fornication as these two terms had been defined. It belonged in none of the established categories of offenses against the marriage relation.460

Because of the ambiguity of the laws and the ambiguity of their interpretation by the courts, Mormon polygamists, Yorgason included, trying to live in compliance with the laws as they understood them, found themselves in the wrong no matter what course they took. They were "damned if they did, and damned if they didn't." Family records tell of Yorgason's efforts to comply and of his frustration in not being able to do so. This no doubt contributed to the anomie of the situation, and helped bring about disastrous family and financial consequences men such as Yorgason experienced.

22. Kimball Young found that two common forms of going underground to avoid prosecution for polygamy were being sent to colonize a new area and being sent on a mission.461 Yorgason, after becoming a polygamist, served two such missions to Sweden. Family records indicate that at least one of these was definitely a trip "underground."

23. Nancy Tate Dredge found in her research that many polygamist families were financially ruined by their years of hiding, during which their farms and businesses went largely unattended.462 This was certainly true of Yorgason, who lost his entire estate of many thousands of
acres, plus his mill and his dairy, while he was in hiding, to the marshal who was hounding him, detailing to the marshal what properties he was losing and why.

24. Kimball Young rated his sample families regarding how successful their polygamous experiences were, and found that nearly 53 per cent were either highly successful or reasonably successful. Prior to 1892 Yorgason would have fit into that category. After that date he would have fit into the 23 per cent who were rated as considerable or severe conflict situations. Interestingly, when Young ranked his families according to financial status, he found nearly the same percentages. This indicated that the higher the economic status of the family, the more chance of success they had in a polygamous situation. This data would be corroborated by Yorgason's experience. Prior to 1892 he was considered by all observers to be wealthy, after that date he was virtually bankrupt. And that is when his wives, almost en masse, left him.

25. James Edward Hulett, in his social-psychological studies of the male Mormon polygamist, determined that the man went into a plural marriage situation with almost no guidelines or rules to follow. This state of anomie caused him varying amounts of frustration, which Hulett called ego insecurity, and which the polygamist handled in ways that were typical of monogamous family situations. Hulett determined these
areas by examining various family activities. The data on Yorgason is sufficient to compare with only one of Hulett's areas of study, but that is an interesting comparison. That area is the father's behavior when confronted by conflict among family members. Hulett's findings indicated that if in a polygamous family there was conflict, the father used tested monogamous methods, such as ordering by authority, use of religious sanctions, and equitable distribution of material goods to solve the problem at hand. If that failed to work, then the man withdrew from the situation until it passed. All available evidence points to the fact that Yorgason behaved in precisely this manner, distributing goods, voicing his authority, and handling family disputes through his office of bishop. Journal entries and memories tell of occasional thundering denunciations of wayward children and even the threat of a Church court when one of his sons got out of line. If these things failed, then Yorgason simply went to stay with another family. The final episode of this nature, of course, was when his authority and prestige were ignored by his wives no matter what he said. At that point the state of anomie was too uncomfortable, and Yorgason simply walked out on all of them, going to California for the remainder of his life.

26. According to Eugene E. Campbell and Bruce Campbell, when a social state of anomie exists, divorce
rates increase. This is not necessarily because there are more bad husbands and wives, or even bad marriages, but because there is a lack of regulations in the social structure, including the marriage and family system. While polygamy per se is not normlessness, under the Mormon system it was, for as Hulett also points out, the people involved were essentially monogamous by nature, and so behaved that way. Four of Yorgason's five divorces occurred under such normless conditions, when there appeared to be no other practical way to solve the tremendous emotional conflicts brought about by federal harassment, financial ruin and social embarrassment.

The above comparisons have shown how the experience of James Yorgason and his families with polygamy compared favorably with the experience of the majority of other polygamous families studied. The following comparisons will show how their experiences differed from the majority of others studied by other scholars.

1a. According to Vicky Burgess-Olson, 60 per cent of the polygamous males in her study and 64 per cent of the females were native American born. Yorgason and five of his six plural wives were of Scandinavian birth, making them part of a quite small minority.

2a. According to a study by Phillip R. Kunz, Yorgason (with his total of six plural wives) was in a minority of less than 10 per cent of the 8.8 per cent of
Mormon men who practiced polygamy. According to Kunz, over 90 per cent of all polygamists had no more than two or three wives.\textsuperscript{476}

3a. Vicky Burgess-Olson, in studying the average ages of husbands and plural wives, concluded that first wives generally married at twenty-two years of age and second wives at twenty-three. Third wives dropped back to an average of twenty-two years. She also found that in the mean, husbands waited 13.1 years before taking a second wife, and another 6.1 years before taking their third or last one.\textsuperscript{468} Yorgason and his wives do not fit this pattern. His first wife was eighteen at the time of her marriage, he waited eight years before taking his second wife, and she was sixteen at the time. His third wife (but not his last) came only three years later, and she too was sixteen. His fourth wife, taken two years later, was twenty-three. His fifth and sixth wives, married after another three years, were thirty-six and twenty-two. Yorgason at this time was thirty-six himself. His seventh and final plural wife, taken five years later, was twenty-four.

4a. Stanley S. Ivins found that not one plural marriage in ten followed a previous marriage by less than a year.\textsuperscript{469} Yorgason became one of the 10 per cent or less in 1883 when he married Hannah and Catherine within a few weeks of each other.
5a. Vicky Burgess-Olson reported that James Edward Hulett found that the average polygamous husband sired twenty-one children. Her own figures were lower. She determined that not more than one fourth of polygamists had more than twenty children. This would place Yorgason, with his twenty-one children, in the 25 per cent category of her study.

6a. According to Kimball Young, many couples separated without divorce, and there appeared to be general public acceptance of the idea that if a man and woman could not get along, they were free to separate and seek new mates. This was not the method used by Yorgason, and in fact seems diametrically opposed to some of his experiences. Of Yorgason's six plural wives, one died and four obtained papers of divorce from him. Three of the families still have those papers. Three of the divorces were cancellations of sealings and one was for time only. The remaining plural wife, who also divorced Yorgason, did it in the way that Young suggests was common. She simply left Yorgason and was legally married to another man. Church records indicate that both she and her new husband were excommunicated for their efforts. To this writer, that hardly seems like public acceptance.

7a. Nancy Tate Dredge reports that after the Manifesto many polygamists continued to live together. But instead of seeking them out as they had earlier,
federal officials simply ignored them. One of her sources was obviously not Yorgason, who with his seventh wife Anna was forced into hiding in the fall of 1892, and who, along with Anna and her baby, was arrested and imprisoned in March of 1893. All three stayed rent-free for several months.

8a. Of 462 men imprisoned for polygamy in the Territory of Utah in the 1880's, eighty-three, or eighteen percent, were Scandinavian. Of 219 cohabts in the Utah Pen in 1888, sixty-one or twenty-eight per cent were Scandinavian. Yorgason, though never convicted of polygamy, unlawful cohabitation or adultery, spent several months behind bars awaiting trial on such charges, and was obviously part of the minorities listed.

9a. From 1882 to 1887, 541 persons were indicted and 209 convicted on charges of unlawful cohabitation, while twenty-seven were indicted and fourteen convicted on charges of polygamy. The aggregate imprisonments for those found guilty was 469 years, eight months and eight days. Fines amounted to $157,566.97. An indictment for unlawful cohabitation was filed against Yorgason during this period, but it took the deputies until 1890 to make the arrest, and until 1891 for a jury to find him not guilty. He was in prison for most of the time between his arrest and his trial. Yorgason was arrested again in 1893 and charged with adultery, spent another four months in jail awaiting trial following that arrest, and
jumped bail as quickly as he could secure his own release. All of Yorgason's prison time was never counted officially as time spent in prison.

10a. Melvin L. Bashore, in his study of cohab life behind bars during the 1880s, found that though life was dreary and unpleasant, with poor food, bedbugs and filth the lot of the prisoners, most felt thankful for the experience and were more than willing to be prisoners for conscience sake.\(^{475}\) Yorgason did not have good experiences regarding prison, and after serving his first time there he made vocal his feelings that he would never, under any conditions, ever go back. He of course did, but as pointed out above he jumped bail at the first opportunity, preferring to lose money rather than freedom. As near as can be determined, he never approached a prison again.

In conclusion, when comparing the experiences of James Yorgason and his polygamous families with those of other polygamous families studied, Yorgason's experiences compare favorably in a majority of cases. His experience was not primarily an abnormal one, or at least it was not until he abandoned his families and moved to California, after which most of his wives filed for divorce. This shattering or dissolution of the family unit, and possible causes for it, needs to be considered here.

According to Vicky Burgess-Olson, there are five major qualities that a polygamous family needed in order
These five qualities are listed as follows:

1. The first and original wife must possess a great willingness for the dedication to the institution and must even participate in the choice of other wives. She must have the highest status of the wives in the family and, included in this, be given managerial powers.

2. The husband in the family must be a sensitive and stable person having the capacity to deal fairly and equally with all the family members.

3. Certainly there should be a significant financial base in the family.

4. The other wives selected for the family should be approximately the same age and little courting should be done after the first few wives. (Sources showed that time in the parlor or elsewhere wooing was upsetting to other wives.)

5. It is best to have separate homes for each of the wives.

All available evidence suggests that Yorgason's families contained each of these elements until about 1892, when through one reason or another Yorgason lost his broad financial base. At that point his family began its rapid collapse. The rather obvious question now would be: Why did Yorgason lose all of his money? And the answer, instead of being simple, appears to be that it happened because of a complicated combination of events and situations. While Nancy Tate Dredge found that polygamous families were financially ruined by their years of hiding, she assumed that the absence from home brought about poor management, which in turn
brought about financial destruction. This writer, on the other hand, believes that lack of management was a contributing factor, nothing more, to families who were economically ruined during the late 1880's and early 1890's.

It has been previously pointed out that Arlo Richardson, Utah State Climatologist, had verified, insofar as he was able with existing records, folklore and journal accounts of a severe drought that hit Utah and Sanpete County during the late 1880's and early 1890's. Historian John Garraty writes that:

[The bitter winter of 1886-1887 dealt a smashing blow to the (economy). Then a succession of dry years shattered the hopes of the farmers. The downward swing of the business cycle in the early 1890s completed the devastation. (Farmers) who had paid more for their lands than they were worth and borrowed money at high interest rates to do so found themselves squeezed relentlessly.477

In 1890 farm prices continued to fall. Interest rates had become prohibitive, but the farmers had to borrow because they could not afford to pay prices charged for storing or marketing their crops or for the goods they needed to keep alive and to produce. At the end of 1890 they had suffered through three consecutive years of drought.478 By early in 1893 the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad had filed for bankruptcy, commodity prices were falling steadily, the stock market was fluctuating wildly, a run on the banks had occurred, causing
more than five hundred of them nationwide to fail, and the deepening depression was spreading around the world. The Democrats, the Republicans and the Populists were debating wildly about the various virtues of paper money versus silver versus gold, and banks were hastily foreclosing on loans and notes which looked at all tenuous, not caring what kind of money they had, just so they had it. 479

In Utah, Don R. Murphy has found from his studies of temperature and precipitation records made in Salt Lake City, that since 1875 there have been eleven to thirteen year cycles during which precipitation drops from a 1-4 years wet period to a 1, 2 or 3 year drought period. His records indicate that in Salt Lake City there were wet years in 1884-1886, drought until 1895, and wet years again from 1896-1899. During 1888 and 1892 Salt Lake City had a nearly average rainfall of 17 inches, but during the other years it fell as low as 10 inches. 480 This tends to verify accounts of farmers in Utah who during the 1880's and 1890's could not grow crops below the first fifty feet of their irrigated fields.

Leonard Arrington has also written that by 1891 money was tight, for the Panic had tightened purse strings all over the country, making it difficult for the Church or its members to obtain credit. By 1892 all of Utah was involved in the deepening economic depression,
and Utah experienced severe economic instability during the early 1890's. 481

In the 1880's, when the drought began and Yorgason was still bishop, he attempted to help members of his ward who were suffering severe hardship by buying their properties and farms from them. He did this by mortgaging his existing properties and using the money obtained from them for the purchases. But the drought was much worse and of much longer duration than Yorgason expected, and his own farming produced minimal results and minimal income. At that same time the federal government began "The Raid," forcing Yorgason either into prison or into hiding for most of the next five years. During that time the Panic and the depression of the 1890's swept the country, including Utah. Yorgason at the time owed between $35,000 and $50,000, a significant debt by nineteenth century standards. Because of the drought and because he was in hiding and could not be reached and so was considered a risk, mortgage holders began foreclosing. Yorgason tried, through the mail, to solve his difficulties and pay off his creditors, but he received no cooperation. Nor would federal officials let up on his pursuit so he could solve his problems in person. Thus, in the midst of a series of litigations regarding his properties, he was arrested and placed in prison, where he languished for a critical four months while all of his property slipped away. When upon his release he found that he had
been totally stripped of wealth (the writer has in his possession photocopies of all these court cases, over 600 pages in all) he determined to go elsewhere and start over. But as previously mentioned, none of his wives would accompany him to his new destination. Thoroughly discouraged and disgusted by the conflict, and by his own inability to solve it, Yorgason simply climbed upon his horse and rode away, removing himself, as Hulett contended, from the area of conflict. When his wives realized that he was apparently gone for good, and that they were on their own, so to speak, to support their children, the family structure collapsed. Christina lost her power, divorces were filed for, and families went their separate ways, some maintaining their identity with Yorgason, others not. And thus came the dissolution and fragmentation of James Yorgason's polygamous experience.
ENDNOTES


10 Ibid.


16 Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), "My Watch," Sketches New and Old (New York, 1875).


21 Ibid.


26 Ibid., p. 22.


30 Linford, pp. 328, 581.


32 Bitton, p. 118.


34 B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), Vol. III, p. 224. This information is found in footnote, number 78, at the bottom of the page, and is taken from a statement by Wilford Woodruff as related in Utah Pioneers, p. 23.

35 Lyngby Parish Records, film # G.S. 145890, L.D.S. Genealogical Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

36 A Kilometer is about 6/10 of one mile.

37 Much of the history of Sweden and Scandanavia is legendary, dealing with the Vikings and of men such as Leif Ericson, who in his flat bellied knarr with a single square sail attempted to establish a colony in America some 500 years before Columbus. (Bern Keating, Famous American Explorers, Rand McNally & Company, 1972, p. 12.) Christianity was introduced into Scandanavia in the middle of the 9th Century, but it was not fully established until the 11th century during the reign of Olaf, who defeated Norway and made Sweden the mightiest kingdom in the North. (Ragner Svanstrom and Carl Fredrik Palmstierna, A Short History of Sweden (Oxford, the Clarendon Press, 1934), pp. 18-19.) For the next 200 years or so there was warfare between the Swedes in the northern part of the country and the Goths in the Southern part, who were also fighting the Danes. In 1397 Queen Margaret of Denmark and Norway united Sweden into her kingdom, and so it remained until 1523, when Sweden broke away from Denmark and elected Gustavus Vasa as king. It was during his reign that the Reformation spread through Scandanavia. When Gustavus became king he found the country in the depth of poverty and the people ignorant and discouraged. Through his efforts he built the people up, established a strong government, and became so beloved of his people that they called him "Landsfather." He was of high moral character and deeply religious, and so when he became aware of some of
the problems found within the Catholic Church, he quickly severed relations with it, thus making Sweden the first country in Europe to do so. (Ferninand Schevill, A History of Europe: From the Reformation to the Present Day (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1949), pp. 116-130.) In 1611, when Gustavus Adolphus became king, his ambition for territorial expansion, as well as the spread of Protestantism, quickly drew his country into war with Germany, and so helped to thwart the plan of the Hapsburgs for a universal Catholic empire. In 1654 Charles X. Gustavus declared war on him. The Danes felt very secure because of the stretch of water which separated them from Sweden, but one night during the cold of winter 12,000 Swedes marched across the frozen sea and up the remaining Danish provinces on the Swedish mainland. These included Skane. (Gustav Sundbarg, ed., Sweden, Its People and Its Industry, (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Soner, 1904), p. 83.) Therefore, prior to 1568 the southern end of Sweden was a part of Denmark, and so it is logical to conclude that at least some of the ancestors of Soren and Karna Joransson were Danish, and had become Swedish only because of the political maneuvers described above. In 1814 Sweden and Norway united under one king. This union made it possible for Norway, while giving allegiance to the Swedish king, to preserve her independence as well as recently adopted constitution. Denmark also adopted a new constitution in 1849, which provided for a far more liberal interpretation of religious practices than either Sweden or Norway, subject to their joint crown, enjoyed. This political situation was to have a profound effect upon the growth of Mormonism in Scandanavia after its introduction in 1850. The chaotic situation very likely helped Soren and Karna decide to emigrate to America once they had joined themselves with the Church there in Sweden. (Introduction to the Swedish Mission, L.D.S. Church Christorian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1850-1853. No pagination, but see the first page for 1850.)

38 L.D.S. Emigration Records, 1855. These may be found in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. Though this is neither the time nor the place to go into a lengthy discussion of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Sweden, it might be well to review that history through 1855 and point out some source materials.

A. October, 1849, Territory of Deseret, First missionaries called to Scandinavia. They were Erastus Snow, Peter O. Hansen, and John E. Forsgren. S. W. Richards, ed., The Millennial Star (Liverpool, 1850), Vol. XII, pp. 131-135.

B. They departed the Salt Lake Valley 19 October, 1849. Albert Zobell, Jr., Under the Midnight Sun (Salt
Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1950), p. 3. Curtis B. Hunsaker, in his Master's Thesis, History of the Norwegian Mission from 1851 to 1960, presented to the Brigham Young University in 1965, reports that Zobell gives the date of departure as October 17th. This is obviously a mistake, as Zobell clearly states the 19th, and Andrew Jensen, in Church Chronology, p. 38, also gives the date as the 19th and also states that it was the first company of missionaries to depart from the Rocky Mountains. In the company were 35 men, 12 wagons, 1 carriage, and 42 horses and mules. For further information on this missionary journey see: A. Dean Wengren, A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Sweden, 1850-1905, Ph.D. Dissertation presented to the Brigham Young University, 1968, pp. 20-21.

C. Arrival in Denmark 14 June 1850. "Introduction to the Swedish Mission Mss.," L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. No pagination, but see the first page for 1850.


H. 16 October 1853, Vallby Branch was organized. The Joranssons would affiliate with this branch just over a year later. "History of the Scandanavian Mission," 1850-1855 (Manuscript History of the Scandanavian Mission), L.D.S. Church Historian's Office Library, Salt Lake City. No pagination, but see entry under October 16, 1853.

I. Persecution intensifies through 1855, and becomes physically as well as emotionally abusive. Millennial Star, Vol. XVI, pp. 60-61. It is interesting to note that Elder Van Cott also points out that Swedish authorities considered 28 days on bread and water to be equivalent to death. Also, "Skane Conference Historical Record," 1853-1871, pp. 5-6, as reported in Wengren, p. 69. Also, Millennial Star, Vol. XVI, p. 329.

Records of Members, Scandanavian Mission, L.D.S. Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, Gs 13475 pt. 6,
Vallby Branch Records, 1853-1863. In the Millennial Star, Vol. XVII, p. 78, the statistics for Skane Conference, 31 December 1854, show 8 branches, 9 Elders, 9 Priests, 7 Teachers, 1 Deacon, 125 baptized, 4 excommunicated, and 42 emigrated, for a total of 177 Saints. It was at this point that Karna was baptized.

40 Vallby Branch Records Gs 13475, pt. 6, 1853-1863. It should here be noted that Vallby is also spelled Valby, and both seemed to be used interchangeably. This was also mentioned in an interview with Charlotte Haskell of Payson, Utah, a granddaughter of Peter Yorgason. 7 June 1973.

41 Millennial Star, Vol. XVII, p. 492. Also, History of Elna Sorensson (Yorgason) Dahl, P. 1, compiled by her descendants. Also Millennial Star, Vol. XVIII, p. 220. One quote regarding this persecution should suffice: "In Malmo, and other places, not many days pass without some of the brethren being knocked down in the street, others stoned, and their clothes torn to pieces by the ungodly who exclaim, 'The Mormons have no right'; and verily it is true where a hireling Priesthood reigns." Millennial Star, Vol. XVII, p. 493.

42 Microfilm Gs 13475, pt. 6, Vallby Branch Records, 1853-1863, L.D.S. Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City.

43 Records of Members, Scandinavian Mission; Vallby Branch Records, 1853-1863, Microfilm No. Gs 13475, pt. 6, L.D.S. Church Genealogical Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. As noted elsewhere, the children are recorded on these records as Sorensson, while Soren and Karna are Joransson. This date is given in various family histories as the date the Joranssons left Sweden. Instead of that, it is merely the date that the family left Lyngby Parish to begin their emigration.


45 Ibid., p. 149.

46 Ibid., p. 152, quoted from "Autobiography of Samuel Roskelley," The Roskelley Organ, p. 16. It was at this time that the brethren directed the Saints to fast one day a month and give the food they would normally use that day to the poor. Many felt that this was what saved the Saints. Because of the good that it did, the practice of the fast day has continued to the present. George A. Smith, The Rise, Progress and Travels of the Church (Salt Lake City, 1869), p. 17.
William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, Readings in L.D.S. Church History (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1965), II, 481. This whole event of the manna sugar was considered quite miraculous by the Saints, who gathered it up to such an extent that they were able to pay 300 pounds of it as tithing, indicating that they must have been able to process over 3,000 pounds. It has never appeared on the trees since then. It was first reported in the Deseret News, 22 August 1855, and the whole article may be found in: Thomas C. Romney, The Gospel in Action, p. 4.

B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), Vol. IV, pp. 80-82. Disaster awaited many, such as the 28 Saints who sailed from Australia in 1855 on board the Julia Ann. It was wrecked near the Society Islands (Hawaii) on 4 October 1855. Five persons died and the survivors barely escaped to a barren and uninhabited island where they subsisted for six weeks on turtle before they were rescued.

F. D. Richards, Editor, The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star (Manchester and Liverpool, England, 1840 to present), No. 13, Vol. XVIII, p. 192. The full content of the poem, "A Word to the Saints who are Gathering" is as follows:

Think not when you gather to Zion
Your troubles and Trials are through--
That nothing but comfort and pleasure
Are waiting in Zion for you.
No, no; 'tis designed as a furnace,
All substance, all textures to try--
To consume all the "wood, hay, and stubble,"
And the gold from the dross purify.

Think not, when you gather to Zion,
That all will be holy and pure--
That deception and falsehood are banish'd,
And confidence wholly secure.
No, no; for the Lord, our Redeemer
Has said that the tares with the wheat
Must grow, till the great day of burning
Shall render the harvest complete.

Think not, when you gather to Zion,
The Saints here have nothing to do
But attend to your personal welfare,
And always be comforting you,
No; the Saints who are faithful are doing
What their hands find to do, with their might;
To accomplish the gathering of Israel,
They are toiling by day and by night.
Think not, when you gather to Zion,
The prize and the victory won--
Think not that the warfare is ended,
Or the work of salvation is done,
No, no; for the great Prince of Darkness
A tenfold exertion will make,
When he sees you approaching the fountain
Where of truth you may freely partake.


52 "Church Emigration," L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. There is no pagination, but this information is under the heading "Ninety-First Company"-"John J. Boyd, 512 Souls." The same History of the Scandanavian Mission, no pagination; and Kate Carker, Our Pioneer Heritage (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1959), Vol. XII, pp. 463-464. The story was also told by Arnold Irving in the "This Week in Church History" section of the "Church News" published by the Deseret News, Salt Lake City, Utah. No date available.

53 Andrew Jensen, History of the Scandanavian Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. No pagination, but see under entry for Saturday, 27 October 1855. Canute Peterson was a resident of Sanpete County, and later became fast friends with the Joranssions. Many years later he cosigned with James on a note and subsequently had to pay it himself when James was driven out for polygamy.

54 Jensen, no pagination, but see under Friday, 7 December 1855.

55 Junius F. Wells, Editor, The Contributor (Salt Lake City, February, 1890), Vol. XI, pp. 155-159. On 23 May 1854, Pres. Richards was called before a special committee of the House of Commons, British Parliament, to explain how the Mormons were able to have such success in their emigration methods. Pres. Richards answered them thoroughly and then took the opportunity of telling them a great deal about the Church, including how they governed themselves, how they were treated in the United States, how missionary work was done, and so on.

The names of all the adult passengers on the John J. Boyd are here published. This newspaper, published by John Taylor, is on microfilm at the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office and the Brigham Young University Library.

This was how Ellen Wasden Christensen described Castle Gardens as she disembarked there herself in 1855.

It is interesting to note that in the year 1856 a young man named Samuel Clemmens who lived about 40 miles down river from Keokuk began his brief career as a riverboat captain. He was later to become famous for his beautiful stories about life on the Mississippi, written after he changed his name to Mark Twain.
The actual rosters of all the companies which crossed the plains in the emigration of 1857 have been lost, so there is no actual proof that the Joranssions were in this company. However, logic seems to reach this conclusion. They were Scandanavian, and that was the Scandanavian Company. Family tradition has it that they arrived in the valley October 13th. However, the last train to enter the valley in 1857 arrived there on September 26th. Interestingly, the Mathias Cowley company arrived on September 13th. Might the month have been confused over the years? I think so. For more information see Jensen, Andrew, Church Chronology (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1899), p. 55.

Kate B. Carter, Heart Throbs of the West (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah Printing Company, 19 ). Vol. 12, pp. 468-469. See also Church Emigration of 1857, Second Wagon Company, L.D.S. Church Historians' Office.

James Linforth, Editor, Route From Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley, Illustrated (Liverpool: Latter-Day Saints Book Depot, 1855), p. 85. The experience of first driving an ox team is very humorously described here by Mr. Frederick Piercy, who states that it sometimes took weeks before one got the hang of Geeing and Hawing.

This information is found written on the back of a small photograph of James Yorgason which is now in the possession of ValGene Yorgason, Salt Lake City, Utah, Author Unknown.

"Journal History of the Church," L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. No pagination, but see in 1857 under the heading: "Iowa." This was also printed in the Scandinavians Stjerne, Vol. VII, p. 73.

Berrett and Burton, Vol. II, p. 405. This information was originally published in the Frontier Guardian, 13 May 1849.


There is much information available on the Utah War, or the Utah Expedition. Original sources from the government standpoint would be found in Ex. Document No. 71, 35th Congress, 1st Session, House of Representatives, "The Utah Expedition." Mormon sources are quite plentiful, and include many personal diaries and histories, public addresses by Mormon leaders, and news
items published in the various Mormon publications of the time. The "war" was apparently precipitated by a letter which W.M.F. Magraw, a teamster who had lost his job to a Mormon publications of the time. The "war" was apparently precipitated by a letter which W.M.F. Magraw, a teamster who had lost his job to a Mormon company, wrote to President James Buchanan. The letter was full of falsehoods regarding the Church, but was convincing enough to the President, who immediately replaced Brigham Young as Governor, and ordered 2,500 troops to accompany the new Governor, Alfred Cumming, and see that he was installed in office. President Buchanan, in his first annual message to Congress on 8 December 1857, made the following comment:

The people of Utah almost exclusively belong to this church, and believing with a fanatical spirit that (Brigham Young) is governor of the Territory by divine appointment, they obey his commands as if these were direct revelations from Heaven. If, therefore, he chooses that his government shall come into collision with the government of the United States, the members of the Mormon Church will yield implicit obedience to his will. Unfortunately, existing facts leaving but little doubt that such is his determination. Without entering upon a minute history of occurrences, it is sufficient to say that all the officers of the United States, judicial and executive with the exception of two Indian agents, have found it necessary for their own personal safety to withdraw from the Territory, and there no longer remains any government in Utah but the despotism of Brigham Young. This being the condition of affairs in the Territory, I could not mistake the path of duty. As Chief Executive Magistrate I was bound to restore the supremacy of the Constitution and laws within its limits. In order to effect this purpose, I appointed a new governor and other federal officers for Utah and sent them with a military force for their protection and to aid as a posse comitatus in case of need in the execution of the laws. (James D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents (Bureau of National Literature, Washington, D.C., Vol. 4): pp. 2985-2986.

Nationally, the feeling was that Brigham Young would be hung and Mormonism finally wiped out for good, along with its relic of barbarism, polygamy. To the Mormons, this was an old story of mobs hiding under the name of government to destroy them, and so the immediate determination was to fight back, and plans were made in
this direction. Though very little actual fighting was done, Mormon activities were so effective in holding back the troops that the whole movement became known as "Buchanan's Blunder." Perhaps the best way to describe the general attitude of the Saints would be to quote a song that was commonly sung by the pioneers, and which the author obtained from Laurelda Despain, of Fountain Green, Utah:

When Uncle Sam he first sent out that army to destroy us;
Said he, "Those Mormons we shall rout; they shall no longer annoy us."
We'll send a force quite competent, we'll try to hand for treason;
They surely tried but didn't hang, Oh, don't you know the reason?

CHORUS: Falla roll ta riddle de roll.
      Thy fall la roll tr li do.
      Fall la roll ta riddle de roll.
      Thy fall la roll tr li do.

As they were traveling up the platte; they sang many listful ditty;
Singing: "We'll do this and we'll do that when we get in the city."
And sure enough, when they got there, they made the Mormons tare, Sir.
That is I mean they would have done, but they did not get there, Sir.

When they got within two hundred miles, their officers were saying:
"It will be but a little while until the Mormons we'll be slaying.
We'll hang every man who has two wives, we've got the rope quite handy."
That is, I mean they would of done but Smith burned them back to Sandy.

When General Johnson heard of this, it made him feel quite raffie;
Said he, "Who'll bring those burners in?"
"I will," said Captain Murphy.
"I'll go and bring those burners in, and their necks we'll stretch them."
That is, I mean they would of done, but, Oh, they couldn't catch them.

One day as Lot Smith and his boys were traveling along quite carelessly,
To their surprise they happened onto a lot of long-eared Cavalry. "Will you fight?" said Smith; "Oh, No," said they. They thought in a snare they'd got us. When our backs were turned they popped away; but, Oh, they couldn't hit us.

They camped awhile upon Hams Fork, saying, "We'll wait a little longer; Till Johnson and his crew come up and make us a little stronger. Then we'll go in, take Brigham Young and Heber, his companion." That is, I mean they would of done, but they were afraid of Echo Canyon.

Now, Uncle Sam, just while you can, you'd better cease to roam, Sir. You need your men and all your means to defend yourselves at home, Sir. But as per chance you need some help, the Mormons they've been kind to. They helped you once; they'd do it again, that is, if they're amind to.

And then they went with awful tales saying, "Those Mormons beat the devil. They ride down hills, o'er rocks, and brush, as fast as on the level. And worse than that you shoot one down, and surely think he's dead, Sir; The next you see he's on his horse, a-toddling along ahead, Sir."

Now our yoke is off. We'll keep off, If obedience we would yield to. Brigham Young and Heber true, and Daniel in the field, Sir. But Uncle Sam will put it on, and keep it tight as thunder. That is, I mean they would have done; But, Oh, we won't come under.

Oh, there's a great commotion in the east about the Mormon question. The problem is to say the least; its hard for their digestion.


80 Ibid., pp. 246-249.
J. Cecil Alter, Editor, Utah Historical Quarterly (Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1945), "The Utah War: Journal of Albert Tracy, 1858-1860." Mr. Tracy, one of the officers of the Utah Expedition, reflects an attitude of scorn and derision towards the Mormons, and regrets that no battles took place. He says:

The best commissioners for Brigham Young and his insolent following, would have been eighteen pounders, backed by plenty of good rifles. p. 23.

Hosea Stout, Diary (Typewritten Copy), Vol. VII, p. 434. This is on file in Special Collection, Brigham Young University Library. Elder Stout mentions the cold and the early winter weather.

School for James Joransson was probably a very surprising experience, at least from one standpoint. For grammar he was taught neither English nor Swedish, but a new idea called the Deseret Alphabet. This was a further example of how the Saints sought to isolate themselves for their own protection, and to become totally self-sufficient. It was a phonetic system, and so had the additional advantage of foreign converts of being easier to learn than the English language would have been. The Book of Mormon was printed in this form for a time, and first and second primers were printed and used briefly in the schools. See: Larson, Gustive O., Outline History of Utah and the Mormons (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1958), p. 132. Also: William E. Berrett, The Restored Church (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1973), p. 298. Following are some examples of the characters:

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This opinion is reflected by the Saints in many cases. See Joel Hills Johnson, Diary (Typewritten Copy), p. 103, and Henry Lunt, Life of Henry Lunt (Typewritten Copy), p. 235. Both of these diaries are on file in Special Collections, Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah. Furthering this feeling, the Deseret News, 13 January 1858, printed a poem written by W. G. Mills:

Strong in the power of Brigham's God
Your name's a terror to our foes;
Ye were a barrier strong and broad
As our high mountains crowned with snows.

Samual Pitchforth, Diary of Samual Pitchforth (Typewritten Copy), pp. 70, 74. (The Mormon soldiers) . . . enjoyed themselves well while the snow fell, knowing that God was fighting our battles . . . . our brethren who are left on the mountain found twelve deserters frozen to death—so we see that God is fighting our battle. See also John Pulsipher, Diary (Typewritten Copy), p. 122. These are also found at Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah. Reference is further made to this in Norman F. Furniss, The Mormon Conflict 1850-1859 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 122.

Charles Smith, Diary (Typewritten Copy), p. 50. Also Wandle Mace, Journal of Wandle Mace (Typewritten Copy), p. 257. Also George Lake, Diary of George Lake (Typewritten Copy), p. 7. All three are found in Special Collections, Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah. All three indicate that if the move proved to be necessary, they would be happy to do so.


Roberts, Vol. IV, pp. 46-52. Also, see Massacre at Salt Creek (Doubleday, 1979). This novel, by the author, recounts an Indian battle that occurred during this tumultuous time, and which probably occurred because of the war.

Stout, pp. 446-447.

Haslam letter, Also George Halliday, Dairy (Typewritten Copy), Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah. Also Kate Carter, ed., Heart Throbs of the West (Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City, 1948), Vol. X, p. 267.

Jensen, p. 61.

Tracy, pp. 27-28. It is also interesting to note that the band, according to Captain Tracy, played a song or two of disrepute as they passed in front of the home of Brigham Young.

Roberts, p. 447.

Haslam letter. Also Microfilm Gs 6502, pt. 11, Cottonwood Ward Records, L.D.S. Genealogical Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The records received from Hazel Dahl, Claresholm, Alberta, Canada, indicate that Peter Joransson's second child, Anna Matilda, was born in Moroni on 26 September 1860. This would indicate that the family moved there prior to that time.

Moroni Ward Records, Records of Members 1861-1920 (Parents), L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. This is on microfilm.

Artemesia D. Anderson, Founding and Pioneering Moroni, original manuscript now in the possession of Minnie D. Blackham, Moroni, Utah. No pagination, but see the first page. See also Noble Warrum, ed., Utah Since Statehood (S. J. Clark, Salt Lake and Chicago, 1919), Vol. I, pp. 654-657.

This information was gleaned during an interview the author and his brother Brenton had with Ralph Anderson of Moroni, Utah on 28 December 1972. It can also be found in a little history written by Mrs. Andrew (Mollie) Anderson of Moroni, Utah, on 4 January 1933, and now in the possession of Ella Yorgason, Burlington, Wyoming.

Anderson, no pagination, but see heading "Town Sites."

Ibid., see under heading "Moroni Musicians." This is also found in a letter to the author from Ella Yorgason, Burlington, Wyoming, 16 January 1973.

107 Ibid., pp. 208-209.

108 Berrett and Burton, Vol. II, pp. 390-392. This is the sworn statement of John Lowry as quoted from Peter Gottfredson, Indian Depredations. In Roberts, Vol. V, pp. 149-150, it is stated that Lowry was angered and intoxicated, and intended to shoot Jake Arapeen. This is denied by Lowry, who says, "I have patiently born the stigma placed upon me, for I knew the facts, and to those who still persist in looking upon me as guilty of precipitating the Black Hawk War I will say this, that I appeal from their decision to a higher court--Our Creator, who will ultimately judge all men." Of interest here also is the sworn statement of Peter Monk, one of the eyewitnesses, who said that the intoxication version is false. He declared that Lowry, in all sobriety, simply acted swiftly when warned of danger. This is found in Kate B. Carter, Our Pioneer Heritage, Vol. IX, p. 175.


110 Lauritz Christensen, "Record of the Minute Company of Moroni for 1865," unpublished version in possession of author. This is an original document, given the author by the family, and to his knowledge, no copies exist elsewhere.

111 J. N. Simpson, Moroni Black Hawk Encampment Program, p. 15. This is another private publication, a copy of which is now in the possession of the author.


113 Ibid. See also J. N. Simpson, Moroni Centennial Year 1859-1959. This is a private publication, a copy of which is now in the possession of the author. The Bastion was torn down in 1890 and the materials were used to build a school house, and was located where the Lincoln School now stands.

114 As a native of Sanpete County, and as a descendant of many other natives of that county, the author is well acquainted with the details of Sanpete winters. They have been cussed and discussed for years in his family.

115 Della Morgan, The History of My Grandmother Kjersta or Christina Johnson Yorgason. This is a private paper, a copy of which was very graciously given the author by Mrs. Morgan.
This information was received in a letter from Helen Yorgason Sanderson, Kaysville, Utah, received 11 November 1972. Mrs. Sanderson is a granddaughter of James Yorgason.

Ralph Anderson interview. Also the Ella Yorgason letter.

Don Schmidt, letter to the author, 12 August 1973. Don is a grandnephew, and heard these stories from his grandfather, James' brother-in-law.

Simpson, Black Hawk, pp. 11-12. Mr. Simpson here quotes from the diary of Jens Christian "Cooper" Nelson, which is now in the possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Callie O. Morley.

Carter, Pioneer Heritage, Vol. IX, p. 189. In a short history of Francis Margaret Tilby written by H. ValGene Yorgason of Salt Lake City, Utah, on 19 August 1959, Mr. Yorgason recalls that Joshua Coombs, Francis' second husband, told him many times about how Chief Sanpitch, who had done many evil things, sent word into Fountain Green that he wanted to be killed. So a group of men went down to Cedar Hill where they found him sitting on the "House Rock." He told them to go ahead and kill him, and so they granted his wish.


Anderson, no pagination, but see heading "Spring of 1865." Mrs. Anderson here notes that the people dragged their log houses all the way from Fountain Green and Wales to Moroni. See also Carter, Our Pioneer Heritage, Vol. IX, p. 132.


Anderson, no pagination, but see heading "Pioneer Celebration 1866."

Morgan manuscript, p. 3. This information is also found on all family records submitted to the L.D.S. Genealogical Society. It should perhaps be noted that James and Christina were not able to get to Salt Lake City to the Endowment House until 30 January 1868, due, no doubt, to the weather and the Indian situation.

129 Carter, Heart Throbs, Vol. VI, p. 485. See also Jensen, Church Chronology, pp. 78-79. There is an interesting conflict in these two accounts. In Carter there are a great many details given about the peace talk as it was held in Ephraim. In Jensen he says: "Col. F. H. Head, superintendent of Indian affairs, and Dimick B. Huntington, Indian interpreter, had a "big talk" with the Indians in Strawberry Valley, Uintah, and a treaty of peace was made with these Indians, who had raided the settlements in Sanpete Valley and other places." Both accounts give the same date, and so as the former had the most details and seemed to be a first-hand report, it was accepted as the most valid.

130 Ralph Anderson interview, also family traditions as reported by Ella Yorgason, Helen Sanderson, etc. All that remains of this home now is a small pile of weathered adobe.

131 Microfilm, Moroni Records, Records of Members 1861-1920 (Parents), L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

132 Microfilm, Moroni Records.

133 Ella Yorgason letter. This information was also given during a personal interview with Perry Allred, 19 February 1973, and with Virgil Jacobsen on 4 June 1973. Mr. Allred lives in Salt Lake City, and Mr. Jacobsen lives in Fountain Green, Utah.

134 Sanpete County Records of Corporations and Businesses, Book I, Sanpete County Courthouse Archives, Manti, Utah, pp. 3-5. A copy of this is in the possession of the author.

135 Morgan, p. 3. This information is also extant on many family records.

136 Microfilm, Moroni Records.

137 Sanpete County Assessment Rolls, Book I. There are many of these records which the writer was unable to find in the archives in Manti, and so not all of the years are complete. It was quite surprising, though, to go through them and find that quite consistently James ranked highest in the records in his assessed value. This held especially true in later years. Copies of these assessment records are in the possession of the author.

138 Della Morgan letter.

Nordstjernan, Vol. 7, pp. 181-183. The author has in his possession the complete transcripts of all the conferences mentioned here, but felt it advisable to quote them.


Ibid., Vol. 11, p. 10. Letter to President N. C. Flygare:

Yesterday it was eight days since I had the opportunity of bearing my testimony and I did so in a Methodist hall at South Adolph Fredricksborg before a few hundred attentive listeners. That testimony fell like a thunder bolt for the Priest of that society. After he had asked if there was someone, "A real Christian" present that wished to leave his testimony, I stood up and thanked him for the opportunity. Others had stood up before and left their testimonies, which caused the Priest to utter he did not wish anybody present to present his feelings on baptism. He also said that Christ was only dead to be a Savior for the world's sins and baptism was only a secondary matter which the Priest never talked about, but his subject was only to save the soul. Therefore, that no one should believe that I had partial feelings or my own opinions, I took their attention to 28th Chapter of Matthew, 18, 19 and 20th verses, and asked them if anyone could show me by-way which was certain to lead mankind's salvation. There was none that were inclined to fill my request.

The Priest turned pale and stuttered after speaking his feelings and at the end said, "In five weeks from now I shall speak on baptism." He after prayed that there would be no more trouble between us, but thanked the Lord even that his word had been spoken that evening.

He prayed special to bless us his Baptist brothers, even though we were known in the gathering. He soon realized that we were Mormon Priests, which was an even more unpleasant feeling for the Priest.

Ella Yorgason letter.

Merl Ivory interview.

Harris Larson interview.

From an interview conducted 19 June 1973, with Hazen Jensen, Ephraim, Utah. James later married one of Mon's wives' sisters, Hannah Nielsen.

Klaus J. Hanson, Quest for Empire (Michigan State University Press, 1967), pp. 141-142. Though it seems from all we read that polygamy was very prevalent, Mr. Hanson says: "(It was) openly admitted by Mormons, that plural marriage was a practice reserved primarily for the elite. The ratio of married males in Mormon society as a whole was only around ten percent between 1846 and 1890." To further illustrate that James Joranson was considered among the elite, we quote the following from William Mulder, Homeward to Zion--The Mormon Migration From Scandanavia (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1957), p. 239. "But most of the Scandanavian polygamists contented themselves with two wives, though Soren Jensen, Danish carpenter who joined the arches supporting the great Tabernacle in Salt Lake, had five, and James Joranson, Swedish Bishop of Fountain Green, had six, and still managed two missions to Sweden." Obviously, Mr. Mulder never heard of the last two wives. In a more recent study, Phillip R. Kunz, "One Wife or Several," Unpublished manuscript, January 1978, p. 11, it is stated that 8.8% of the men in 1870 actually practiced polygamy.

In letters to the author from Ella Yorgason, LaVern Chapman of Fountain Green, Utah, and ValGene Yorgason of Salt Lake City, and From an interview with Gayle Yorgason of Provo, Francis is spoken of as being very kind and generous, especially to the children. This was a characteristic which she carried through her entire life.

Tall Timber, p. 277.

From information obtained from Helen Sanderson in a letter dated 11 November 1972.

Ibid., also Helen Sanderson, "History of Emma Christine Yorganson Draper," 1959. This information was given her on 21 July 1959 by Viola D. Jensen and Orson L. Yorgason, and is in a private paper, a copy of which is in the possession of the author.

Endowment House Records, Microfilm, L.D.S. Genealogical Society Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. See also Arrington, p. 356. He says the word "sealing" was used as a sort of surface compliance to the 1862 act which prohibited more than one marriage.
Della Morgan, "The Life History of Elinor Cecelia Yorgason Morgan," unpublished manuscript, p. 1. A copy of this is in the possession of the author. This additional comment is in the text:
"As Nora grew older it caused her much distress to think she had played a part in starting the heartache in her family caused by her father's practice of polygamy." One wonders if he might not have gone ahead as the brethren asked him to if Nora had not been willing to cooperate.

Microfilm of Records of Members, Gs 26-198, Moroni Records (Parents), 1861-1920, L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Simpson, Black Hawk, pp. 28-31.

Microfilm of Records of Members, Moroni Records (Parents), 1861-1920, L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Moroni Mission Records, Book 1, p. 104.

Moroni Mission Records, Book 2, p. 62. Both of these books were found by the author quite by accident in the archives of the Sanpete County Courthouse, Manti, Utah. They were in poor condition and were not filed in any systematic order, but were merely sitting on shelves, each book in a different part of the room. It is unknown if there are any other records dating earlier or later than the ones mentioned here. Photocopies of the two pages are in the possession of the author. One page was also found on which Soren, James' father, had his records of transactions kept, but the page is very brief and shows little activity, $22.00 being the total amount dealt with over three years.

Sanpete County Assessment Rolls, 1875. These are found, under year of assessment, in the Sanpete County Courthouse archives, Manti, Utah. Other than two or three early years that are missing, these are very complete records.

Moroni City Cemetery Records. Also family records.

Family records. These are found throughout the family, but a very thorough set of records is in the possession of Ruby Hurren, Nampa, Idaho. She very generously allowed the author access to these records as he needed it.

Interview with Ralph Anderson, Moroni, Utah.
164 Sanpete County Assessment Records, 1877.
166 Ibid., p. 54.
167 This information was taken from a transcript of
the funeral address of Ephraim Nielson of Moroni, Utah,
when he spoke at James Yorgason's funeral. The transcrip
t was made by Mercy Ivory. In this address he refers
to the fact that James was President of the Y.M.M.I.A.
As far as can be determined, the Y.M.M.I.A. was not in
existence at that time, and so this may be an error in
the transcript, or an error in the memory of the speaker.
168 Ibid.
169 Manti Temple Construction Records. These records
are incomplete and are not filed in any order, but may
be found in the Manti Temple Archives, Manti, Utah.
There is no pagination to any of them.
170 Information from interviews with Merl Ivory and
Perry Allred on 19 and 20 February 1973.
171 This information was obtained from a letter to
the author from Merdith Coleman, daughter of John Yor
172 Sanpete County Assessment Rolls, 1877.
173 Helen Sanderson, "History of Emma Christine
Jorganson Draper," 1959. This information was given her
on 21 July 1959, by Viola D. Jensen and Orson L. Yorgason,
and is in a private paper, a copy of which is in the
possession of the author.
174 Helen Sanderson letter, 11 November 1872. There
is no evidence one way or the other that a rejection
ever occurred, though it is probable that in later years
Christina began to wonder if he ever would stop.
175 Endowment House Records, L.D.S. Genealogical
Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.
176 Sanderson, "History of Emma Christine Jorganson
Yorgason Draper." More information on this will be
found in the appendix, "The Wives."
177 Sanpete County Election Register, 1878, p. 41.
This register is found in the archives, Sanpete County
Courthouse, Manti, Utah.
As the author talked with old timers who had been in Sanpete for many years, he found that none of them knew for certain just what a fence server was or did. The consensus of opinion was as is recorded in the text.

Yorgason Family Records, in the possession of Ruby Hurren, Nampa, Idaho.

Sanderson, "History of Emma Christine Jorganson Yorgason Draper." This was also learned during the interview with Ralph Anderson, Moroni, Utah, 28 December 1972. Mr. Anderson, it should be pointed out, was the best friend of Orson Yorgason, James' son by Amy.

Sanpete County Assessment Records, 1879.

Della Morgan, "The History of my Grandmother Kjersta or Christena Johnson Yorgason," p. 3.

Della Morgan, "James Yorgason History." No pagination, but this is in a section headed, "A List of the Names of the Wives of James Yorgason that we have Record of." She obtained this information in April, 1839, during an interview with Maria and Nora Yorgason Morgan while visiting in Ogden, Utah.

From information received from Robert Yorgason, Ogden, Utah.

Endowment House Records, L.D.S. Church Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Sanpete County Assessment Records, 1881. This is the first time that his city and farm property is detailed at all, and it records that he owned four homesteads in the city and 30 acres meadow.

Utah Brand Register, 1880-1890. This is found in the archives of the State Capital Building, Salt Lake City, Utah. It is interesting to note that Yorgason's brother, Peter, also registered a brand that year, under the name Peter Yorgansen, which was a PY on the left hip or thigh, and registered 7 April 1880. Soren registered the Slash Y (\Y) brand on the right shoulder in 1884, and he spelled his name Yorgensen. James, however, spelled his name Yorgason, the first or earliest spelling of the current name that I have found.

Patriarchal Blessing Files, Vol. 363, p. 227. This is found in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. It is the policy of the Church to let descendents read these blessings, but they cannot be copied. Hence, what is written above was jotted
down from memory after several visits to the Office. One item not mentioned above was that he was promised that by obedience to the New and Everlasting Covenant he would receive an everlasting inheritance for himself, wives, children, relatives, friends . . . according to his faith.

189 Yorgason Family Records, in the possession of Ruby Hurren, Nampa, Idaho.

190 Morgan, "A History of James Yorgason."

191 According to Della Morgan, most of the responsibility for caring for James' families fell to Christina. This seems natural, as she was the oldest, as well as being the first wife, and therefore, next in authority (the only one according to the law). It must have been very hard on her, though, to handle all of that for two whole years.

192 Carter, Heart Throbs, Vol. II, pp. 212-213. Sanpete County was in the process of building a branch line of the railroad up through Salt Creek Canyon through Fountain Green, and down to the coal mines at Wales. This was a narrow gauge bed, and most records state that it was completed in 1880, though no official documents have been found to verify this. If it was, the possibility then exists that James departed from the terminus at Wales rather than at Fountain Green. Either would have been about the same distance from Moroni.

193 The Scandanavian Mission, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Nordstjernan (Stockholm, Sweden, 1881), Vol. 5, pp. 236-237. All references quoted hereafter from the Nordstjernan (pronounced Nordshernan) were written originally in Swedish, and were translated for the author by Mrs. Anita Taylor of Rexburg, Idaho. All volumes of the Nordstjernan may be found in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. Nordstjernan means North Star. Also, Mission Book B 1881:3191, pp. 56, 60, 74. These mission Books are handwritten records on file in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

194 The British Mission, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Millennial Star (Liverpool, 1881), Vol. 43, p. 554.

195 Della Morgan, "History of James Yorgason," unpublished manuscript, a copy of which is in the possession of the author.
Information concerning this is also found in the Scandinavian Mission File. There is no pagination, but under the name James Yorgason are the headings Mission 1 and Mission 2. The dates and events are there recorded. This Mission File is located in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

This information was obtained by going through the following Swedish branch records:

- Malmo
- Kristianstad
- Lyngby
- Lund
- Goteberg
- Stockholm
- Goteland
- Trollhattan
- Karlskrona
- Uppsala

These records are recorded on microfilm and may be found in the L.D.S. Church Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah. As near as can be determined, James was responsible for and had the opportunity of baptizing and confirming 61 people during his first mission.

Lund and Lyngby Branch Records, microfilm. Her name on these records is spelled both Katarina and Katrina. She will be discussed further in the next chapter.

It was asked of the writer once why Yorgason did not marry in the mission field, or why his wives did not fear that he would. Apparently the Brethren had issued instructions that missionaries not marry until they were home. Mrs. F. D. Richard, "The Inner Facts of Social Life in Utah," San Francisco, 1880. The original of this handwritten letter is in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Scandanavian Mission File. No pagination, but see under heading James Yorgason, Mission 1.

Ibid. See under date of Friday, 15 June 1883.

Lucille Babcock, telephone conversation with the author, 27 December 1972. This story is one that has persisted through several lines of the Yorgason family. In none of these versions were any names mentioned, but as the story seems factual, these wives and these sons were the only ones who could possibly have been involved. The three boys were all born within four months of each other, and all while James was on his mission.
Hansen family records.

Viola D. Jensen and Orson L. Yorgason, "History of Emma Christine Jorganson Yorgason Draper," unpublished paper now in the possession of Helen Sanderson of Kaysville, Utah. The author, going through some files in the L.D.S. Genealogical Society, found that both Emma (Amy) and Brigham Draper were excommunicated following their marriage to each other. This would have probably been on the grounds of adultery, as according to Church policy, she was still sealed to James Yorgason when she married Brigham Draper. Obtaining a marriage license would have been no problem, however, for the law did not recognize her first marriage, and so legally what they did was right. Emma was rebaptized in 1895, but no record was found of Brigham being rebaptized. In 1956 Viola Draper Jensen applied for a temple divorce between Emma and James Yorgason, as that sealing had never been cancelled. This cancellation was never granted, and a letter from Salt Lake City advised Mrs. Jensen to let the Lord handle the matter. The author saw this letter in 1967 while going through these files, but on returning in 1973 to get a photostat of it, the letter could not be found.

Ibid. The author has found several accounts of how James helped this family. One such was when Brigham purchased a poor piece of land on Dry Bottom between Moroni and Fountain Green. After trying to farm it for some time, to no avail, he sold it to James Yorgason, who paid him enough that he could get started again somewhere else.

"Manuscript History of the Church," L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. No pagination, but see under heading, Fountain Green Ward, Moroni Stake.

Andrew Jensen, The Historical Record (Salt Lake City, 1889), Vol. VI, p. 265. There seems to be a conflict of information at this point. The Historical Record indicates that James was inaugurated as a new bishop by Elder Lyman, and family tradition says that Elder Lyman ordained him (letter to author from Ella Yorgason dated 16 1973). However, the "Manuscript History" clearly states that he was ordained by Elder Erastus Snow. At the moment, therefore, it is a toss-up as to who actually did ordain him.

Lucille Babcock, telephone conversation. "On each of his missions James' generosity to those he taught worked some hardship on his families, as he paid many of their passages in order that they could emigrate to Utah. Most of these people promised to repay him; very
few ever did, and many lived off his generosity even after arriving in Zion."


T.I.B. Cards, L.D.S. Genealogical Society Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. James did buy Hannah Nielsen a home in Fountain Green, purchasing it from Soren R. Nielsen on 11 January 1884, for $250.00. This was located in the Fountain Green Addition, Section 1, Block 30, and was 110-1/2/160 of an acre in extent. Tradition has it that he married Hannah in order to give her a name and a home. Other than this she remains very much a mystery, for she had no children and only the one little story persists in the family about her. In later years she moved to Ephraim and became known as Hannah White, simply because of the color of her hair.

Ibid. Catherine did not get a home of her own until 1888, following James' second mission.

Della Morgan, letter to the author, 10 March 1972. One can imagine that there might be jealousy and other negative feelings among the people of Fountain Green simply because a foreigner, so to speak, from another community, had been called to preside over them rather than one of their own. Therefore, anything that he did as Bishop that was slightly different than what they were used to would be looked on with at least a little suspicion. This got James in trouble later on.

Della Morgan, "History of James Yorgason," (unpublished manuscript, copy in author's possession), p. 3. The red stone foundations of this barn are still standing today, and may be seen on the right side of the road as one enters the north end of Moroni, Utah.


Fountain Green, a city familiar to James Yorgason, was settled in the spring of 1859. George W. Johnson, a resident of Santaquin, was called by President Brigham Young to locate a settlement on Uintah Springs, a favorite camping spot for travelers near the north end of the west side of Sanpete Valley. On July 4, while engaged in surveying the location, Indians stole his horses. He walked home and returned a month later to build the first log cabin. J. S. Holman built the second one near by a little later.
By winter about half a dozen families lived there, and these were joined by others the next spring, when a post office was secured. The name of Fountain Green was given to the new community because of the large spring that flowed from the base of the San Pitch Mountains (West Mountain) near by, and because of the broad green meadows that grew where the stream flowed down the valley.

Gayle Yorgason, the writer's father, in a telephone conversation of 13 March 1974, reports an interesting incident connected with the spring at Fountain Green, which is here related. "After the first six families moved to Fountain Green they were surprised to find, the next spring, that there was scarcely enough water to keep them alive. Two of the families thus moved out, leaving only four families to continue the settlement. At this point, President Brigham Young visited the settlement, and seeing their predicament, prophesied that as long as the people lived their religion, the spring would grow and meet the needs of the community. The history of the town shows that this has been fulfilled to a remarkable degree. Fountain Green grew in size to approximately 1,200, and the spring grew also. It has now diminished to less than 500, and the spring has also diminished. I was told this story several times by Francis Johnson, the daughter of Amos Johnson and the granddaughter of George W. Johnson, the first settler of Fountain Green.

Besides the property bought for Hannah and placed in her name, James bought 2 18/160 acres from Robert L. Johnson, 12.12 acres from Nels Hansen, 3.64 acres from Lars Petersen, and 3.59 acres from Hans Hansen. These were all city properties, and were purchased before he left on his second mission. No records could be found which indicated purchase of extensive acreage outside of town, though it is known that he kept his properties in and around Moroni even after he moved to Fountain Green.

Virgil Jacobsen, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview on 1 May 1973. Also, Perry Allred, Salt Lake City, Utah, personal interview on 28 December 1972. Mr. Allred called him both "Big Timber" and "Tall Timber."

Loren Jensen, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview with Gayle Yorgason, 2 April 1967. "I was up to Tim Carter's one day a tending her little kids. She'd drag me up to tend her kids. They was having a quilting for them older women. Anyway, I was listening to these old women talking, talking about Andrew Aagard, and this one old woman said, "Yeh, people thought Andrew
Aagard come here broke, the same as the rest of 'em did. Ha! I sat up all of one night sewing 5 and 10 dollar gold pieces into his underwear, so that nobody would fine 'em." She says, "Me and another old lady sat up all of one night, back in Denmark, sewing them into his underwear." It was no wonder he got rich. He could buy anything he wanted for two bits. Why, this place across the street here, well, that was sold for $5.00."

219 Osmond Crowther, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview with Gayle Yorgason 1 April 1967.

220 Loren Jensen interview.

221 Irvin Oldroyd and Dorothy Oldroyd, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview with Gayle Yorgason, 1 April 1967.

222 Lib Hansen, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview with Gayle Yorgason, 8 January 1966.

223 Irvin and Dorothy Oldroyd interview.

224 Ibid.

225 Lucille Babcock interview.

226 Lib Hansen interview.

227 Gladys Winters and Devonna Crowther, Fountain Green, Utah, personal interview with Gayle Yorgason, 1 April 1967. Hans Tinker's real name was Hans Hansen, but he was a tinker.

228 Kate B. Carter, Our Pioneer Heritage (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1959), Vol. 4, p. 174.

229 Ibid.

230 Ibid.

231 Frank Allred, Centerfield, Utah, personal interview on 8 June 1973.


233 Perry Allred and Olene Allred interview.

234 Ella Yorgason letter.

235 Frank Allred interview.
Perry and Olene Allred interview. Accounts of these encounters are interesting, and three of them will be quoted here.

... Bishop had to call a meeting with the elders at Aunt Reenie's home, because she got in bad. She and two other girls were walking down the street after some meeting at night, and Aunt Reenie thought she saw a bush wiggle, you know, and she thought, Oh oh, there's the bushwackers. And so she reached down and picked up a clod, you know, and threw the clod and rocks into the bush, and sure enough, one of them was there, and she hit him, and so they had to have a meeting about it, and oh ... Grandpa felt so bad about it, to think that one of his daughters had hit the bishop with a clod. (Perry and Olene Allred)

It was before the Bishop's second mission, and there was a bunch of boys sitting on a fence, and when the Bishopric was walking past, these young boys would pull their hats down (over their faces, so as not to be seen), and Bishop Yorgason reached over to pull John Holman's hat up to see who he was, and John had a handful of sand, and he hit the Bishop in the face with it, right in the eyes, and he nearly got excommunicated for that. (Earl Ivory)

One night Jim Yorgason, the bishop's son, and Andrew Allred, pulled off a gag, and the bishop and one of his counselors chased them clear down into the cedar hill, trying to catch them, and these boys ditched them down on the cedar hill and came back. Andrew Allred and Yergi Yorgason, now there was two athletes, you bet! Jim Yorgason was the fastest kid in town, and he was so strong that he could lift anything.

Yergi Jorgason was one of the meanest ---- that ever breathed. Oh, damn his heart, he had us kids so scared. Jim hung me by my heels in the picket fence ... and left me to get off the best way I wanted to. (Frank Allred)


Ibid., p. 358.

Ibid., p. 359.

Ibid., p. 412. President Taylor never came out of hiding, but died while "underground." Many therefore feel that he was a martyr to the cause of polygamy.

Mission Book B 1885:38, p. 81. This is a handwritten record on file in the L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Nordstjernan, Vol. 9, p. 155.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 204.

Records of the Goteborg Branch, on film, found in the Genealogical Society Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Records of the Goteborg, Goteland, Karlskrona, Kristianstad, Stockholm, Trollhattan, and Uppsala Branches of the L.D.S. Church in Sweden. He may have baptized or confirmed others, but the author could find no other records.


Nordstjernan, Vol. 9, pp. 316-317. President Wells was at this time the president over all the European Missions, and a fairly close friend of James.


The names and birthdates and death dates of James' children are scattered through many old family records. The author compiled them, from information received from Ruby Hurren of Nampa, Idaho, onto one sheet, which is in his possession. James had a total of 21 known children.

Warranty Deeds, Grantee's Index, Book, Sanpete County, Utah Territory. These records are on file in the archives of the Sanpete County Courthouse, Manti, Utah.

James Yorgason, personal letter to Elinor C. Yorgason, 23 December 1886. This letter is in the possession of Della Morgan of Spokane, Washington. It is the only document, for that matter, in his original handwriting, other than his signature, on some notes and certificates.
Scandanavian Mission File. No pagination, but see under date of 30 May 1887. There is a discrepancy of date in this article. The article is concerned with the month of June, but suddenly the author of the article says that the "Wyoming" sailed from Liverpool May 14th, three weeks before the emigrants arrived there to sail with her. The correct date is inserted in this work.

William Mulder, Homeward to Zion--The Mormon Migration from Scandanavia (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p. 239. Andrew Jensen, the Church Historian, was the only Scandanavian with more wives than James had.

Merl Ivory, personal interview with the author, Fountain Green, Utah, 20 February 1973. It is sad and yet interesting to note that Mr. Ivory died just a day or so following this interview. Up to the moment of his death he was in fine health and spirits, and what a pleasant old gentleman to speak with.

Arrington, pp. 360-361. Also, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee of Privileges and Election, Document #486, Investigation of Honorable Reed Smoot, Senator From Utah, Washington, 1904-1906, Vol. 1, p. 492. Here it is reported that in the Code of 1898, State of Utah, Section 2850, all issue born of polygamous marriages born on or prior to 4 January 1896, are again legitimated and are entitled to full rights of inheritance, and "... to have and to enjoy all rights and privileges to the same extent and in the same manner as though born in lawful wedlock."


Arrington, p. 363.

Ibid., p. 364.

The author could find no records of the marriage or sealing of James and Anna Svederus, but at that time many of these sealings were performed by the brethren without any records being kept. This was to prevent tracing by federal officials. In Mary Yorgason's journal she refers to Anna as a hired girl, and says that the marshals didn't find who they were looking for, so they supposed, because they only saw the hired girl. This facetious remark leads the author to believe that she was working as a hired girl but living there as a wife. Also, all family records indicate that her name was Svederius, while the journal of Mary spells it repeatedly Svederus, leaving out the i.
Editorial, *The Deseret News* (Salt Lake City), 8 June 1885, p. 13. Wilford Woodruff, in his diary under date of 3 October 1885, relates that it was his understanding that sentences could be pyramided as related in the *Deseret News*. This must have been a frightening prospect to these brethren.


Frank Allred interview.

Della Morgan, "The Life History of Elinor Cecelia Yorgason Morgan," unpublished manuscript, no date or pagination.

Helen Sanderson letter, 11 November 1972.

Loren Jensen interview, 2 April 1967.


Ibid.

This information comes from various family records, as well as Mary Henrie's Daybooks.

Lib Hansen interview, 8 January 1966.

Loren Jensen interview.

Merl Ivory interview. It is interesting to note the hazy memories of these people regarding the number of wives James actually had.

Vernon Anderson, personal interview with Delbert Yorgason, date not available.

Ibid.

Mary Caroline Johanna Yorgason Henrie, "Day Books," (Fountain Green, Utah, 1888-1891). These are three small leather-bound books which Mary kept as diaries for the years mentioned above. They are in the possession of Leland Henrie, her son, of Richfield, Utah. The author has taken excerpts from these diaries that pertain to her family and their daily life.
ValGene Yorgason, personal interview with the author, Salt Lake City, June 1973. Mr. Yorgason had written most of his memories down, and a copy was given to the author. See also, Duane Green, letter to the author, Goshen, Utah, 10 February 1973. Mr. Green says that his father used to work for James Yorgason, and that the horse’s name that made the 110 miles to Salt Lake City in one day was Sailor. Mr. Green says that Sailor was the only horse in the area that could do it. As to whether this winning horse was named Sailor or Ingersol, one can only guess. Also, Blaine M. Yorgason and Brenton G. Yorgason, The Bishop’s Horse Race (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1979).

Robert Yorgason, letter to the author, 3 January 1973. See also Duane Green letter.

ValGene Yorgason interview.

Morgan, "Christina Yorgason," p. 5.

LaVerne Chapman, letter to the author, 2 February 1971.

J. Gayle Yorgason, personal interview with the author, Provo, Utah, 30 December 1972. Mr. Yorgason is the grandson of James, and served as bishop of the Fountain Green Ward between the years of 1941 and 1947. His interest lies in the area of local history, and he has taken much time to interview some of the older people of the community, gleaning many stories and memories from them. Also ValGene Yorgason interview.

Merl Ivory interview.

Emma O. Williams, interview with J. Gayle Yorgason, Fountain Green, 1 April 1967.

E. Arlo Richardson, letter to the author, 8 May 1973. Mr. Richardson is the Climatologist for the State of Utah. He replied that his office had only scanty data prior to 1900, but what they did have indicated that 1887 was very bad as recorded by three stations, and then records were mostly silent except for one or two instances until 1894, when fairly complete reports indicate that Sanpete County was still suffering, and continued to do so until 1897. An interesting item for members of the L.D.S. Church is that it was during this period that Lorenzo Snow went to St. George and received the revelation on tithing, thus indicating that the problem was anything but local to Sanpete Valley. The drought is remembered by many early Saints in their journals.
Perry Allred and Olene Allred interview, 28 December 1972.

Mary Henrie "Day Books." No pagination, but a note in the margin under 1889 indicates that "Pa worked out another land deal today." The author, after weighing all the facts about his purchases, examining the amounts he paid, and so on, drew his own conclusions at this point, and these conclusions are reflected in the text.

Warranty deeds, Grantee's index, Sanpete County, Utah Territory. The author found three books of indexes in the archives of the Sanpete County Courthouse, Manti, Utah, but he was unable to find the works the indexes were referenced to. These books cover the years 1880-1895, but James is found in them only until 1892. Photostats of these books and translation of them are in the author's possession, and with time and the proper maps, one would be able to pinpoint each of James' purchases and where it would be today. The author has not deemed it necessary to do this.

Emma Williams interview, Merl Ivory interview, ValGene Yorgason interview, Ella Yorgason letter. Most older people in Fountain Green will repeat the same story if they are asked.

Merl Ivory interview.

Frank Allred interview.

Grantee's Index, Sanpete County.

ValGene Yorgason interview.

Carter, Our Pioneer Heritage, Vol. 14, p. 470. This work, while referring to the mill, does not mention James Yorgason as the one who purchased it in 1888, but says only that it was purchased.

Mary Henrie "Day Books," no pagination, but see under Friday, 15 November 1889. This was the day that his mill burned down. Only one other mention is made of his mill, but it is interesting that she calls it the roller mill.

Loren Jensen interview. See also: First National Bank of Provo vs. James Yorgason, Case 52 (25 April 1893). In this case the bank, which had a lien on his dairy, refers to it as the James Yorgason Fountain Green Dairy, thus giving the author his only lead or information as to the name it had.
Allred and Allred interview.

Ella Yorgason letter.

Emma Williams interview.

Merl Ivory interview.

Delma Shields, personal interview with Forrest Yorgason, Tooele, Utah, 1971.

J. Gayle Yorgason interview.

Mary Henrie "Day Books," no pagination, but see under Monday, 11 May 1891. Ernest Yorgason said he also used to work at the creamery, and that Anna Svederus used to pull his ears to tease him, and that he didn't like it, or her.


Mary Henrie, "Day Books."

Delma Shields interview.

Ruby Hurren, personal records.

Mary Henrie, "Day Books," no pagination. These items will be found mentioned all through the books. One wonders how one plays "jacks for slaps with $20.00 gold pieces." The author has found no one who is able to answer this question.

Mary Henrie, "Say Books."


Morgan, "Elinor Morgan History."

Merl Ivory interview. See also, Ella Yorgason letter, 16 January 1973.

Loren Jensen interview.


Duane Green letter. This is also an old family tradition, that he trained his horses like they were pets.
J. Gayle Yorgason interview.


Mary Henrie "Day Books," no pagination, but see under dates in text, 1888. The pistol which James S. used against the marshals is still in the possession of the family, and is now owned by Robert Yorgason of Evanston, Wyoming.


H. Johnson interview.


Records of the First District Court of Utah, Provo, Utah. United States vs. James Yorgason, Case 742 (September 25, 1888-February 20, 1891), Salt Lake City, L.D.S. Genealogical Library, pp. 34, 88.

Mary Henrie, "Day Books." No pagination, but see under heading of 15 November 1888.

Ibid.

Ibid., Sunday, 4 May 1890.

Grantee's Index, Sanpete County. James purchased this property from Martin A. Taylor and wife.

Mary Henrie, "Day Books," no pagination, but see under Friday, 13 December 1889. This must have been an unlucky day, at least for Mary and Wilford.

Warranty Deeds, Grantor's Index, Sanpete County, Utah Territory. This index is in two books, and is found in the archives of the Sanpete County Courthouse, Manti, Utah. Again, no other material has been found.


Loren Jensen interview.

E. G. Beckwith, Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economic Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean (Washington, Beverly Tucker, Printer, 1855), p. 57, 18 September 1853.
It seems that one of the motives James had for taking his horses out into the desert may have been to hide them, as he knew they might be taken from him. Thus, the secrecy of the place to so many people.

Mary Henrie "Day Books." These have been copied as she wrote them. It will be noted that she left spaces to record miles, but evidently never got back to it. The location of the ranch was not known by anyone the author could locate, but this small account led him almost to it. Though many of the landmarks Mary mentions are no longer known by that name, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad was kind enough to send the author an old map made in 1891, which clearly shows Little Grand Station, Cottonwood Wash, Grassy Trail, etc. The author was then able to trace the route on a map directly to Courthouse Rock, and from there to the river and the ranch.

Kenneth A. Beach, letter to the author, 7 May 1973. Mr. Beach is County Assessor for Grand County, Utah. He was kind enough to point out to the author the location of Courthouse Rock, and to inform him of its previous history.

Pearl Baker, The Wild Bunch at Robbers Roost (Abelard-Schuman, New York, 1971), p. 13. Also Gayle Yorgason, personal interview with Andrew Allred of Fountain Green, Utah. No date on tape. Mr. Allred described it as a gooseneck. See also, Stella McElprang, Castle Valley, a History of Emery County (The Emery County Company of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1949), p. 2. The Green River portion of this history was compiled by Pearl Baker and Ruth Wilcox.

This information was gleaned from personal interviews with the children of these men. Though this job must not have lasted more than a year or so, virtually every one of them thought so much about it that he repeated it to his children on several occasions.

James Yorgason, "An Interesting Letter from Jim Yorgason of Fountain Green," The Enterprise (Ephraim, Utah), Wednesday, 1 February 1893.

The gold medal which James won is now in the possession of Leland Henrie of Richfield, Utah.

James Yorgason letter, The Enterprise.

Warranty Deeds, Grantor's Index, Sanpete County, Utah Territory, Books 1 and 2.
Grantee's Index.

Evidence indicates that only two failed to go along with this, Canute Petersen and O. L. Coolidge. One who did and yet still lost the property was Andrew M. Berentsen, James' counselor. See Jacob Johnson vs. James Yorgason, Case 39 (6 January 1893); Canute Petersen vs. James Yorgason, Case 40 (17 January 1893); O. L. Coolidge vs. James Yorgason, Case 41 (17 January 1893).

Manuscript History of the Church, Fountain Green Ward, Moroni Stake, October, 1891.

Senate Document #486, Investigation of Honorable Reed Smoot, Senator from Utah (4 March 1904), Vol. 1, p. 324. This relates the conversation between a Mr. Taylor and President Joseph F. Smith, head of the Church. Pres. Smith candidly admitted that since the manifesto he had had eleven children by all of his wives, but that he had taken no new wives in accordance with Church policy. A part of this is quoted below:

Mr. Taylor: Now, since that was a violation of the law, why have you done it?

Mr. Smith: For the reason I have stated. I preferred to face the penalties of the law to abandoning my family.

Mr. Taylor: Do you consider it an abandonment of your family to maintain relations with your wives except that of occupying their beds?

Mr. Smith: I do not wish to be impertinent, but I should like the gentleman to ask any woman, who is a wife, that question.

Mr. Taylor: Unfortunately, or fortunately, that is not the status of this examination at this point.

Mr. Smith: All the same, it is my sentiment.

Senate Document #486, Vol. 1, p. 19. This declaration of amnesty was issued by President Benjamin Harrison, and was declared by President Woodruff to be "... of little benefit to the people." Roberts, Comprehensive History, Vol. 6, p. 289.

Morgan, "History of James Yorgason," p. 4. Also, Ernest Yorgason, "History."

Sylva Merady Mae was lost to the family for years, and was only found when the author stumbled onto her name when going through records of births in Spanish Fork. It is unknown exactly when Catherine went to Spanish Fork. Her son confirmed this birth with the author.
Hurren, Family Records.

Judgment Docket #1, 7th District Court, Sanpete County, Utah Territory, Index to Judgments. There may have been others filed in other counties, but these are all the author has been able to locate.

Merl Ivory interview. Mr. Ivory states that he went up to West Jordan and stayed with Maria and her sons for about two months, and that he surely did love her. Also, Morgan, "History."

Grantee's Index.

Della Morgan, "History of James Yorgason."

Most family records show only twenty children, but Sylva Merady May is left out. The most complete record is that owned by Ruby Hurren, Nampa, Idaho.

James Yorgason letter, The Enterprise. This letter is quoted in the appendices.

Erastus Clawson, "Marshals Sale," The Enterprise (Ephraim, Utah), Wednesday, 1 February 1893.

Merl Ivory interview.

Allred and Allred interview.

P. C. Christensen vs. James Yorgason, Case 36 (13 December 1892). The author was able to find record of only one time when James himself ever took anyone else to court. That was on 9 May 1890, when he took a John Doe to court because two unclaimed horses had wandered through an alfalfa field of his destroying a great deal of new grass. A summons was issued, no one showed up to claim the horses, and so James was granted them in lieu of 10 cents per head fine, which he had asked for. This is found in the records of the Justices Court, Fountain Green Precinct, Sanpete County, Utah Territory, p. 9. This small record is in the archives of the Sanpete County Courthouse, Manti, Utah.


Co-op Wagon and Machine Co. vs. James Yorgason, Case 33 (21 November 1892). It is interesting to note that this debt was incurred not by borrowing money, but by charging over 10,000 lbs. of barbed and glidden wire, staples to go with it, a feed cutter, and a wagon. These charges were made in early 1891, the wagon was
later repossessed out in Woodside in Eastern Utah, and it is easy to speculate that this material was used to fence in his horse ranch.

362 Elinor Morgan, "Diary."
363 Ibid.
364 Ibid.
365 Ernest Yorgason, "History."
366 Elinor Yorgason, "Diary." This account in Elinor's diary led the author to the news article, which can be found in the archives of the Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City, Utah. It is also found in the Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah.

367 The Daily Tribune, Saturday, 25 March 1893.
368 Ephraim Enterprise, Wednesday, 29 March 1893. It should be noted that one of his "friends" gave him away at this time.

369 Virtually every single law case the author found made the statement: "In this action the defendant James Yorgason having been regularly served with process, and having failed to appear and answer the plaintiff . . . ."

370 Deseret Evening News, 15 June 1893.
371 Ernest Yorgason, "History." Also, Ella Yorgason letter.
372 Ralph Anderson, personal interview with the author, Moroni, Utah, 27 December 1972.
373 Helen Sanderson letter, 11 November 1972.
374 Jay Anderson, personal interview with the author, Manti, Utah, 1 May 1973. Mr. Anderson, who is the youngest son of Catherine, stated that as James Yorgason approached each wife, she declined by saying that she was younger or had been his wife less long than so and so, and so she really didn't have a right to go with him. Christina simply refused to go. Mr. Anderson stated that Catherine would have liked to go with him.
375 Ralph Anderson interview. One wonders why he didn't give them to his family.
376 Emma Williams interview.
Merl Ivory interview.

Morgan, "History of Christina Yorgason," p. 6. James, in his letter to Marshal Clawson, mentions an account due the Church. This must have been what he was referring to, as the author could find no indication of anything else.

Robert Yorgason letter and Ella Yorgason letter. Both commented that Ernest never again liked anyone with the name of Christiansen.

Morgan, "History of Christina Yorgason." This is a quote from Ernest Yorgason, her son.

Morgan, "History of Elinor Yorgason."

Ibid.

Ernest Yorgason, "History."

Frank Allred interview. He says:
"Joe Otteson from out to Birch Creek was one of Yorgason's victims. He signed with him on a note, and then after Yorgason was gone, Joe had to pay up. He didn't have any money, and so in order to pay it he had to sell a piece of his property, his favorite, so he could pay. Later on Joe went down to L.A. to try and get his money from Yorgason. I don't know whether or not he ever got it." "I can only tell you what I've heard. I heard that he borrowed money from a lot of people there in Fountain Green and then he left between two suns. They never knewed where he went, for years. I don't know if he ever paid back any money, I couldn't tell you one damn thing about that."

Also, from the Jesse Oldroyd interview:
"Recently I went to the daughters of the Utah Pioneers here in Fountain Green. This was after I read your ad in the Pyramid. I asked them if any of them had any information and all any of them had to say was that, from all they could remember hearing, Bishop Yorgason was imported from Moroni to be the Bishop, and many people were quite resentful of this."

Also, from the Merl Ivory interview:
"... he was a very fine man. Yep! I don't know how the hell people could say that he wasn't honest. Because he never had any deals with anybody that I know of that he didn't treat right."
Also, from the George Collard interview:
Both my folks and my grandparents were quite close
to Bishop Yorgason and his wife Steenie. And I never
in my life ever heard anything said about Yorgason
that would question his honesty in any way. He was
an honest man who was in some ways a victim of
circumstances. But he was always honest and did his
best to see that other people were cared for and had
the things that they needed. Steenie was a quiet and
busy woman, well respected in the community.

Also, from the Howard Allen interview; May 29, 1973:
"One day when I was out on the desert herding sheep
with Johnny Yorgason, another herder came in and
said that there were some Yorgasons up north herding
also, and he asked Johnny if they were related.
Johnny replied, 'Damned if I know. The Church stood
Pa at stud all the way from New York to San Francisco.
There could be Yorgasons anywhere.'"

Also, from the Allred and Allred interview:
"The drought is what ruined Yorgason too. It
wasn't polygamy, and he wasn't dishonest. He just
got in over his head financially, and then they
foreclosed."

Also, from the Virgil Jacobsen interview:
"My father looked up to Yorgason and he was his
idol. Dad never said anything that indicated that
Yorgason was dishonest in any way. He was always
a pusher and a doer, very forthright, always building
and creating and making money in everything he did."

385 Ralph Anderson interview.

386 J. Earl Garner, personal interview with the
author, Rexburg, Idaho, 22 January 1973. Mr. Garner is
a lifelong resident of Rexburg, is over ninety years of
age, and served his mission in California. The author
first became aware of this as he listened to Mr. Garner
describe the pigeon ranch during a talk in Sacrament
Meeting early in 1973. He was very emphatic about this
amount, stating that the story was well known to all
the people in Los Angeles.

387 Ibid. Morgan in her history states that he first
went into the chicken business and then branched into the
pigeon business.

388 Mr. Randall. "Reminiscences of the Winter of 1905-
1906 in California," p. 28. Unpublished manuscript now
in the possession of the author. This was originally
given by Mr. Randall (first name unknown) to Merdith
Coleman, a granddaughter of James Yorgason, who was serving as Mr. Randall's nurse. She, in turn, gave it to the author.

A Century of Mormon Activities in California (Salt Lake City, Deseret News Press, 1951), Vol. 1, p. 94. According to this article the ranch was located in the northeast part of the city on Riverside Drive, just east of Elysian Park. This name which he chose was used both on his letterhead and on his business card. It is unknown whether this name was ever changed officially.

Helen Sanderson letter, 11 November 1972.

Ibid. She reports that due to pigeons liking to be in a flock, James was unable to sell them to others. Whenever he did so, within a week or so they would be back with him. This, at least, prevented competition.

Randall, p. 28. The author has been unable to find out just how squab was cooked or eaten, though the opinion has been expressed that they were baked whole and eaten that way, without any cleaning at all.

Allred and Allred interview. Very likely this is why his families back in Utah didn't receive any financial help from him. It is interesting to note, however, that court records found in Manti indicate that varying amounts of money were applied to James' debts throughout the years from 1898 to 1912, but there is no indication where this money came from.

Merdith O. Coleman, letter to the author, 16 January 1973. Mrs. Coleman relates that her father, Johnny Yorgason, told her a great deal about the farm, and gave her several pictures of it, all but one of which have gone out of her possession.

Merl Ivory interview. Mr. Ivory was in California as a teenager to shear sheep, and while there visited James Yorgason on his ranch.

Ibid.

These postcards are scattered throughout the family, for it seems that Johnny sent them at every opportunity to all his brothers and sisters. The author has seen at least nine or ten different views.

Randall, p. 28.

Merl Ivory interview.
A photograph of the restaurant is in the possession of the author.

Merl Ivory interview.

J. Earl Garner interview.

Ibid. With that many pigeons it is easy to understand that a protected platform would be a necessity if one is to get very many visitors.

Ibid., Also Meredith O. Coleman letter.


J. Gayle Yorgason, personal interview with the author, Provo, Utah, 30 December 1972. Yorgason states: One that comes to my mind first happened in the winter of 1942 while I was working as an ordinance worker in the Manti Temple. I met a little old gentleman there by the name of Wall. When he learned my name was Yorgason, he said, "You know, a number of years ago while I was in California on a mission there was a man by the name of Yorgason who went by the name of Johnson. But he would come in to Los Angeles, for he was always looking out for ways to help the missionaries. He would have us out to his ranch, a large pigeon and turkey farm. He would have us out there as one day a week was missionary day out there and that would be our day off. But always when the missionaries were having street meetings someone would try to stir up a little trouble for the elders. They would start shouting things and throwing things, and the missionaries would always try to get things back under control, but they had a real problem. So many times this large man, Yorgason, would step out of the crowd, come up in front of them, and just take over for the missionaries. He had a manner that no one seemed to argue with or have any reason to not listen to what he was saying. Because of his manner of authority he would take over and get the crowd quieted down and he would then turn it back over to the missionaries. And usually the troublemakers would either have gone or else would keep quiet from that point on as long as he was in the crowd." Mr. Wall said this was a common occurrence, that Yorgason would always seem to be in the right place at just the right time. He seemed to know when the missionaries were having their most important street meetings and try to be
there. This was one of the ways that he tried to help out the missionaries.

407 Mercie Ivory, "Transcript of the Funeral Services over Bishop James Yorgason," Fountain Green, Utah, 22 May 1917.


In approximately 1910, when I was about 26 years of age, I wanted very badly to see my father and his pigeon farm, both of which were in Los Angeles, California. My brother, Joseph, living in Wyoming, sold my horse and sent me the profits, thus financing my trip.

I boarded a train at Salt Lake and everything was quite uneventful until we reached San Francisco. Here, in order to cross the bay, the train was broken up into three sections and loaded onto a ferry.

When I arrived in Los Angeles, I took a sightseeing street car out to the pigeon farm, which was located in the Elysian Park on the Los Angeles River, then being on the outskirts of Los Angeles. The James Y. Johnson Pigeon Farm was just one of the attractions, or stops, of this tour; others being the ostrich and alligator farms, Ocean Park, Venice City, and Long Beach. The entire tour cost $2 and there would be hundreds of people each day take it. There was an extra fee to Catalina Island—"101 miles for $1!"—was the bait. But it was worthwhile. We rode on a glass-bottom boat and we could see all the many different types of fish and ocean plants.

When I arrived at the pigeon farm, after paying an admission fee of 10 or 25 cents, I began asking for my father, who was going under an assumed name—James Y. Johnson. When I explained to an employee who I was, he told me to pretend that I wanted to buy some fancy birds, and that he would send Pa to help me as soon as he returned. Pa was out delivering squabs.

The employee kept his word, for after awhile I heard a voice say, "I understand you want to buy some pigeons." I replied that I did, and then Pa said, "You can't fool me—you're Ernest!" He hadn't seen me since I was 7 years old—some 19 years earlier, when I would stand guard at the front gate and wait for him to come home.

Pa had started out with a poultry farm—chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, but a disease struck the
farm and all but the pigeons died like flies, and Pa nearly went broke. So, even though there was more profit in poultry, he went into the pigeon business. Dark feathered pigeons had dark meat and reduced prices, so he featured nothing but white ones—better meat—better money. The farm hosted approximately 100,000 pigeons which were kept in pens. Each pen had 10,000 coops, and each pair of birds had two coops. The eggs were in one and the young ones were maturing in the other. Both the male and female would take turns setting on the eggs and feeding the young. There was one feeding ground where an old man would pour 2 tons of grain (corn and wheat) every morning at 10:00 when the tourists came filling the stands. All the pigeons would come to eat, raise up thick as a cloud, and block out the sun there were so many in number.

In getting the squabs ready for the market, Johnny, my half-brother who had been there about 8 years, would gather into a gunny sack the squabs that were ready and would bring them into me. After 6 to 8 months I was put on as "Chief Squab Picker"—I could pick as many as 4 birds a minute; two dozen in less than six minutes; 20 to 40 dozen each morning. Meanwhile Pa would call his clients—various hotels and restaurants—and get their orders. He didn't need any telephone directory—he knew them all. After getting the orders he would deliver them personally, using a horse and wagon. I didn't think much of that horse (named Sailor). He would sometimes balk and often did right on the railroad track that ran right beside the pigeon farm. Whatever picked birds were left over from the deliveries were put into cold storage. Once Southern Pacific ordered 500 dozen cold storage pigeons! There was a Japanese farm neighboring our farm. Our pigeons would often fly over to eat the greens. Sometimes the Japs would shoot and kill whenever the birds stole. But all we'd have to do was holler and the birds would return to their coops.

409 Ella Yorgason letter, 16 January 1973. She states that this story was told by Ernest Morgan, a grandson of James Yorgason. The author has looked into the history of Catalina Island, and interestingly, between 1895 and 1915 the island changed hands four times. Knowing that, Yorgason certainly might have considered purchasing it.

410 Ernest Yorgason, "Personal History."
Morgan, p. 5. No records have been found in the Church to indicate whether this marriage was civil or otherwise.

Ibid., p. 3. There has been a great deal of discussion regarding this amount, and it has been variously represented as being anywhere from $100,000 to $1,250,000. The author chose the lowest figure quoted as being most likely correct.

ValGene Yorgason interview.

"Famous Pigeon Farm Wiped Out," The Los Angeles Examiner, Los Angeles, California, 22 February 1914.

"Half-Million Pigeons Drowned or Homeless," The Los Angeles Sunday Times, Los Angeles, California, 22 February 1914.

ValGene Yorgason interview.

Ibid.

Gertrude K. Johnson, letter to Mrs. Elinor Morgan, Los Angeles, 3 July 1917. This letter is now in the possession of Della Morgan, Spokane, Washington, as are all other letters quoted below.

James Yorgason, letter dictated to Mary Henrie, Lancaster, 1 April 1917. Also, Gertrude K. Johnson, letter to Mary Henrie, 6 April 1917.

Mrs. J. Y. (Gertrude K.) Johnson, letter to Charles Edward Yorgason, Lancaster, 8 April 1917.


Helen Sanderson letter, 11 November 1972.

Wilford Moroni Yorgason, letter to Charles Edward Yorgason, 16 May 1917. This letter is dated the same day as the death of James, indicating that the date is wrong or that it was written very early in the morning.

Merl Ivory interview.

Mercie Ivory, letter to James S. Yorgason, Fountain Green, Utah, 22 May 1917. This letter is now in the possession of Ella Yorgason, Burlington, Wyoming.

Ibid.
Mercie Ivory, letter to Catherine Yorgason Anderson, Nephi, Utah, 22 May 1917.


Olson, 157.

Young, 210, 213.

Ibid., 118-119. Also see Olson, 69.

Olson, 70.


Olson, 70.


Olson, 71.

Young, 129.

Ibid., 214. Also Olson, 112.

Olson, 105, 109.


Ivins, 315. Also Olson, 53.


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Dredge, 139. Also, Ray R. Louder, "The Trials, Attitudes and Feelings of the Latter-day Saints During the Underground Movement in Utah and the West" (Unpublished manuscript, 1957): 3.

Linford, 368.

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Hulett, 279-287. Also, Young, 283.
Campbell and Campbell, 16.

Olson, 82.


Olson, 51, 53.

Ivins, 316.

Olson, 101, 102.

Young, 425.

Dredge, 146.

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A. Milton Musser, "Questions and Answers," Improvement Era (Salt Lake City, November 1905): 64-65.


Olson, 121, 122.


Ibid., 238.

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Rasmus Clawson, U.S. Deputy Marshal, Ephraim

Dear Sir:

I saw a piece in the Salt Lake Tribune concerning me and my departure from home and it is not altogether true. In fact, very little of it is true, so I thought perhaps that you would not consider me out of the way to rectify it in part. It said that before I left that I did borrow from my good brethren all the money that I could get and that I bought a valuable stallion, then mortgaged him, then sold him, thus getting paid for him twice. These two points and others not worth mentioning are false as I did not borrow any money from my brethren just before I left, but to the contrary I paid out every dollar that I had to my creditors. The stallion spoken of I bought three years ago from Bennet & Sons, Kansas, and the bill of sale says he cost $1,800.00. There is but $800.00 balance due on him; they asked for additional security last summer and the stallion was placed on a mortgage to secure the $800.00. Afterwards I sold the horse with the understanding that the debt to Bennet & Son should be paid by the purchaser, consequently I am the loser of $1,000.00 on the stallion and not in pocket. It is true that I am greatly in debt but not any of my indebtedness has been contacted with the intention of not paying back. Sometime last summer I concluded to sell all my horses and pay off what indebtedness I could and finally I did bargain and sold them to James S. Yorgason with the understanding that we should take a bunch to Chicago and he should have the balance for which he paid as stated in his bill of sale. We did not count the horses but he was to have all with my recorded brand on them. I have some horses scattered around that has not my brand on I have bought them neglected to brand them. These horses what I sold went out of my possession before any judgment was rendered against me in the Territory of Utah. Now I wish to tell you how that I have got financially ruined. In the first place the dairy man which started me and gave me what instructions he could or would give me was a fraud and he made cheeses which will prove my statement as anyone knows who has seen or eaten any of it. I was damaged over $5,000.00 by his neglect or inability but he claimed to be an expert at
both cheese and butter. The butter was good and the Z.C.M.I. they handled it nearly one year and they threw off on me about the 1st. June 1892 is about the very worst time that a man could be left without customers for butter. I then had to lose about $2,000.00 worth of butter before I could get a new customer for my butter and sure enough I got one, Mr. John Jones, Jr., and his son, F.A. Jones. They were to pay every week for the butter 1,000 lbs. per week $285.00. They did pay very well for awhile till me and my son went east with our horses. We went down with 50 head and we could have had $50.00 per head at Chicago but we had cosigned them to T. H. Spaulding and Co. and we could not sell them and I ordered the horses sent to Boston, where they said we could get more cash for them, but we found them a perfect band of anything but straight dealers. We only got about $3.00 per head, after expenses and commission was taken out of the first carload and the other carload I have never heard from yet. So you see that when I got back home I really had less cash than when I started away and when I got back I found that I had been summoned to appear at the district court and answer to three complaints of indebtedness and from the time given me I could see that judgment was given against me but I found afterwards that it was not given until about a week later. If I had known then that judgment in my opinion would never have been given as I consider it unjust it was for a lot of cattle which was not as recommended. I then found myself in a very bad fix. Another party had taken all my milk cows to secure them for another account, and the balance of milk cows went I can scarcely say where or for what but they were gone. I then sold the creamery and a considerable of my land which was already under mortgage with the understanding that the parties should pay interest and lift mortgage when due or return property back to me. I looked over my books and found that Mr. Jones was over $1,000.00 behind. I concluded to try and have a settlement with him and that would help me to straighten some of my accounts. I went and seen him but he claimed that he had not been as he worded it but would turn out his outfit and let that go as far as it could but I told him he must get the cash as I had to have it to pay my interest accounts with. He said he would get what he could by 6 o'clock that night and meet me at the office but he did not come. The next morning I learned that both father and son had left town the night before. It is true I got there outfit but I was out $1,000.00 in cash. All the cash I had when I left home was $5.50 and I should not have had a dollar if my oldest daughter had not given me $1.00 and the next oldest gave me $5.00 but they persuaded me to go with them to a dance the night before I left and there I spent 50 cents for my ticket. I found at the Nephi Bank there
was some over $120.00 to my credit. I drew out $10.00 made out cheques for the balance payable to my creditors but my daughter had given cheques for the same money unbeknown to me which she had a perfect right to do as my agent in my absence, her cheques got in ahead of mine and of course my cheques were returned unpaid. Now Mr. Clawson I see plainly that I shall not be able to succeed in business in San Pete at least for awhile so I wish to explain to you what I have got and in what shape. I have on dry bottom about 280 acres, value $14,000.00 East of the road 160 acres, value $1,600, mortgaged to the American National Bank Salt Lake for $4,700.00 when due. They also have $500 in the new canal running from Fairview to dry bottom $500. They also have also east of town, 72 acres, $144. I have on dry bottom about 160 acres, $6,400. Mortgaged to Deseret Savings Bank for $3,000. I have a farm north of Mornoi 128 acres, $6,400. Mortgaged to the Lombard Co. for $3,500. when due. I have 20 acres on dry bottom and 10 acres east of the road which is mortgaged to Jacob Johnson for about $800. and $1,900. Also another piece about 20 acres do not know the value may be $100. I have in the Cedar Ridge about 392 acres $7,840. mortgaged to the Western Farm Mortgage and Fruit Co. and on dry bottom 30 acres $1,500. for $3,500. when due. I have also about 446 acres on the glade $17,840. mortgaged to one Allston & Shetles & Rolyne for $4,200. I have also one creamery complete if not otherwise disposed of worth $6,000. $5,000. mortgaged to First National Bank Provo, I have proposed to let them have it for my notes. I do not recollect any more mortgages but these I should like settled and if you can sell them at private sale better than public (you) will do me a kindness to do so. Of course I have forgotten the Utah Nursery Co., they hold papers against me but they have also got judgment and they have their security which is altogether more than they should have as the stock was very much misrepresented by Mr. A. Van Meter who sold and represented the stock to me.

I have 160 acres on dry bottom mortgaged to Ole Jensen of Manti worth about $30.00 per acre and three city lots in Fountain Green and three brick houses worth about $1,600. all mortgaged for $1,500. Total $6,400. Total mortgages amount to Acres 1735 mortgaged for $26,200, valued at $70,524. When this property is disposed of and the mortgages lifted I would like the balance of the cash to be paid as follows: To the First National Bank of Nephi $1,960. to the Manti City Savings Bank, 1,060. To C.A. Larson, Ephraim, 860. To Bank of Commerce, Provo, 1,060. To O. Coolidge, Manti, 1,100. To Payson City Savings Bank, 640. To

My total indebtedness is as near as I can tell about $36,630. There are small accounts with different ones which I will try and settle myself when I get back home. The Church has also an account against me but I think we can settle that ourselves. Please take action in these matters as soon as possible so that no more cost will (be added to) what has already accrued. (Of course, I) expect to have to pay you (as much as) if you were working officially (for selling my properties). You are perfectly welcome to publish this statement in full or in part and let people know that it is my intention to settle every dollar which I do owe them, and please try to stop suits if possible till you can make sales. I think it would be profitable to advertise all this property for sale right away. I will be home after awhile then I'll try and see you.

Very Respectfully,

James Yorgason

P.S. On large sales please consult my son, James S. Yorgason.

J. Yorgason
The Daily Tribune  
Saturday, March 25, 1893
A LIVELY CHASE FOR A COHAB,
JAMES YORGASON MOUNTS AN OFFICER'S HORSE AND FLEES.

He Is Caught After a Chase of Thirty Miles--His Plural Wife Found Living Under a Shelving Rock--

James Yorgason, formerly a bishop at Fountain Green, was brought to Provo yesterday by Deputy Marshal Rex, having been arrested on a charge of adultery in Grand County. Yorgason had been missing for some time and a few days ago the deputy marshals heard of his whereabouts and also that of his alleged plural wife. Deputy Marshals Erastus Clawson and Rex went after him and found his plural wife under a shelving rock in the wilds of Grand County, with a small babe in her arms.

Deputy Marshal Rex was the first to make the discovery, and called to his brother officers (sic) telling him of the fact. The two of them left their horses tied to some trees and proceeded to the rude abode where the woman was arrested. When they returned to where the horses were tied, lo! and behold, one was gone. Yorgason had in the meantime arrived, mounted the animal, and fled. This was 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and then commenced a heated chase of about thirty miles, when the alleged adulterer was captured. He was taken to Sunnyside Station, on the Rio Grande Western Railroad, and brought to Provo as above stated. Most of the time yesterday was spent in rustling for bonds. It appears, however, that Yorgason's reputation among the moneyed men does not rank high, and none cared to go his security. It is said that a number who have signed notes for him in Sanpete have done so to their sorrow. The result is that Yorgason still lingers in confinement. He spent last night in the county jail. Now that Yorgason is captured, it is believed other charges will be brought against him of a criminal nature, resulting from his faulty financial deals and speculations. There are a number of judgments hanging over him. The plural wife was brought in late last night by Deputy Marshal Clawson.
James Yorgason, formerly Bishop of Fountain Green, was captured last week by Deputies Clawson of Ephraim and Rex of Salina. His hiding place was in Eastern Utah in a small cave, which was never known to exist except by a few persons who resided in the vicinity.

The deputies had a hard time to find out Yorgason (sic) whereabouts, but through the assistance of some person acquainted with Yorgason, they were able to find his winter quarters and immediately after getting horses, etc., they began their search for Jimmie. When they came to his dwelling they were informed by a couple of hired Swedes that he had left several days since and they knew nothing of his whereabouts but on being asked who took food to him they pointed to their won and of course gave him away and after a few words they were persuaded to let their child go with them and find Yorgason. While all of this was going on Yorgason was but a half mile up on the mountain looking to see whether or not the officers were coming his way and when he found they were, he at once tried to make all haste for other quarters. After awhile the deputies came to mountains so steep that it would be impossible for an animal to climb so they continued their search on foot. Yorgason, seeing this (as) a good opportunity to try and escape, made for the horses left by the deputies and succeeded too. After awhile the marshal saw him sailing away as fast the animal could carry him and Rex followed as soon as possible and after a 30 mile chase succeeded in capturing his blue feathered jay bird. During this time it was learned that he had a young woman and a babe four weeks old. When this had been accomplished Yorgason was loaded on a car and shipped to Provo, thence to Mt. Pleasant where his preliminary trial was held. He was bound over in the sum of $1,000.00 to await the action of the Grand Jury and being unable to furnish bonds was conveyed to the Utah Pen where he still remains. The charges against him are so many that it would take a column of space to mention them, and for fear that we might omit some, we will not attempt it. His sentence, when announced, will of course be a strong one and which he justly deserves. His photos were taken at Provo and will be placed in the Rogue's gallery.
APPENDIX C

Funeral Services over the Remains of Bishop James Yorgason:

Bishop John T. Oldroyd presiding, singing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." Prayer by E. W. Sorenson, singing "sometime We'll Understand," opening remarks by Bishop Oldroyd. He was pleased to see so many old friends and relatives present (some coming more than one hundred miles through mud and rain).

Second speaker, Brother Lynn from Midvale, who was with James Yorgason on his first mission to Sweden. He said they were companions nine months, ate and slept together most of the time and regretted very much having to separate due to the fact that Brother Yorgason was appointed Conference President. He was sincere and faithful in his work and many were benefitted by his kindness and liberality, especially among the poorer classes. Twenty-six persons were emigrated from Sweden to the United States at his own expense. He said I now speak in behalf of all who knew him and associated with Brother Yorgason and I say to know him was to love him.

Third speaker, Ephraim Nielson from Moroni, he said he was well acquainted with Brother Yorgason and besides being liberal, sympathetic and god-fearing, he was a leader among men. He told of when he was President of YMMIA at Moroni(?). A call came to him to furnish one team and five men to work on the Manti Temple, he made the call known to the young men and before the close of the meeting he had five teams and twenty-five men volunteer to go. He said it was the same way with anything that he requested of the young men. He met him a number of times when he was on his mission at Los Angeles. On one occasion was at the funeral services of his little grandchild who died there. He was given privilege of speaking a few words. In his remarks he bore a strong testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and so long as a man does not deny the faith he is entitled to the blessings of the Lord and he was pleased to see that he is being buried in his temple clothes.

Singing, Solo By Bishop Oldroyd and his wife, Geneva, "In the Upper Gardens."
Fourth Speaker, James Larson of Moroni. He said he was namesake of Uncle James and he owed him much for the very good council he had given him in his boyhood days. He said he had been a guide to him many times in his walk through life. He spoke of Aunt Christina being at his wedding reception and of the good council she gave him and in telling him how to live. She said she and her husband had never had a quarrel during their married life.

Fifth Speaker, James Aagard made an enthusiastic talk. He said that the family felt that there were a great many there for curiosity. To hear what would be said of their father. He said while we know he had done wrong and had made mistakes we feel sure that he has suffered in his mind and what he is lacking in repentance the Lord will perhaps hold him responsible, so far, that the debt he owes the covenants he has made must be paid before he will be permitted to come forth in the resurrection and mingle with his family. He also brought proof by reading from the scriptures that the principle of polygamy was not responsible for his downfall, as some had made the remarks, but he claimed that it was when he became handicapped financially that he fell down. He said there had been some discussion to him wearing his temple clothes, but he felt that it was all right for him to wear them, that he would be able to make restitution with his God for any wrong he had done.

Bishop Oldroyd in his closing remarks thanked everyone in behalf of the family who had taken part in the services and all who had been kind to them in any way and had assisted in caring for their father.

The floral offerings were many and beautiful. Singing, "Shall we Meet Beyond the River." Benediction, Brother K. P. Jensen.

A copy of the funeral was sent to many of the family members, including James, who was still in Wyoming, and Catherine, James' sixth wife, who had remarried and was now living in Nephi.

Dear Friend Catheryn:
This is only a synopsis of the funeral. He died easy and without saying anything in the way of goodbye. I was with him when he died except Nora and Wilford. He began sinking about 3 AM and passed away at 10 AM. His wife from
Los Angeles sent a will for him to sign but it was not signed. There was quite a number from Moroni and his nephews from up north, but none of his family came except Mary. He looked very nice, Mattie came and brought nice flowers, the flowers you sent were put with the rest at the home and the meeting house. Dear friend, I wish you had come over for I think you would have enjoyed it all. I hope this will be some comfort to you although there is quite a number of mistakes.

Your Friend,
Mercie Ivory
# APPENDIX D

## THE WIVES OF JAMES YORGASON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wife</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Date of Marriage</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Age of Husband</th>
<th>Termination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christina Johnson</td>
<td>Nov 26, 1849</td>
<td>Dec 8, 1867</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Death, Sep 15, 1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Margaret Tilby</td>
<td>Sep 6, 1858</td>
<td>Aug 2, 1875</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Divorce, Cancellation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Christine Jorganson (Amy)</td>
<td>Dec 13, 1861</td>
<td>Aug 8, 1878</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Divorce, Cancellation, Excommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Lovisa Peterson</td>
<td>Mar 20, 1857</td>
<td>Oct 28, 1880</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Divorce, Cancellation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Nielsen</td>
<td>Feb 8, 1847</td>
<td>Oct 28, 1883</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Divorce, Cancellation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Olson</td>
<td>Aug 27, 1861</td>
<td>Dec 20, 1883</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Divorce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Louisa Svederus</td>
<td>July 9, 1864</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Death, 1893-1894?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude K. Wing</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>May 18, 1913</td>
<td>older</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX E

### CHILDREN OF JAMES YORGASON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wife</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Mary Caroline Johanna</td>
<td>Sep 17, 1868</td>
<td>Sep 4, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. James Sanders</td>
<td>Sep 30, 1870</td>
<td>Jul 21, 1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Elinor Cecelia</td>
<td>Sep 14, 1872</td>
<td>Jan 18, 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parley Peter</td>
<td>Nov 24, 1874</td>
<td>Feb 15, 1876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Annie Laura Christina</td>
<td>Nov 9, 1876</td>
<td>Nov 23, 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Ernest Alonzo</td>
<td>Jun 12, 1884</td>
<td>Apr 21, 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Andrew Washington</td>
<td>Sep 1, 1879</td>
<td>Mar 8, 1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Hyrum Vincent</td>
<td>Nov 6, 1881</td>
<td>Nov 26, 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Francis Victoria</td>
<td>May 16, 1884</td>
<td>Oct 30, 1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Royal Leone</td>
<td>Dec 14, 1892</td>
<td>Mar 17, 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma (Amy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Orson LeRoy</td>
<td>Jun 1, 1879</td>
<td>Nov 24, 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Hilda Jane</td>
<td>Jan 11, 1881</td>
<td>Nov 14, 1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Robert Gustaf</td>
<td>Sep 10, 1881</td>
<td>Nov 5, 1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Augusta Polene</td>
<td>Aug 7, 1884</td>
<td>1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Sylva Merady May</td>
<td>Jun 25, 1892</td>
<td>Aug 14, 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE IMPACT OF POLYGAMY UPON THE LIFE OF JAMES YORGASON:
A NINETEENTH-CENTURY MORMON BISHOP

Blaine M. Yorgason
Department of History
M.A. Degree, April 1980

ABSTRACT

On August 2, 1875, James Yorgason, soon to be the Bishop of the Fountain Green Utah Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, took his first plural wife. In doing so he joined a rather elite group of Mormon men who were known as polygamists. Over the next thirteen years, as he built a financial empire to support them, he took five more plural wives, making him exceptional even among the elite.

But then in 1887 the Edmunds-Tucker law was passed and "The Raid" against Mormon polygamists began, the United States entered a time of monetary crisis in 1888, and by 1889 most of the western United States, including Sanpete County, Utah, was experiencing a severe drought. Together these situations destroyed James Yorgason's financial base, and shortly thereafter each of his plural wives filed for divorce, effectively destroying his polygamous family.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:
Ted J. Warner, Committee Chairman
Eugene E. Campbell, Committee Member
Ted J. Warner, Department Chairman