Representative Mormon Short Stories 1890 to 1940: Evolution of Sentimentalism Toward Realism

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REPRESENTATIVE MORMON SHORT STORIES 1890 to 1940:
EVOLUTION OF SENTIMENTALISM
TOWARD REALISM

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of English
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In Partial Fulfillment
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Master of Arts

by
Alice Gardner
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Introduction

In their introduction to an anthology of Mormon literature, *A Believing People*, Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert summarized the development of short fiction from the 1830s to the present. When the Latter-day Saints (Mormons) settled in the West, their former repugnance toward fiction turned to an attitude of acceptance. However, what the Mormon Church publications defined as "home literature" was literature with a particular flavor of Mormon doctrine, meant to be morally uplifting to its readers. Its chief aim was to repel the influence of contemporary non-Mormon writers of popular, "pulp" fiction.

Cracroft and Lambert related a few basic plots in their introduction of the many sentimental stories written by Mormon contributors in late nineteenth century fiction, many of whom wrote under pen names. Then they made the following statement to both describe and summarize the long literary period from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1940s:

The first several decades of the twentieth century afforded little excellence in
shorter fiction, the heyday of Mormon short story writers passing with Nephi Anderson and Josephine Spencer. . . . Church magazines did little to foster anything more than the short, underdeveloped, and strongly didactic tale.

When I first read this statement, I was curious about the body of literature in LDS (Latter-day Saint) Church magazines it referred to, and I wanted to find out what was in those magazines and be able to describe the material. I became particularly interested later when I discovered that no one had ever made a thorough study of the literary contents of Mormon periodicals during the fifty-year period from 1890 to 1940. Thus, my intention here is not to be as analytical or as critical as I might be in my evaluation of the fiction in these periodicals. This is partly because my dual purpose is to investigate and to evaluate, and it is partly because of the huge body of material involved.

When I first opened the yellowed volumes of these periodicals, I found that several Mormons had contributed almost an equal number of poems and short stories. I decided to deal only with the short story genre because its length and form renders it more conducive to analysis on several levels. Short stories also allow

for a greater diversity in the development of character, plot, theme, style, and so on than do either poetry or novels because they can be read easily in one sitting but they are relatively complex.

After I had narrowed my focus to include only short stories, I decided against a random sample approach for reading and selecting the stories I would use in my discussion. Since my purpose was to be an investigative one, I felt that I should look at all of the stories as a body so that I could get a "feel" for the whole before I chose the parts which could best represent the entire body of this literature.

Eighteen ninety was selected as the beginning date of the Mormon short story in this study since it marks the inception of the Young Woman's Journal, the richest repository of early Mormon fiction. Other Church-sponsored periodicals had flourished for years, but I decided not to use stories in periodicals like the Millennial Star, The Woman's Exponent, the Relief Society Magazine, the Contributor (for young men), the Improvement Era, and the Juvenile Instructor. They contain few short stories that are not heavily didactic and sentimental. As I will point out throughout my thesis, these aspects of early Mormon fiction were not divorced from stories in the Young Woman's Journal although their extreme forms were somewhat mitigated.
The *Journal* began with a more favorable attitude toward fiction (fostered by an editor who was an avid writer and advocate of fiction herself, Susa Young Gates). This attitude encouraged short story contributors to the *Journal* to pay more attention to their writing in order to choose literary patterns and styles for conveying their message or theme adequately. I found a greater degree of creative freedom in the *Journal* than in the other Mormon publications listed above. Often literary digressions in the other periodicals were confined to articles cautioning readers to stay away from novels and to absorb only literature from "the best books" outside of the scriptures.²

Two magazines which did contain a significant number of short stories throughout their lifespan, the *Relief Society Magazine* for women and the *Juvenile Instructor* for children, remained in a sentimental or didactic mode more consistently and intensely than did the *Journal*. Although stories from other periodicals are discussed occasionally here, I will not give much attention to them until the merging of the *Journal* with the *Improvement Era* in about 1930.

I decided to end my study in 1940 because of my belief that the first Mormon novels of the 1940s show

² Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; see also D & C 90:15; 109:14.
the same artistic evolution in plot, characterization, and theme as do their prototypes, the stories of LDS periodicals. The short stories and novels written after the 1940s are treated by Cracroft and Lambert in their anthology as being, in their opinion, the initial stories of quality written by Mormon writers. Yet, since no one has really looked at the earlier stories in order to determine their nature and their respective levels of sophistication, it is difficult to know how the post-1940 stories and novels developed their relative degree of quality.

The three chapters following this one cover stories written between 1890 and 1940 and are divided into three sections: chapter two, 1890 through 1905; chapter three, 1906 through 1925; and chapter four, 1926 through 1940. The summary and conclusion are in the final chapter.

Chapter two is the longest one because in it I establish my criteria for evaluating the literary development of the stories by defining sentimentalism and realism and by providing examples from national

3 Many Mormon novels before 1940 treated native themes, but I refer to the first objective and sympathetic portrayal of Mormon characters and their beliefs. The first full-length novel of significant literary quality is The Giant Joshua (1941) by Maurine Whipple. Its appearance was a landmark in the short history of Mormon literature and marked an appropriate stopping place for my study.
literature as a standard "type" for the former kind of fiction. In chapters two and three I have also included a few quality stories from that period in national literature with themes and stylistic development comparable to that of Mormon stories.

Throughout chapters three and four my discussion shifts from the more "representative" stories--or examples which typify a certain group of stories--to those which differ in some way from the earlier stories and indicate an unusual digression, in some cases, from the common Mormon patterns of theme, style, or setting.

Chapter four is quite a bit shorter because I have concentrated just on the facets of the short stories in the restructured Improvement Era which distinguish it most from its predecessor, the Journal. After reading all of the preceding volumes of the Journal, I found it easy in the 1920s and 1930s to identify stories of the types I had discussed earlier. I tended to ignore them in favor of stories which were different in some way.

Each chapter discusses between twelve and twenty stories which I have selected on the basis of the following criteria: 1) length in relation to relative quality; 2) interest created by style, approach, and/or tone; 3) thematic interest, whether because the story is a unique type showing the social/political concerns
of a particular time, or because it is one of the better written stories within a subject area; and 4) whether it is a significant marker on an imaginary scale of literary sophistication from melodramatic and didactic sentimentality on one end to the critical realism described by Howells on the other end.

I say "imaginary" scale because it is not necessarily true that a lack of literary sophistication is always equated with melodramatic or sentimental writing. A notable exception, contemporary with this period in American literature, is Mark Twain, particularly his A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. Twain is so skillful a writer at using comedy and a variety of other styles that he can incorporate blatantly sentimental passages into this and other works without the reader's conscious awareness that his emotions are being wrenched to an unreasonable degree. Very few less skillful writers than Twain can handle sentimentality as well.

It also does not necessarily follow that realistic writing is always a more skillful mode than types of romantic writing like melodrama and sentimentality. I realize that semantic problems will remain with the terms I use to describe the literary styles of the stories here. Without belaboring this point further, I would like to suggest that the predominant majority
of stories in Mormon fiction tends to become more sophisticated as they incorporate more elements of realism and drop extreme forms of melodramatic and didactic sentimentality.

The previous part of this chapter has discussed the reason for my interest in this thesis topic, its parameters, sources, and scope, and the basic criteria I have used for selecting "representative" stories. In the next and last part I will mention some sociological issues which are relevant to my topic. They could well be considered throughout the reading of my thesis and deserve further and more detailed analysis.

The reader may be somewhat frustrated with the literary treatment of the stories as opposed to a more interesting sociological discussion. My purposes may seem at odds at times when the reader finds that the most intriguing comments are contained in footnotes. Yet, in order to cover just the literary material adequately, I felt I had to relegate sociological implications to a more secondary position although in some cases they may seem to be more important. This is one of the major problems I encountered. Because the material has not been looked at or discussed in depth, I found in the process of this study that I could easily write a corollary thesis of the same size which would
focus on Mormon culture as it is reflected in Mormon short stories.

I tried to balance the literary aspects of these stories with their cultural and sociological implications as much as possible since I believe that it is impossible to separate them in this kind of an exploratory, descriptive study. Hopefully, what I say in this work will assist others who wish to understand sociological issues of Mormon culture more completely or who wish to examine the literature in greater depth, especially as it relates to the Mormon history and milieu.

A study of the fiction of Mormon short story writers in their own periodicals may prove the above statement of Cracroft and Lambert to be true, that there was indeed little of excellence in short fiction during the period from 1890 to 1940. However, it would seem more logical to assume that Mormons writing at this time were, after all, individuals as well as proponents of their own faith and lifestyle. Each would supposedly have his own literary style, level of complexity, and his own individual approach to the message he wished to espouse in his story. Some, also, may have written just to entertain or to satisfy personal needs. Since there were more Mormon contributors to periodicals than the two better-known
fiction writers, Josephine Spencer and Nephi Anderson, mentioned above by Cracroft and Lambert, undoubtedly there could have been a much greater diversity in theme and artistic quality than that which the two anthologists have claimed.

My opinion is that Mormon literature, and in fact the literature of any isolated and relatively homogeneous group, has an integrity of its own and deserves objective literary analysis. In other words, Mormon writers of "home literature" can be compared with contemporary writers and "popular" or national standards of excellence (at that time, exemplified most clearly in Howells' criticism and writings) to which they had access.

True, the development of Mormon fiction toward artistic sophistication was markedly slow, but I think, after extensive reading and analysis of these stories, that it became steadily better, an important consideration in this study. At first the stories were relatively simple in plot and characterization because for decades the chief aim of almost all LDS writers was to promote morality or convey a didactic message.

Gradually, Mormon fiction, reflecting cultural and economic changes within the growing Mormon communities, became less openly moralistic, more complex in style, and more sophisticated artistically. In
short, it increasingly resembled stories written according to national literary trends and moved away from the sentimentality popular before World War I to the growing realism and naturalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It slowly began to be less didactic and unique in themes relating to Mormonism, and became more complex, polished, and similar to the short fiction in national periodicals— in short, less distinguishable as "Mormon" fiction.

To establish a workable set of hypotheses for this study, I asked myself the following questions about changes I assumed would occur concerning the existence or influence of uniqueness in Mormon fiction versus the use of universal themes and well-known literary styles. My questions included: What types of stories early in the period contained seeds of the evolution from didactic simplicity to literary complexity and diversity? How did Mormon fiction writers approach their religious messages over this fifty-year period? Were some of them more successful in handling their moralistic messages than were others? If, as Cracroft and Lambert argue, the early Latter-day Saints' fiction was strongly didactic, what forms did these messages take? What messages were stressed and what were the sociological reasons for them? Did some writers create stories consistently for their own
fulfillment or for entertainment only? Did styles and themes in Mormon fiction differ significantly from those of popular literature produced on a national scale, and did elements from the national literary trends toward realism and naturalism exist in Mormon fiction prior to the 1940s?

Answers to these questions presuppose that since there were Mormons writing prolifically for half a century, they must have revealed something of the attitudes, emotions, and ideas which were prevalent in their own society and which were an organic part of their lifestyle. By studying the literature of early Mormon periodicals, present day readers should be able to understand more completely the issues and values which were important to Mormons during this period.

I hypothesize that the literature of Mormons followed patterns or trends which reflected changing socio-economic and spiritual needs of the entire community. For instance, in the 1890s did the Mormon writers discuss the problems which polygamous families experienced after the Manifesto, which discontinued the practice of plural marriage? Did they discuss, either consciously or unconsciously, themes which worried Mormon leaders and parents, such as the influence of non-Mormon miners or Eastern schools on the attitudes of their youth? Did stories for Mormon youth encourage
them to stay in "Zion," rear a large posterity and be self-sufficient, or did they encourage them to expand their horizons and make use of new avenues to the outside world such as the railroad and the telegraph in order to pursue professional, technical, or artistic careers?

Although my thesis is not designed to answer all of these questions, formulating these kinds of questions has helped me to understand the rapidly changing Mormon society. Thus, I could more easily know why Mormon writers employed certain methods for treating certain subject matter during the 1890 to 1940 period.

There are three major hypotheses which I will use in evaluating stories contained in the subsequent chapters. First, several levels of literary quality existed over the fifty-year span of this study. As short fiction in LDS periodicals showed a gradual shift from a simple sentimentality and an overt didacticism, it moved toward a greater complexity of characterization to include elements of a more sophisticated realism.

Second, Mormon literature slowly lost its uniqueness in regards to thematic material or a kind of "regionalism" in vogue nationally at the latter end of the nineteenth century. It shows an assimilation and an accommodation to national trends in short fiction.
although it developed at least a decade behind those trends. The changes in Mormon literature toward assimilation and accommodation with the nation's literature, however, signaled a more pervasive shift in Mormon society toward convergence (politically, socially, economically) with the larger American culture. In the twentieth century Mormon writers found themselves becoming increasingly integrated with the nation and less involved with writing strong didactic warnings against gentiles (non-Mormons), for example, in their short stories.

Third, Mormon short story writers both consciously and unconsciously incorporated into their stories the current concerns of their culture for the preservation of their own members in the faith, especially the youth. Thus, their fiction reflects the united psychological responses of the adult Mormon community to the widening physical, social, and political milieu in which they lived. The pull toward assimilation with the nation's values and the opposite pull toward preservation of the Mormon religion and cohesion of the Mormons in their own lifestyle creates a tension which is not resolved in the short stories of this period.
"Life Is What You Make It:" A Potpourri of Short Story Types, 1890 to 1905

An early LDS writer, Nephi Anderson, made the following defense of fiction in a short article found in the first (November 1897) issue of the *Improvement Era*.

The Statement (sic) made by critics that fiction reigns supreme in the literature of the day is no doubt true. In the list of published books, the novel takes the lead. Fiction comes in a continuous stream from the press of the country, and it reaches all classes of society.¹

He goes on to ask the question, "Is the Latter-day Saint justified in reading fiction?" Of course, he continues, the answer is both yes and no: "There are good novels and there are bad novels, as well as good and bad in all classes of books."²

¹ Nephi Anderson. "A Plea for Fiction," *Improvement Era*, (1897-1898), 186. This periodical was published initially for young men of the LDS faith. It contained mostly expository articles and very little fiction.

He proposes that LDS youth read fiction, but fiction of "the good, pure, everlasting kind." In conclusion Nephi Anderson asserts that Mormons should not only elevate their minds and souls by reading good literature, but they should also use fiction as a means for reinforcing their unique theological message: "If one had a message to deliver, he puts it in a novel, into a living, breathing thing. The Latter-day Saints have a great message to the world. What a field is here for the pen of the novelist."

The notion that novels or any other type of creative writing should spread the truths of the restored gospel is emphasized in the conclusion of another article by the same Mormon writer, Nephi Anderson.

The Latter-day Saint understands that this world is not altogether a playground, and that the main object of life is not to be amused. He who reaches the people, and the story writer does that, should not lose the opportunity of "preaching" . . . . A good story is artistic preaching. A novel which depicts high ideals and gives to us representations of men and women as they should and can be, exerts an influence for good that is not easily computed.

4 Anderson, "Plea," p. 188.
5 Nephi Anderson, "Purpose in Fiction," Improvement Era, 1 (1898), 271.
Using fiction as "artistic preaching" has been a well-accepted practice in LDS periodicals since the Young Woman's Journal printed its first issue in 1889. In fact, the short story on page one, "Whatsoever a Man Soweth," marked a turning point in the Mormon attitude toward fiction.6

"Leonard Fox, if you don't stop reading them trashy novels day after day, you'll go clean crazy."/

So warned Leonard's mother. When she said, "trashy novels," she meant just that. From about 1850 to 1888 all fiction was disparaged by most LDS leaders, notably Brigham Young and George Q. Cannon, editor of the Juvenile Instructor. In 1870 Cannon wrote:

Let children have such reading [novels], and it will not be long before the plain truth will not satisfy them. Their appetites will be spoiled for it, they will grow up novel

6 Gean Clark makes this point in her master's thesis (BYU 1935), "A Survey of Early Mormon Fiction." This initial story in the Young Woman's Journal was the first example of "true" literary fiction. Written by a native Mormon writer, it portrays a message to youth in story form. It is the first attempt by Mormons to "fight fire with fire," to use the vehicle of fiction not only to teach correct principles but to provide suitable reading material for youth who would read any fiction they could find anyway.

7 This is the opening paragraph of "Homespun" (pseud.). "Whatsoever a Man Soweth," Young Woman's Journal, 1 (1889), 1. The author is believed to be Susa Young Gates, editor of the Journal at that time.
readers. This habit of novel reading is very common these days, and is the cause of many of the evils which prevail in the world.  

What Cannon referred to was the bulk of trivial, sensationalistic "pulp" writing which poured out when cheap printing became practical in England during the 1830s. Such low-level literature was written and printed on a mass scale for a mass audience of largely lower or middle-class laborers. About thirty thousand of these people joined the Mormon Church and traveled to Utah, naturally bringing with them the reading tastes against which LDS leaders spoke. This was just one source, and probably the earliest one, of cheap fiction in Mormon circles. The railroad carried American-produced dime novels to Utah after the Mormons had been there only twenty years.

Understandably, Mormon parents were worried about the mental and emotional effects of novels on their children. As leaders of the Church tried to establish a zionistic society "of one heart and one mind," they too were concerned. Cannon called novel reading a habit, which it may have been, but it was considered

as addictive as alcohol (perhaps, considering the television viewing nowadays, the idea was not far-fetched).

Leonard Fox himself exemplified the personality and perception problems which a continual craving for fiction was believed to have caused.

So long he had posed and acted, performing a part which he was constantly trying to make a reality, that what between his own selfishness and constant weakening of resolves by novel-reading, his mind was unable to see things in their true light, and his mental vision was . . . distorted and inverted. ("Whatsoever," pp. 7-8)*

After a life-time series of setbacks, which apparently occurred because the novel habit has debilitated Leonard, making him weak and silly, he comes home to live with his daughter, cured and calmed: "He never dares to read a story or novel, not even the very best. He warns every young person he meets never to read novels" ("Whatsoever," p. 49). The writer steps in at the end of the story to soften Leonard's admonitions.

Still I think he [Leonard] carries his warning to an excess. Young folks like something bright and gay to read. And books or novels

* For an interesting and informative defense of the morality of popular literature consumed by youth throughout the nation during the last half of the nineteenth century, see Edmund Pearson's book, *Dime Novels: Following an Old Trail in Popular Literature* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press), 1968.
are as great an educator as the theater. I only wish we had novels or stories written by our own people with proper lessons taught therein. ("Whatsoever," p. 49)

The wish of the writer did come true. LDS periodicals, most notably the Young Woman's Journal, were full of stories by faithful Mormon amateurs who tried to preach or moralize in an artistic manner. However, throughout the fifteen-year period evaluated in this chapter (1890-1905), Mormon writers and editors increasingly produced stories similar to ones in national publications to fill LDS periodicals and such stories in the Journal gradually lost their distinctly "Mormon" flavor.

Sentimentality was a characteristic which was integral to Mormon fiction from the very beginning. Its roots were in the national literary scene where "pulp" literature filled with increasing sensationalism proliferated in the nineteenth century and then developed into a generally more sedate "genteel tradition" toward the end of the century based on middle-class values and also geared for mass consumption.

In literature, especially the Mormon literature evaluated here, sentimentalism, or sentimentality, can be defined as either an overindulgence in emotion or an optimistic overemphasis of the kindness and goodness of people, or both. Melodrama is an example of the first
type of sentimentality. Sentimental fiction, particularly the domestic novel, dealing with the small daily problems of the average middle-class household is an example of the second definition of sentimentality. The object of this type of novel is to arouse the reader's sympathy and pity through portraying the commonplace events of domestic life.

Both types sacrifice dramatic reality in order to teach moralistic lessons by appealing to the heart instead of the mind. Usually the ending of both types is a predictably happy one, although suspense and pity make the trite story lines interesting to read, especially when the writer is a skillful one.

The characters are typically flat and stereotyped, experiencing little growth or development. This is especially evident in melodrama--the characters are either good or bad with no growth or change.

Plots are contrived or wrenched so that good always triumphs in the final scene, as in melodrama, or they are subservient to the moral lesson to be taught through the main character's precepts or example.

Samuel W. Taylor, a writer of Mormon short stories, was critical of the plethora of overly sentimental and melodramatic fiction in Mormon periodicals. He labeled the hackneyed plots and stereotyped characters of such stories which he avowed were just what the Mormon
market demanded, the "little did she realize" or the "come-to-realize" story. The problem with this story type, Taylor said, is that such phrases are poor but main strategic substitutes for plot and character development, which would add realistic elements to the story. One of Taylor's own stories and his criticism of the quality of Mormon fiction will be explored further in chapters four and five.9

Sentimentalism is a characteristic of the romantic movement, and "in its broadest sense [it] may be said to result whenever a reader or an audience is asked to experience an emotional response in excess of that merited by the occasion or one that has not been adequately prepared for."10

The following verses illustrate the type of extreme sentimentality which was both common and popular in the United States during the 1870s. As far as poetic standards are concerned it could not be called poetry. It is obviously poor verse, but I use it because of its popularity and to describe its many elements of overt

sentimentality familiar to most people in the late nineteenth century.

Little Susan\textsuperscript{11}

(Air—"The Pride of Caldair")

Once there was a little girl
And her friends loved her dear--
Her parents loved their little girl,
And she did their hearts cheer.
Ah! they loved their little darling,
As with them she did roam,
And they called her little Susan,
The Pride of their home.

Little Susan had light blue eyes
And light flaxen hair,
And she was a pleasant child,
So beautiful and fair.
With her parents she will never more
On earth with them roam--
Oh! they loved their little Susan,
The pride of their home.

Her parents had more children,
There were nine of them all--
There are now eight living,
For God but one called.
It was the flower of their family
God called to his home,
It was their little Susan,
The pride of their home.

Her friends will not forget her,
Though she died years ago--
It was John H. Moore's daughter,
And her age was four years old.
She is waiting in heaven,
Waiting for her friends to come
And be with their little Susan
The pride of their home.

In an introduction by Mark Twain in a section on sentimental poems, he gave tongue-in-cheek praise to the poet of "Little Susan" and similar verses for having "the touch that makes an intentionally humorous episode pathetic and an intentionally pathetic one funny."\(^{12}\) It is a humorous bit of poetry because of its sing-song rhythm and its lack of detail, meaningful substance, and the original figures of speech which make a poem a personal experience. What makes it humorous is its obvious sentimentality, the essence of which is the incongruity of subject matter with language.

The poet of "Little Susan" tries to force emotion from the reader in many ways. Some words are repeated to beg sympathy (for instance, note the repetition of "little" in just the first stanzas, and "pride of their home"). An innocent child is used as the central figure (who is subjected to a fateful, cruel world, which, commonly in sentimental literature, claims the life of a beautiful, perfect spirit). Patterned and trite phrases of description are always idealistic, and "love" is mentioned with no illustration or details to make the word concrete in its context. Susan is described only briefly and in just a physical sense as having "light blue eyes" and "light flaxen hair." All we are

\(^{12}\) Twain, pp. 400-401.
told of her personality is that "she was a pleasant child," which means nothing to the reader because every child can be pleasant.

Consequently, knowing nothing about Susan's unique qualities and individuality, we are incapable of feeling genuine emotion at her death. With no concrete details to guide the reader's imagination, she is like a flat and lifeless paper doll. Perhaps this type of verse was popular because Little Susan is so flat and stereotyped that readers can identify with her. They can read what they wish into the descriptions of her.

Several non-Mormon sentimentalists were well-accepted and popular among Mormon readers and writers of the 1890s. Most of their writing was not as emotional and trite as "Little Susan," but they all used some elements of sentimentality in their poetry and prose. Such names as Josiah Gilbert Holland (who was particularly well-known and admired by Mormons), L. M. Hewlings, F. Marion Crawford, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox (who published poetry as early as 1883) are not familiar to students in the latter half of the twentieth century. Students are better acquainted with the "great writers" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Henry James, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser. The latter group of realists and naturalists were just starting to get a foothold in their reactionary
movement against the sticky sentimentality of the ubiquitous popular and pulp fiction writers. However, most of the naturalists and realists were not generally accepted in contemporary, established literary circles nor were they well-known for many years.

In the present study I have stated that Mormon fiction moves gradually from the romantic, sentimental and didactic to greater realism along with national literature. The discussion of realism below will be my standard for definition and evaluation.

In order to evaluate the movement from sentimentality to realism in Mormon short stories, we need to define the elements of realism which we will use as our standard. William Dean Howells, the dean of American letters for thirty years, developed the most appropriate criteria for realism for our purposes since he was a novelist himself and a contemporary of many of the Mormon writers and had great influence over the emerging national literary trends toward realism and naturalism as a prominent magazine editor.

Howells was born in 1837 and grew up in the relatively small towns of Ohio. He became acquainted with the common, middle class people of that area near the frontier because his family was not wealthy, but had enough. Although his formal schooling was slight, he was a voracious reader. His father owned the largest
private collection of the classics in their town and encouraged his son to educate himself from them.

Howells grew to form a sensibility whose main ingredient was a love and respect for the average, the normal, and the democratic values of middle-class American life. As an editor and critic of American and foreign literature, for large publications like the Atlantic Monthly, he became the first professional writer in America, living solely and relatively well from his writing. In the meantime he practiced the principles of realism which he preached by producing over thirty full-length novels, two long prose narratives and five volumes of short stories. Not one year passed between 1866 and his death in 1920 in which he did not write about life or literature in novels, short stories, or essays.

The tone of all of Howells' writing was basically optimistic. Along with the early Mark Twain and John DeForest, he was a satirist, not an ironist; their age was an age of comedy. Theirs was a comedy based upon a belief in the significance of the physical world and the society of which they were members. They believed that despite the weaknesses and problems in the most nearly democratic nation of the world, its culture provided the most good for the most people.
Howells never abandoned his basic optimism, as Twain did late in his own career, although Howells did become greatly troubled over the turbulent battles in his society between labor and capital, especially after the violence of the Haymarket Affair of Chicago in 1886. Several hundred workers, striking for an eight hour work day, became involved in riots with the police and some of the "anarchist" leaders were tried and hanged. Because of the inner turmoil and sympathy Howells felt for the workers during their unjust trial along with the emotional milieu of the nation over the entire labor issue, Howells changed his opinion in Criticism and Fiction (Section XXI) that novelists should concern themselves with "the more smiling aspects of life," to merely stating in a descriptive way that American novelists do "concern themselves with the more smiling aspects." During the latter part of his career, Howells moved toward critical realism and gave it its best single definition: "dispersing the conventional acceptations by which men live on easy terms with themselves, and obliging them to examine the grounds of their social and moral opinions." More importantly, the purpose of realistic fiction was not just to expose the imperfections in society but to portray its faults.

faithfully enough so that they could be studied and improved.

Despite Howells' critical stance as a realist later in his career, he maintained the basic elements of his original definition of realism. Besides including a prevailing tone of optimism, Howells defined realism as "nothing more and nothing less than the truthful treatment of material."\(^{14}\) Equally important is the fact that a realist is an observer, selecting only the details which are "true" to life, as he sees it, and are therefore "good." When young, aspiring writers asked Howells: What is the function of literature? How do we know if literature is good or bad? What kind should we write? Howells gave this simple answer.

Is it true? --true to the motives, the impulses, the principles that shape the life of actual men and women? With this kind of truth . . . your books cannot be bad, morally or artistically. Without it, all graces of style and feats of invention and cunning or construction are so many superfluities.\(^{15}\)

In 1873, Howells summarized the realist's emphasis on character over plot or setting when he wrote that autobiography is "the most precious contribution to


\(^{15}\) Carter, pp. 102-103.
men's knowledge of each other," and that inventive writing reaches its greatest ethical heights when it enables men to know each other better by giving the reader the "facts of man's consciousness or experience." 16

A realist is interested, then, primarily with characterization, especially the effects of daily events on the psychological composition of his main characters. (Howells however, as a critical realist would write one of his best novels, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* about the larger social environment of his main characters whereas his younger contemporary and friend, Henry James, would dissect the internal depths of his characters with greater complexity than Howells ever attempted.)

Howells as a realist was always highly concerned with the effect of his fiction on the members of his audience and their lives. He vicariously probed the minds and emotions of his reading audience. It is important to point out here that the audience of the period from 1890 to about 1920 was much less sophisticated and less open in matters of fictional realism than today's audience of fiction. While a few critics of his own day (after 1900) labeled Howells as prudish

16 Carter, p. 99.
and excessively genteel in his approach to life, particularly in describing relationships between the sexes, Howells had thoroughly shocked his readers in 1882 with the content and ending of one of his first major works, *A Modern Instance*. It is the first serious treatment in an American novel of the breakdown of a marriage, eventually ending in divorce, of a couple whose marriage was based only on physical attraction. His Victorian audience reacted with shock and disbelief to the fact that his characters Marcia and Bartley Hubbard did not reconcile their problems at the end of the novel and "live happily ever after" in matrimonial bliss.

In contrast, the romanticist goes beyond the immediate and the commonplace of life to discover the ideal. He transcends the "smiling aspects" to insist that conclusions be earthshakingly out-of-the-ordinary tragedies, predictably happy solutions of marriage, or reconciliations. Plot and theme are emphasized over characterization, more so in sentimental writing than in romantic. Howells and Twain were opposed to romanticism--as a lesser literary form than realism--because when an author invents something entirely out of the realm of his own experience or knowledge he is apt to be mistaken, sentimental, or silly.
It is understandable that Howells would react against the domination of sentimentalism as the more extreme form of romanticism when he became the assistant editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1886. Yet, he did so with a muted, patronizing tone by saying that all people needed a little excitement once in a while. To the emerging proliferation of women who wrote romantic and/or sentimental fiction (if we assert that fiction can be romantic without being sentimental, but not sentimental without being romantic), Howells said, "They take kindly to the public wish to be amused rather than edified. But neither have they so much harm in them; they . . . are more ignorant than malevolent." 17

We have looked at an extreme example of sentimentality in "Little Susan" and discussed Howell's definition of realism and its value in American fiction. Now we will examine two "type" sentimental stories from national fiction. They will serve as a point of reference for describing, discussing, and analyzing future Mormon stories which have varying degrees and kinds of sentimentality. Before doing so, however, let us review the collective background and purposes shared by early Mormon writers.

17 Howells, p. 22.
Mormon critical attitudes toward fiction went through three overlapping phases; first, from 1850 to 1888 a strong condemnation of fiction became softened with the realization by church leaders that Mormons would continue to read stories, nonetheless; and second, from 1888 to 1900 there was the first encouragement of fiction-writing by Mormons which would teach youth "correct principles" (see Nephi Anderson's and others' comments about novel-reading at the beginning of this chapter).

Finally, there was a period from about 1880 to 1890 during which editors set up a "standard of excellence" for stories written for consumption by Mormon youth. They did this by selecting stories from various national periodicals to reprint in a magazine just for that purpose, Parry's Monthly Magazine. Local editors believed that it would "fill the long recognized necessity in our literature of replacing with better material the great popularity of the ever-present light, sensational literature; to raise the standards of popular reading among our people." 18

As we look at the two stories reprinted from Parry's which we will use as "type" stories of

18 Parry's Monthly Magazine, 1 (1883), 23. This magazine ran for at least six volumes (1883 to 1889). Information about Parry's was taken from Gean Clark's masters thesis, pp. 4, 17.
sentimentality and which were read before the first native writers produced fiction for the *Young Woman's Journal* in 1889, we should keep in mind that while we perceive these "type" stories as overly romantic, sentimental, and didactic by our standards today, the editors of *Parry's* had a different perception of literature. They sincerely considered the stories selected as the "choicest readings taken from the best books and periodicals now published."\(^{19}\) It is natural that Mormon writers would attempt, initially, to recreate the same literary style which was widespread and popular among their own people as well as the whole nation at the end of the nineteenth century.

The first "type" sentimental story, "Taken at his Word," has a plot that we might call an eternal quadrangle. Nellie Palmer, at the beginning of the story, is found weeping her pretty eyes out on the chaise lounge in her bedroom. She has been married six months to a young man who likes to flirt and sees no harm in it. While he pays attention to the young ladies at evening socials, his wife converses solemnly with deaf gentlemen.

It isn't long before Nellie believes that she is fast losing her charm: her eyes are chronically red

\(^{19}\) Clark, p. 17.
and swollen and she is jealous over Isabel Boden, the "other woman" who Nellie thinks is enticing her husband away from her. However, she meets a Captain Lovell in the nick of time, who has a "soul-sympathy" with her. Her friendship with him continues and she finds out to her surprise that she is a belle, universally admired by the town's gallants. Her husband, naturally, cannot understand the attraction and is jealous. Finally the showdown comes between Nellie and her husband. Nellie says, "I am not a slave, but a wife, and I demand the honor due me!" The story ends in this way: "Her mood was a new one to her husband. She sat erect and proud, looking him steadily in the face, with bright clear eyes, in whose depths he could still read great tenderness, and he at once comprehended the whole matter." 20 This type of conclusion is easily in the "little did she realize" mode of sentimental fiction.

Another example of frequently published popular fiction illustrates the extreme wordiness, sentimentality and romanticism of most of the reprint stories; it is called "A True Story" and is written in the Pamela or Clarissa Harlowe Style, with England as

its setting. It is definitely in the Richardson tradition. One sentence chosen at random reads:

In timid and tremulous tones and in terms in which the incoherence of extreme agitation was painfully apparent, the stranger informed Davenport that he had for some time waited in hope of seeing some individual whose respectability of appearance might pass for guarantee of his honor, and whom, in consequence he might have courage to address. 21

The plot summary is simple and concise in comparison with the preceding sentence. A young girl, fleeing from her father who wishes to marry her to an ancient nobleman, travels as a boy. Davenport rescues her from some lonely wet countryside, thinking that she is a man. Her hat comes off at a strategic moment, and her curls come down in "clustering profusion, black as the wing of a raven, the glossy curls of a female," 22 After many, many words she marries Davenport and is reconciled to her father. The story ends happily with floods of tears and various displays of emotion beyond what the plot requires.

It would be virtually impossible to label any Mormon story of the 1890s either wholly sentimental or totally realistic. Yet, it is interesting to see how many writers used a combination of each approach to

achieve their purposes. Sometimes they employed a technique called "verisimilitude." This means that part of the fictional material may appear to be realism while couched in the most extreme piece of sentimental, romantic writing. See the description of Emma's clothing (above) in the discussion of "Reclaimed." Also, as hypothesized earlier, there was a gradual but discernible trend in Mormon fiction from a "sentimental romanticism" toward realism during the fifteen-year period (1890-1905), a trend which is discussed later in this chapter.

Some types of stories written from 1890-1895 are unique to Mormonism. Such stories can be placed in three general categories according to their themes: conversion to the Mormon Church frequently followed by a "temple" marriage for "time and eternity," the influence of gentiles on the young, and fictionalized accounts from the Book of Mormon. There are other themes utilized during this time, but they are usually didactic sketches or variations of these main three types which reflect the concerns of the Mormon parents and leaders for the stability and the advancement of their own society.

Conversion stories in Mormon fiction have two general variations. The first variation is conversion within the Church, or to use modern terms, repentance
and reactivation. A representative story of this type of conversion is "Reclaimed," evaluated below, which treats the gradual neglect of church observance caused by a greater involvement in home, professional, and social affairs. Temperance was an issue which molded itself naturally into another example of this variety of "member" conversion stories. Abstinence from alcoholic beverages was such an emotionally-charged subject that Mormon writers (in fact, probably the majority of all writers of this period) found it convenient to use plots, characterization, images, and devices which were strongly sentimental in writing stories about alcoholic abuse.

The second variation of the genre involves the conversion of a non-Mormon, usually a female, to Mormonism. Typically the convert is living in a foreign country when she is contacted by a Mormon elder (who holds the priesthood and who has the power to baptize her). After a series of adventures she patiently waits for ship passage to "Zion" (Utah). There, she is married in the temple for eternity and "lives happily ever after." In contrast to the reform type of conversion story, this kind of story has less melodrama and more elements of sentimental comedy. Despite the fact that she is plagued by conflicts with family, friends, lovers, and employers before her
journey, all ends happily with a smooth and safe journey to Utah and an uneventful marriage.

Similar are the "activation-to-the-Church" stories. The heroine, again, in this type, has no spiritual or physical imperfections, but fortunately, she does have a better sense of humor. A greater number of conversational details help develop a more complex characterization. An example of this kind of conversion story, peculiar to the 1890s, is "Not Fate" by Sophy Valentine, a prolific native writer. Conversion stories, characteristic of most Mormon fiction of that time, have little psychological depth but do have strong emphases on plot and theme, whether their purposes are stated outright or are implied in the story's action.

"Reclaimed" is a good example of the methods which early writers of fiction in the Young Woman's Journal used to achieve "artistic preaching." The two writers of this story (and it is our loss that we do not know more about them as individuals or even their actual names, a significant literary problem during this period) combined two distinct styles--didactic and the traditional romantic-sentimental pattern popular in their day. The first style is typical of native LDS (Mormon) writers because it promotes ideas and doctrine unique to the LDS people. The second is used as a kind of cement in this type of story, both to attract the
reader's attention and to maintain his interest in the story regardless of its length and frequency of didactic digressions.

The first paragraph is a standard sentimental description of the main characters, an old storytelling introduction that readers quickly recognize. The introduction of the following story, "Reclaimed," could be an appealing one if it were not for the fact that Anna, the heroine, does not change internally throughout the story, nor are any improvements or changes made in her physical person, except perhaps for dramatic effect. Circumstances force her to change her lifestyle (she must go to church meetings to repent of her earlier negligence), but at no time are the readers led to know her thoughts or feelings.

Lack of conversation within the story is an evidence of flat characterization, a prime element in sentimental fiction and standard in melodrama. Although the writer assures us that Anna has a great deal of individuality, the story's opening paragraphs are effusive incomplete sentences which attempt description but are devoid of concrete, informative details,

Quick and impetuous, naturally very affectionate, but of such a highly sensitive temperament that she tried to crush the life out of the delicate little germs of the love plant that were surrounding her heart like a growth of ivy.
Eyes brown when good natured, but black as Egyptian darkness when anger stirred her soul. A good complexion, with cheeks oftener rosy than pale; hair a light brown that curled only when made to by the use of irons or papers, and lips over which the laughter fairly bubbled in sweet, silvery mirth— that, by the way, was always being provoked—all of these, with a very marked individuality of character was Anna Barnes.  

Of her personality we are told she was quick and impetuous, very affectionate, and had a highly sensitive temperament, but we do not know when these traits manifested themselves in her development or under what circumstances in her day-to-day activities. We are not told about her past experiences, her thoughts and desires, or her goals and values. All that we know of her from the above description is that she has brown eyes (darker when angry since we cannot measure "Egyptian darkness"), a good complexion (sans warts, moles, blemishes, freckles, wrinkles), rosy cheeks (natural coloring, of course, paint was for old ladies or, perhaps, women who were not truly virtuous ladies!), straight brown hair. She smiled and laughed often—a pleasant and necessary feature in a young lady to be sure. All we have then to characterize Anna is a list or catalogue of superficial and trite physical features.

In a more realistic version of "Reclaimed," for example, we would hear Anna talk back to her brothers, climb a tree and tear her dress, criticize her mother at least mentally, get a blistered nose and a case of depression (besides exuding the sweetness and warmth mentioned above), exploding with anger on occasion, and doing other normal things.

After listing several sentimental details of the romance between Anna and her former schoolteacher--returned missionary-boyfriend, the writers start slipping more and more didacticism into the plot beginning with Anna's marriage. Notice how the romantic and didactic styles contrast but are quite smoothly handled in one paragraph.

Cupid had folded his wings and nestled within the hearts of his two latest victims, to listen once more to the old, old story. . . . The marriage, of course, was to take place in the Temple according to the ordinance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . After quite a journey, they reached the fair city that held within its boundaries the sacred house of God. 24

Nine months after their temple marriage we see Anna and Harold on a Sunday morning discussing how they will spend the day. They decide to read a novel together

24 "Reclaimed," p. 102, Unless a change in volume is indicated, page numbers for the story in the same volume will be given within the text.
and skip their Sunday meetings. The writers at this point cannot resist the urge to interrupt the story and level a stiff warning to the readers instead of using the greater literary impact of letting the characters face and cope with their own transgressions, either mentally or verbally. Since only the early stories in the *Journal* contain such glaring moralisms, the rather lengthy passage below shows the typically strong didactic tone.

Now a word or two, my reader, with you. Don't for a moment think the little scene we have just witnessed was brought to such a climax in a day, a week, or a month. No! It was the result of small neglects that came so slowly they were not perceived. At first,--and now girls here's a warning to you--he did not go to priesthood meeting because his wife was delicate in health and felt timid about being alone in the evening. Then his business became . . . engrossing. . . . Their whole course in life was being changed into a new channel. Pleasure was the only thought . . . and every recreation was freely indulged in. ("Reclaimed," p. 208)

Only several years later when their oldest child became suddenly ill and lay on his deathbed did Anna and Harold remember their neglect of religious duties. Of course, true to sentimental tragedy, the boy dies slowly page after dreary page. Yet he is gifted with angelic foreknowledge that he is to be a sacrificial offering for his parents' sins. The child's last words are, "I died to set my father free," which jolts his parents
into a moral and ecclesiastical reactivation. This prophetic statement "out of the mouth of a babe" is a clear example of the "little did she realize" substitute for character development in melodrama discussed earlier in the chapter. The parents' story ends on a melancholy note of finality--they got what they deserved.

They walked with slow, determined steps to the church of God, to worship according to his commandments. Their grief is quieter now . . . Now he [Harold] acknowledges the hand of God in taking from him his beautiful first born, for through his blow he feels that he and his have been Reclaimed. ("Reclaimed," pp. 213-214)

"Not Fate," the representative story of a Danish girl's conversion from non-Mormon (gentile) status to Mormonism begins in a delightful narrative style,

Now girls, I am going to tell you a real love story! When I say real I mean a true one. It's not my own, by the way; neither am I intimately acquainted with the parties concerned. I have the story second-hand; but it is nonetheless true for that.25

In contrast to "Reclaimed," in "Not Fate," the sentimental and the didactic elements are much more integrated, which helps to smooth out the plot and improve the characterization. For instance, throughout this story, Emma and her mother do the praying and the

25 Sophy Valentine, "Not Fate," Young Woman's Journal, 3 (1892), 53.
decision-making without the preachy intrusion by the writer indicated earlier: "It certainly looked dark; but Sister Hogensen had learned to turn to her Heavenly Father in her troubles, and to him she carried her perplexity now" ("Not Fate," p. 55).

Emma's mother goes to Utah unexpectedly, leaving Emma behind because one of her sons who went earlier with her husband has become very ill. Emma is disappointed in not being able to go also but is fortunate in obtaining a job as a maid, a job which a Mormon friend quits in order to go to Utah with a company of Saints.

The son of her employer, a young man her age, is a temptation for Emma because she is attracted to him, but he is not a Mormon. After about a six-month period of struggle with her feelings

she knew that she had been treading on forbidden ground by allowing herself to fall in love with a stranger, one not of her faith, contrary to her mother's teachings. But now it was over. She would take better care of her feelings for the future; and kneeling down to prayers she asked the Lord to help her overcome her weakness, do her duty and wait patiently till her parents could send for her. ("Not Fate," p. 58)

Yet, in spite of her good intentions and her prayers, Emma yields to her "temptation" when he asks her to attend the theater with him. The descriptive details of her appearance before she went out with him
are typically romantic and sentimental. Her beautiful
clothes symbolize her inner happiness and perfect good-
ness, the ideal model of character for all Mormon girls.

When . . . she stood in the dining room in her
pretty navy-blue dress, her black fur-trimmed
jacket and white opera-hood, pulling on the
long, handsome gloves, she looked perfectly
charming, with the happy light in her eyes
and her pretty pink cheeks, to say nothing
of the fair clustering hair that curled at
the temples. ("Not Fate," p. 59)

The description above and the fact that Emma is
escorted to the theater by her employer's son is a good
eexample of the type of unrealistic scenes (but veri-
similitude" if taken out of context) which were commonly
interjected into Mormon stories of foreign conversions.
It is unlikely that a young girl working as a maid to
earn her ship passage to America would be so quickly
granted this kind of status and wear such expensive
clothes.

The couple has a wonderful time, but as in a
Cinderella story, Emma decides that she must not go out
with him again unless he shows interest in her religion.
"She dropped to her knees and implored the Lord, that
He would lead her and begged of Him that He would let
His Spirit work on this young man, that he might become
a Mormon" ("Not Fate," p. 59). And, apparently her
prayers are effective immediately because she soon finds
a copy of the Book of Mormon in his room, and discovers
that he is planning to be baptized a Mormon. Before too long he is baptized, they are married, and they emigrate to Zion.

What purposes and methods did the Mormon writer have in mind for these kinds of conversion stories? Perhaps one of the main reasons could have been to help the second and third generations of pioneer descendants imagine how much their own families sacrificed to come to Zion. The Mormon children needed to know that the hardships experienced by their ancestors were well worth the religious freedom gained.

Another reason might have been to teach by fictional example the principles of obedience to the gospel and its leaders. This type of conversion story, allegedly true, was in itself used as a primary tool of conversion or affirmation for its young readers. Certainly, the message that prayers are answered and that patient faith in God yields blessings are some of the other possible by-products of this kind of story. To make such obviously didactic fiction more palatable, the writer at the story's beginning often claims that it is to be a true love story, the type of entertainment to which most teenage girls are readily attracted. Such well-devised fictional disguises can more easily feed moral lessons to youth than the "pure" preaching which prevailed in Journal articles.
Another of the general categories of short stories in the Young Woman's Journal from 1890-1905 are the stories which warn young Mormon girls against romantic involvement with gentile suitors. In these stories the gentile malefactor usually succeeds in luring young Mormon girls who are already weak in their faith into sin. These melodramatic stories result in tragedy or sickness, or death, or alienation for the erring one. But they also indicate the actual feelings of Mormon parents and Church leaders who were concerned about the gradually increasing exposure of their youth to gentile enticements such as worldly wealth, ambition, and marriage outside of the Church.

Although most stories of this time period end happily, the stories which deviate from this pattern carry heavy warnings. Their melodramatic plots and characters seem to prove that strong measures, even scare tactics, may have been perceived to be necessary measures for countering encroaching gentile influences.

A representative story of this type is "Hannah!" also by an unidentified LDS writer. Hannah is a Mormon girl who is under so much pressure from her family to marry a nice Mormon fellow, Laurence, that in rebellion she lets herself be wooed by a gentile, Ronald Decker. Apparently, Hannah does not want to marry Decker, but somehow she cannot pull herself away from his clutches.
because of his magnetic, though evil, personality:

"Sweet, innocent childhood!" sighed Hannah. "Oh, I wish I . . . were a child again in my father's arms, and safe from temptation." 26

Unfortunately, when she succumbs to her "temptation" by going away with Decker, her father is not at all willing to think of her as a prodigal daughter. In fact, he loses his temper, totally unbecoming in his station in life as a bishop, and in a melodramatic scene refuses to even see her when she does return after a year.

The bishop's face was a perfect fury, his voice harsh and thick with passion as he turned to the horror stricken, trembling mother. "She shall never darken these doors again. I forbid one of you to even mention her name. She is dead to us all from now on. Oh, may God curse——"

"Jacob! Jacob! you shall not curse her," she cried, her hand on his mouth. "God alone can judge her. Oh, my poor, lost child," and mother uttered an agonized cry and fell to the floor unconscious. ("Hannah!" p. 126)

The father's reaction to his daughter's elopement with a gentile has an element of realism despite its emotional quality. An early Mormon leader told his followers that he would rather see his daughter in her grave than married to a gentile. In this story, since

26 "K" (pseud.), "Hannah!" Young Woman's Journal, 5 (1894), 124.
Decker is a rather minor character in the story, the father plays the villain. It is immediately clear to the reader that the father's emotional outburst is too powerful and profuse for the situation. The story follows the melodramatic pattern so closely that at least one person in each scene must cry, scream, faint, or evoke our pity to an unreasonable degree. For example, when Hannah's husband deserts her a year after their marriage, she returns sick and forlorn: "The shawl fell to the floor, and in that thin and white face and large mournful eyes the mother recognized the once pretty Hannah" ("Hannah," p. 129).

One possible reason for writing "Hannah!" in melodramatic form would be to show the consequences (emphasizing the most dire and thus the least realistic ones) of rebelling against one of the most important Mormon mores, disobedience to her parents. Her primary sin was not that she married a gentile. Before her death, typically long and drawn out to produce even more sympathy, she is finally reconciled with her father. She feels that he accepts and forgives her and she can finally die in peace. To combat the increasing gentile influence on their youth, adults stressed, in fiction as well as from the pulpit, the importance of strict obedience to parental and ecclesiastical authority. Because of the melodramatic
nature of the story it is doubtful that its writer realized the basic incongruity of using the father as the villain instead of the gentile suitor. It is an interesting sociological commentary on the importance of parental authority in Mormon homes, particularly the role of the father as head of the home and priesthood holder.

A young Mormon couple in "A Birthday Diamond," Harvey and Helen, learned the lesson of obedience to the Church the hard way. They allowed themselves to become lured, hypnotized, and almost entrapped in a gentile worldliness, facilitated by their neglect of church attendance. As in "Hannah!" the anonymous author of "A Birthday Diamond" uses a frequently awkward melodramatic style in his effort to emphasize the dangerous pitfalls of wealth. Also, as in the previous story, evil gentile influences (or any force which detracts from the Mormon point of view or lifestyle) are portrayed as both powerful and addicting. Yet Harvey and Helen are allowed the opportunity by their literary creator to repent so that they can give correct advice to their reading audience and be able to live happily ever after, true to story endings in the sentimental tradition.

Because Harvey and Helen neglect their faith and forget their religious vows, they are weakened enough
to become mesmerized by the brilliance of precious gems while selecting a diamond for Helen's birthday. During the time they are in the store, Helen's mind becomes susceptible to the hypnotic suggestion of a handsome, well-dressed, but unprincipled gentile stranger.

His description parallels that of the contemporary short story villain and typifies everything satanic to Mormons. Perhaps the reason for the following detailed description of the alluring gentile "hypnotist" was to inform young Mormon girls that expensive clothes and physical attractiveness do not necessarily indicate morality.

Tall and well-built, his manner was marked by the air of ease which is associated with culture. . . . His close cut hair outlined the rather long but well-shaped head, which was visible beneath the narrow-brimmed, high, silk hat. His face was clear cut, a rather prominent nose being modified by full upper lip and chin . . . while the paleness of his complexion gave his features an aristocratic cast, their fineness being accentuated by the contrast of a small . . . black moustache. It was at once a handsome and striking personality.27

Desirable mates for women within the Mormon community are often portrayed on the other end of the spectrum as homely and awkward, but they are direct, have integrity and are scrupulously honest--not unlike

the popular folk image of the rail-splitter, Abe Lincoln, in the late nineteenth century. It is also interesting to note that during this period among the Mormons, men without beards were suspect.

Because Helen allowed herself to be subjected to the gentile's hypnotic stare, she brings him the diamonds she had just purchased the next day while her husband is gone. Harvey, however, notices a strangeness in her manner, so he follows her one day to her appointed rendezvous with the gentile. He discovers with relief that his wife was truly hypnotized and that she was not aware of doing anything other than what she was told to do under hypnotic suggestion. He knocks the gentile unconscious, the gems are recovered, and Helen regains her spiritual as well as her physical faculties. The writer shows no evidence that he is aware that the gems in the story could have been symbolic of Helen's and Harvey's true "pearls of great price"--their testimonies and faith in the gospel.

This new experience . . . had taught her the feebleness of her own will against the powers of evil, had brought her back into a realization of her dependence upon God, for no other power, she was convinced, could cope against this new woe which had 'come out from Babylon.' ("Diamond," p. 258)

Through earnest prayer Helen gains the wisdom to know the difference between good and evil influences
because of her brush with spiritual degeneration. A closing moralistic injunction in the form of her personal witness is tacked on to the story's conclusion.

When the subject of her hypnotic experience is now discussed Helen has one answer to make to all who question her in regard to its power. "I wish to say . . . not as a belief, but as a testimony that no power of hypnotism nor any other evil can touch those of God's children who accept his gospel and obey his laws." ("Diamond," p. 258)

One conversion story among the fifty to seventy-five short stories in the five year period (1890-1895) is in a class by itself. "Seven Times" (by Homespun, [pseud.], Young Woman's Journal, 5 [1894], 25ff) is one of the first long serials (of about seventy pages, which makes it too long to be evaluated in full detail here). It is an important story to look at for anyone interested in early LDS short fiction because it comes closer than most of the stories in realism in its concrete details of a common household, in its humorous conversations, and its increased character development and use of thematic material.

Margery, a young non-Mormon Scottish girl visiting relatives in Utah, has as much complexity as any other character in the story, and actually more than most of the main fictional characters of Mormon stories of the 1890s. She has a clever wit to accompany her Scottish brogue, and she uses her spunk to personal advantage.
She discovers that not all Mormons are "saints," and she reacts violently to polygamy, hypocrisy, and the intellectual apostate groups she encounters in Utah.

Clara, a foil character to Margery, is an important Mormon character who rejects a proposal to become a polygamous wife, eventually marries a gentile, and apparently dies because of her "sin" in entering that kind of a marriage relationship which cannot help but leave her basically "tainted" by a non-believer. She is nursed on her deathbed by none other than the man who offered her a more honorable (and eternal) marriage contract as his second wife in polygamy.

Margery is taught the gospel by "Aunt Ellen," a motherly soothsayer who constantly sermonizes youth on the beauties of gospel truth and counsels them to choose the course in life which would lead them to eternal salvation. After the long-awaited arrival of Margery's boyfriend from a mission, the two pledge their hearts together in marriage, but not before Aunt Ellen's lengthy warning to them to endure in righteousness to the end and to remember that their reward is not assured just because they are living in the land of Zion.

Thus, "Seven Times" is a type of transitional story from a period of almost total sentimentality and didacticism to a period of greater realism—where one
can find increasing details, humor, complex situations, "grey areas" of conflicting social and moral values, and more character depth. It has the distinction of being the only story I have found in the whole fifty-year period which even mentions, let alone is candid about the relatively small but influential groups of intellectual apostates in Utah. This certainly makes it of interest to the Utah historians. Also, it is one of the very few stories in Mormon fiction which actively integrates polygamy into its plot structure, at a time when anti-Mormon stories more commonly prolifically vilified the practice.

The third general category of themes from 1890-1895 is the fictionalized Book of Mormon story, the main purposes of which were to familiarize young readers with the scriptures (similar to a fictional biblical story), and to teach a moral lesson covered by a thin coat of entertainment. Application of this type of scriptural history to short fiction is unique to Mormonism because of the use of the New World as a setting (the Book of Mormon background) for the story line. In "Anacoana" the characters and place names are made to sound historic although none actually correspond to Book of Mormon names.28 There is an emphasis on

28 Cactus, (pseud.), "Anacoana: A Princess in the House of Joseph," Young Woman's Journal, 5 (1894),
spectacle and pageantry over characterization and plot. Both setting and tone of "Anacoana" are similar to William Henry Hudson's Green Mansions because the "story" of "Anacoana" is more a descriptive narrative than an actual plot-centered short story. The "noble" savages become subject to the barbarism of their conquerors, the Spanish, and the writer sadly takes the reader home with him in order to preach the fictional "lesson:"

Our homeward journey is taken in silence. Each is busy with his own thoughts, born of the scenes which have been enacted before his eyes. Let us hope we have all learned lessons of wisdom from the mistakes of the past, that in our lives may be enacted no scenes of barbarity, intolerance, egotism or hypocrisy that may in the least be compared to those of the dark ages of the past. ("Anacoana," p. 24)

Book of Mormon stories are relatively rare in the Young Woman's Journal even during this period. They

20-24. During the 1890s the historical romance, along with other "utopian" novels in the United States, undoubtedly served as a model for Book of Mormon fiction. It seems less likely to me that contemporary utopian works like Howells' Letters from an Altrurian Traveler (1893) or Edward Bellamy's Looking Background (1887) were as widely read by Mormons as the more popular historical romances in magazines. However, Bellamy was intrigued enough by the Mormon economic system to visit Utah and to examine it for a week prior to writing Looking Backward (Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom [Cambridge, Mass., 1958], p. 26.)

29 A comparison of Hudson with this kind of Mormon
are more prevalent in other Mormon periodicals for youth which are more didactic and lack the Journal's "true" fiction. 30 Such stories are characterized by the long ago, far away, and exotic settings and plots of romantic fiction, yet they add strongly didactic endings similar to "Anacoana's": "And let us only remember, that now, as in ancient days, sunshine always follows clouds to the pure in heart." 31

It should be remembered as we look at the types of stories introduced to the realm of Mormon fiction in the next five-year period (1896-1900) that there is considerable overlapping in story themes and methods. Sentimentality and didacticism are still very important, story is valuable. Both are types of "romantic didacticism," and both settings are in the jungles of South America and use ancient place names. However, Hudson differs in that he uses description to make his central character, Rima, an angelic childwoman, and, unlike Mormon-devised characters, Rima's spiritual nature is an integral didactic element of her personality: "She herself was so near to the supernatural that it seemed brought near me; indefinable feelings . . . and following the direction of her define, lustrous eyes, fixed on the blue sky above, I seemed to see there another being like herself, a Rima glorified." (William Henry Hudson, Green Mansions: A Romance of the Forest, New York: A. A. Knopf, 1916, p. 145.)

30 Examples include: Julia A. MacDonald, "In Olden Days," Contributor, 16 (1895), 411-422; and a more dramatic one by B. H. Roberts, "A Story of Zarahemla," Contributor, 10 (1889), 94-101.

31 MacDonald, p. 414.
although the didacticism becomes less strident and straight-forward as time goes on.

The stories of the last half of the 1890s have many similarities to those of the first half, but there are some important innovations in theme and style. During this period Mormon writers give a strong emphasis to women, their roles as wives, mothers, homemakers, politicians, and educators. However, all of these roles, including the latter two, are evaluated and defined in relationship to what the LDS people thought was a woman's primary responsibility, purpose, and fulfillment in life--to be a wife and mother in Zion. At this time, the domestic novel, already popular in England and the Eastern United States was introduced into Mormon fiction. In fact, for the first time we find several stories of one type so similar to the "domestic" stories in national women's magazines that they almost seem to be reprints.

Utah achieved statehood in 1896, and for the subsequent five years in Mormon fiction the dominant feeling is that horizons have been broadened and it is suddenly a bright new world. For the next ten years (1896-1905) in the Journal there is a subtle difference in tone compared to the periodical's initial years. Conversion stories are still present, with fewer "conversion to Mormonism" stories and more "conversion to
sobriety" stories—heavily sentimental fiction extolling
the temperance theme which had been popular
nationally for decades. There is a marked decrease in
strictly Mormon subjects and the preaching tone that
accompanied them in earlier volumes. This decrease
indicates the beginning of a gradual accommodation of
Mormon culture to secular, actually the Evangelical
Protestant patterns in American Society.

Fiction in the Journal told its young women readers
the importance of not only marrying the right Mormon
fellow in the temple, but of their significant respon-
sibility as homemakers to keep hubby happy while bearing
and rearing as many children as possible, now that poly-
gamous marriages had become illegal. Some writers
stressed the complementary and formal value of education
for potential homemakers, but most merely sanctioned the
outward "niceties" of homelife, a hallmark of the
genteel tradition. Other stories discuss women who
create happy homes because they learn to keep them tidy
and orderly. All in all, the emphasis shifts away from
marriage as the happy ending, to keeping marriage happy
so that it does not end!

"Near and Yet Far," the first story of the 1896-
1900 period, discussed below, is a kind of sequel to
"Hannah!"
It shows what can happen to a Mormon girl and her children when she marries a gentile. The fact that education and housekeeping can and should be successfully combined is the subject of "Lola Seaman's Experience," Women's rights is the subject of a story taken from Cosmopolitan, "Sally Ann's Experience" by Eliza Calvert Hall. The heroine in "The Duewell Household" learns to stay home and completely enjoy the change in lieu of an active social life. Finally, "Miladi" is a very long but entertaining serialized story: it is the first travel story in Mormon fiction without strong didactic, doctrinal, sentimental, or romantic elements compared with earlier stories.

The story to be discussed next, "Goodbye Sweet-heart," represents the kind of subject matter centered around Mormon doctrine and culture which was on the decline. Stories following it in this chapter represent two basic directions fiction took in Mormon periodicals. They either gravitated toward secular themes or remained close to Mormon attitudes, morals, and doctrine. Yet, as we continue to look at stories after 1900, we find that very few of them retain didacticism relative to Mormon doctrine. Most stories in the Journal with didactic doctrinal themes exist in Mormon fiction prior to the twentieth century. We will discuss this transition more thoroughly later.
Mormon communities of Utah and the surrounding area were fast losing their physical and social isolation in the 1890s. Mormons desired to be considered United States citizens as well as Mormons. "Goodbye Sweetheart"\(^{32}\) is an attempt by a Mormon writer to justify the military service of a young husband in the Spanish American War as equivalent to that of a full-time proselyting Mormon missionary.

Early in a story of the "Mormon-theme" type, "Near and Yet Far," Gertrude, like Hannah, chooses to marry her gentile suitor after

she had battled with her own soul in a severe and sharp conflict, and . . . had decided against her conscience, her love, her mother's counsel and against God. In those few short moments she had reached a decision that would entail a lifelong repentance, and that fatal moment was brought vividly to her mind many times in after years.\(^{33}\)

So, it is no surprise to the reader that Gertrude's married life will be fraught with tragedy after this explicit message of foreboding early in the narrative.

As is typical of other male characters in LDS stories about gentile suitors, DeWitt Lawrence has a handsome face, polished city manners, has had an

\(^{32}\) Mary Y. Greene, "Goodbye Sweetheart," Young Woman's Journal, 9 (1899), 402.

\(^{33}\) Sybil Loraine, "Near and Yet Far," Young Woman's Journal, 11 (1900), 350.
excellent education (meaning that he "has been to college, talks French and German, and can tell the meaning of any Latin term"), and is generally good company.

In order to marry him, Gertrude first rejects Harold, the ideal young man in Mormon fiction who has "rustic looks and uncouth country ways." Yet Gertrude admits that "he [Harold] is one of God's noblemen, but I was not worthy of him" ("Near," p. 353).

Gertrude tries for several years during her marriage to interest DeWitt in Mormonism, but he turns sour and starts to ridicule the Church, which of course makes Gertrude unhappy. Then, one of their children, James, falls on the stairs and badly injures his hip. James is the saintly sacrificial child of the LDS sentimental conversion story whose mission in life is to save his father from further gentile wickedness, or at least in this case to spare his mother and sisters from being harmed by his father's tainted soul.

His mother arranges to have James blessed by Mormon elders, one of which is Harold, her former suitor, and James is instantly healed. Although his father witnesses it, he walks quickly from the room, is run over by a carriage, and in a whirlwind scene, repents on his deathbed, confessing privately to his
brother-in-law that he had become wealthy by gambling. (You never can tell about those gentile husbands!)

His death frees Gertrude and their children to return to the safety of her hometown in Utah and live with the Saints. Harold symbolically "forgives" her mistake when his two daughters ask Gertrude to give them music lessons. To give the story an aura of being absolutely true, and thus a good lesson for readers, we are told what became of James because of his innocent faith. He attended the Brigham Young College at Logan, [Utah]. He expects to follow the profession of a doctor when he finishes at school; his lameness never returned, but he keeps his old crutches as a souvenir of God's love and mercy. ("Near," p. 410)

Stories for women with themes centered around housekeeping, representative of the influx of non-fiction pieces and short articles extolling domesticity, were included regularly in issues of the Young Woman's Journal during the decades before and after the turn of the century. They are usually short sketches of only a page or two, and "Lola Seaman's Experience" is also short. Although lacking plot and characterization, it has descriptive details of the common middle-class household, one of the main features of the domestic novel which Mormon writers adapted from their national literary counterparts for their own purposes.
A new bride of twenty-four hours, Lola Brown Seaman, is determined to show the skeptical housewives of her neighborhood that she can be as skillful as they in her new duties while keeping up with her reading to further her education, a desire which her mother had instilled in her. Half of the story reads like the kind of recipe for making bread which our grandmothers knew so well that they never bothered to write it down. It may have been written this way so that female readers could subconsciously learn about cooking while enjoying fiction.

She sifted three quarts of white flour into her well-scoured dish pan, made a hole in the center of the flour, poured in the cup full of thick yeast, added water . . . to make a very soft dough . . . kneaded it for fifteen minutes, adding a little flour now and then.34

The expected result of the "story," the first perfect loaf for a hungry new husband, is achieved, winning the approval of even the neighbor women who had bets on how Lola would get along during the first week of her marriage. Laughingly, but with pride, Lola's husband affirms the belief that a wife can be educated and a successful homemaker: "'Little wifey,

34 Katie Elliot, "Lola Seaman's Experience," Young Woman's Journal, 11 (1900), 519.
you'll be showing the native here that even housekeeping can be improved by the admixture of cultivated brains.' And she did" ("Lola," p. 520). From a more modern standpoint, this statement from a male character is but a timid attempt at women's liberation in 1900, Mormon style.

Editors of the Journal desired that their young female readers learn to not only keep their houses clean and bake perfect loaves of bread, but to also learn to be assertive and articulate in exercising their rights as homemakers--an important part of their own personal development. The Journal designated the home as the primary working place for Mormon women. The following story stresses the importance of women being strong enough to "hold their own" against unfair domination by males.

The very fact that "Sally Ann's Experience" was reprinted from Cosmopolitan for use in a Mormon magazine shows the LDS editor's concern that fiction be explicit in stating the necessity of a woman having her rights in her domestic sphere. The original writer established a narrative monologue with a homey dialect to lend realism to the story. The person listening to Aunt Jane is never identified, so it is easy to assume that the story comes to the reader first-hand from the backwoods of Kentucky.
Since the plot is fairly straightforward, the details and the dialect build the dramatic suspense near its conclusion. Sally Ann, a member of a Congregationalist church, defends Elizabeth, treasurer of the women's auxiliary, against the rest of the congregation when Elizabeth confesses that she stole the church money so she could afford to visit her only daughter who was on her deathbed. Honesty and forthrightness make Sally Ann the heroine of the day as, one by one, she puts the menfolk (including the clergy) to shame by her sharp-tongued but accurate accusations of their miserliness toward their own wives.

One queer thing about it... was that while Sally Ann was talkin', not one of us felt like laughin'. We set there as solemn as if parson was preachin' to us on 'lection and predestination... I've thought many a time that Sally Ann's plain talk to them men done more good than all the sermons us women had preached to us about bein' "shame-faced" and 'submittin'" ourselves to our husbands.35

And then comes one of Aunt Jane's unconventional bits of humor: "The Bible says an ass spoke up once and reproved a man, an' I reckon if an ass can reprove a man, so can a woman. An' it looks to me like men

stand in need of reprovin' now as they did in Balaam's days" ("Sally Ann's Experience," pp. 15-16).

Yet Aunt Jane informs her listener that it is up to a woman, in the final analysis, to keep the equality between marriage partners balanced. Because she herself "did her duty by her husband," he always let her buy the things she needed. Her strength and wisdom as an assertive woman in her marriage seems to be the quality that Mormon women wished their daughters to acquire also: "I've noticed that whenever a woman's willin' to be imposed upon, there's always a man standin' 'round ready to do the imposin.' I never went to no law-book to find out what my right was" ("Sally Ann's Experience," p. 16).

"The Duewell Household" is an example of how Mormon writers began to imitate the increasingly acceptable secular styles of popular fiction. It is a close representation of the domestic novel because it is allegorical, contains lists of domestic details, and has little plot or character development. Also, the heroine of the story, Mrs. Dolly Duewell, is the glorified model of a woman. She is a perfect wife and mother although her husband and children are hardly mentioned. To her, homemaking is the prime fulfillment of a woman's role as well as a practical science. In that sense, homemaking in the domestic novel combines
romantic idealism and down-to-earth realism. But a fictional homemaker's life is more romantic than realistic because in this case Dolly nears sainthood because she willingly sacrifices material luxuries, especially her piano, her social friends and parties when she sees that these things are less important than homemaking. Proper names themselves in the story are evidences of the stock characters and artificial situation which indicate an obvious lack of realism: Duewell, Litethought, Hartright, Algernon Latestfad. Such names suggest that the story originated from a non-Mormon source and was altered sufficiently by Mormon editors to circumvent copyright laws.

Dolly goes through a sort of conversion from a state of apathy to a spiritual reawakening when her husband tells her that he has lost his business and that they must be prepared to give up their expensive home, furniture, and hired help. Her reaction is clearly overdone and too dramatic for the circumstances.

She did not answer, but for a moment her expressive countenance showed how severe (sic) the inward conflict that fiercely raged. Then a calm peacefulness settled on her face; and her eyes glowed like the flame from a fire that has burned out every impurity. It was over for Dorothy. As usual, she had won. Another victory gained over self; but at what a cost was never known except to the heart that ever struggled to reach the
sunlight of perfection. Yes, she saw the way clearly, and would not falter.36

Domestic "asides" and detailed explanations about minor objects or characters which are common to the domestic novel, weigh it down and make it difficult to follow what there is of a plot. The writer, Mrs. Horsley, cannot refrain from expounding on the history and structure of each piece of furniture in every room. She awkwardly attempts to get the reader to see numerous details instead of selecting only the details necessary to stimulate his imagination and to develop plot and character. For instance, Dolly and her rich friend Em proceeded to the parlor.

"What a lovely throne; and how artistic!" she exclaimed, as she caught sight of a prettily decorated rocker. The chair referred to was a golden brown wicker, and through the open design was drawn into puffs some beautiful pink silk, ending in a large bow. The effect was indeed gratifying. ("Duewell," p. 65)

As was common in native Mormon stories since the beginning of the Journal until, roughly, the turn of the century, there is always a moral at the end. In this instance Dolly is only too happy to mouth it, which emphasized the totality of her "conversion" from socialite to defender of the hearth.

Em's parting remark . . . was cheering: 'I won't waste any more sympathy on you, Dolly, for you seem happier now than any of us.'

'Life is what you make it;' Dorothy could not refrain from telling her. ("Duewell," p. 67)

"Miladi," on the other hand, is not primarily a didactic story, although its aim is still a serious one, to educate the readers in literature and history. To achieve this aim the writer has chosen a Mormon girl, Miladi, of unusual wit and spunk to teach readers through her conversations and her letters home about her traveling experiences. Despite the weight of academic information included, the story itself is delightful, mainly because of its light, entertaining dialogue, its carefree tone, and Miladi herself, easily the envy of Mormon teenage readers. This story may have been taken from a non-LDS source and revamped by a Mormon to give it more realism and to provide reader identification. For example, Miladi gets to go to England in the first place because her brother and his bride have been called to serve a mission there. Unless a Mormon missionary had been called to serve as a mission president, it was rare that he would be able to take his wife along to Europe, not to mention a teenage sister.

Conversations in the early sections of "Miladi," serialized throughout the monthly issues of the Journal
in 1900, are entertaining and carry the reader's interest through even the long travel letters later on in the story which must have been copied verbatim from guidebooks. Humor and word puns proliferate in the fast-moving verbal exchanges before Miladi leaves on her trip. The following comment by Miladi's brother is only the first of similar pieces of cleverness and wit: "Miladi, that tongue of yours would be better at lunch time served in a tin can. A fellow needs his Armour on to meet it." 37

Her letters home are chit-chatty, loose, and rambling in style, adding a charming realism to what she says. Miladi, despite her name, a derivative of "My lady" and the fact that her family can afford to send her on a voyage to England, is a down-to-earth young woman. She is probably the most likeable and best developed Mormon character in short stories thus far, at least in fiction of the Young Woman's Journal.

Characterization in the story is a step toward realism. Miladi and her peers constantly enjoy making derogatory remarks about sentimentality and the romantic ideals of courtly love and romance. Miladi is a self-renewing character because she can always laugh at herself, her predicaments, and her misconceptions, a

37 Katherine Arthur, "Miladi," Young Woman's Journal, 11 (1900), 64.
quality which makes her older than her years while being a source of constant refreshment. Even the possibility of becoming involved in an exciting and serious romance does not dampen her vivacious, forthright manner. The following is a part of a letter home.

The bad smell in the steerage made me queer again. As I came up onto the deck, I stumbled against somebody who took entire possession of me and put me into a chair. Here is where the romance comes in. I can see Doris straighten up and look very interested. Of course, the somebody was . . . the best-looking man aboard. He is tall, and has beautiful brown eyes and clean cut features. You know the heroines always stumble and the heroes catch them. It was just that way with me. He was very kind, and has since been company for me when Fred and June were . . . vowing by the moon that only pie crust made with lard would ever separate them. ("Miladi," p. 66)

However, Miladi treats her good-looking hero, Mr. Harding, as if he were just a teasing brother when they decide to tour London together on foot. She uses her charms from the beginning of their relationship to parry his romantic advances just enough to discourage him from using serious thrusts while she still retains his interest.

"You are charming," he continued. "When I caught sight of you on that bridge my heart leaped two feet. It was as though a part of myself had been lost and I'd found it again and wanted to keep it always."
"Are you rich, Mr. Harding?" Miladi inquired. "Pardon my asking, but when I bring my breach of promise suit, I don't want to be exorbitant."

"There, . . . girl, you can't take anything seriously."

"You should see me at dinner time." ("Miladi," p. 205)

Readers cannot help but see and enjoy the highlights of London while following Miladi's gay waltz step on her self-guided walking tour. Her unconventional, unexpected responses to situations create interesting twists to the story line and make her a realistic and a lovable character.

They got into an omnibus and rode to St. Paul's. Mr. Harding said that he had a serious question which must be put to her in a solemn place. So he took her into the Whispering Gallery, went to the opposite side of the circle and asked: "How old are you?"

There was no response, and Mr. Harding, smiling triumphantly, rejoined his companion. He found her with a frozen horror on her face, and her eyes utterly devoid of expression, wide and staring, fixed on vacancy.

After this they took lunch, then walked all the way down Fleet Street and the Strand, past the Horse Guards to the Abbey. ("Miladi," p. 209)

It is important to note that the stories of the years just after the turn of the century contain no travel narratives, no conversion stories of the young foreign girls who join the Mormon Church and travel
to Zion, no domestic novel types of stories like "The Duewell Household," no strictly melodramatic stories (although drama and sentimentalism still predominate), no fiction from Book of Mormon themes, and almost no directly moralistic intrusions by the writer in stories. In short, the stories of the Journal at this time do not seem as distinctly Mormon in tone and theme as they once did. There is a great deal of conformity to themes popular in national magazines, in keeping with the growing secularization of Mormon society. The stories, which still preach a religious message, emphasize general Christian virtues. One reason for this shift is the change from Susa Young Gates as the Journal's sole editor (1889-1898) to having the General Board of the YWMIA (the new young women's auxiliary of the Church) serve as editors. Latter-day Saint principles and commandments (revealed by "modern" prophets and unique to Mormon society: the Word of Wisdom, temple marriage, mission service, isolation from outside influences, prayer in the Mormon fashion) which were frequent in earlier stories of the Journal are now conspicuously absent. Without using strictly Mormon themes, what did writers in the Journal turn to and why? The rest of this chapter and following chapters will be devoted to answering those questions.
Eight stories from the third and last five-year period considered in this chapter (1901-1905) will be reviewed in chronological order. The next two stories we will look at, "St. Mary and What She Was Good For" and "Heart's Ease and Rue" are traditional ones because they still retain the old Mormon didactic messages, but the messages are watered down so that the characters have some integrity of their own instead of being just preachers. They have, especially in the first story, elements of the type of developing realism found in "Miladi"--conversational humor, a smoother and less formalistic style, and more depth of characterization.

"Barney Quinn's Courtship" is a rather simple story of romance, a representative sample of the many "wooing and winning" stories which crop up in this period and continue to mushroom and flourish for decades in Mormon short fiction.

"Mary Eleanor" and "A Conference Bonnet" discuss women's rights and two women's limited opportunities for even domestic happiness. They are geared to evoke an excessive amount of pity from readers, a sure indication of sentimentalism. However, this type of sentimentality is less melodramatic than earlier stories (see "Hannah!") and lends itself to greater reader identification and interest.
Each of the final three stories, "The Way of a Maid," "The Beautifying of Rhoda," and "The Essentials" discusses the entrance of unmarried girls into a male-dominated work force from a different angle. The first discusses the inevitable social changes that occur in an emerging industrial society when girls leave their homes to seek work in a city and live together as roommates.

In the last story, the heroine fails to find the happiness she desires as a professional worker because she is unmarried and is, therefore, considered by her peers to be unfulfilled and incomplete as a woman.

Rhoda, of the second story, is the only woman in any of the three stories to grow and succeed because she works outside the home for the right reason, to help her family after her father's accident prevents his working.

Thus, stories in the Journal begin to treat contemporary social issues involving women, but there is a tacit agreement and stipulation in such stories. A woman can only find total happiness of the domestic scene, and preferably with husband and children; living alone and pursuing a career is not an adequate substitute. Home is her sphere and the only realm in which she can be exalted in sainthood and can thus be an exalted woman in the context of Latter-day Saint theology.
Molly, the main character in "St. Mary and What She Was Good For," did not change in and of herself, but she gained complexity as a character as others put away false impressions of her and got to know her. Harry, one of her country cousins, adores her and is the character who is most affected by her good influence on him: "With Moll he seemed perfectly contented and happy. Moll was jolly, and you know, boys like a jolly girl; there isn't any sentimental nonsense about her, she is just a pleasant, straight-forward comrade." 38

Harry soon dubs Moll as "St. Mary" because she becomes the perfect example of goodness. And it is not long before the writer has her, somewhat self-consciously, preach her creed of righteousness also. She does not stop with correcting Harry's lack of refinement (in the quotation below) but goes on to conquer his swearing, and his tendency to break the Word of Wisdom (the Mormon health code) when in the company of his peers. She also convinces him to continue his education in Salt Lake City. Quite obviously she conquers Harry's weaknesses only because she first conquers Harry with her personality. He yields to her serious admonitions with complete submission.

38 Jane H. Harris, "St. Mary and What She Was Good For," Young Woman's Journal, 13 (1902), 409.
I'm no preacher, so there isn't a sermon coming. But what would you think if my girl friends were rude and unrefined, on the same plane. . . as those boys are, or if I allowed such boys to be my associates? You would think I was lowering myself, wouldn't you? And it looks just this way to me: As womanhood is too lofty to be debased, so is manhood too noble. No, Harry, my boy, you can't afford to sink one inch. ("St. Mary," p. 411)

Because Moll is just too good to be true, she must re-learn her humanness by breaking a dish in the end to prove that she is the same jolly but clumsy Moll as the one in the beginning of the story. However, the writer saves the story from "didactic death" by a light humorous touch. Harry bluntly describes Moll's little white hand on his as a "snowflake on a clod" ("St. Mary," p. 412).

The next two stories are by Josephine Spencer, her first in the Journal (1902), and they are almost opposites in purpose and tone. "Heart's Ease and Rue" is a type of conversion story, an internal one which involves the miraculous changing of a Mormon girl's intolerant attitude toward a relative to one of sympathy and understanding. Although we do not see Kate's inward struggles during her change of heart, we do see the girl before and after her conversion. She cannot accept her brother-in-law's new wife a short time following her sister's death because she is caught in
"the halo of romantic sentiment" which had divorced her imagination from reality. Her little nephew needed a mother, but Kate had not considered that Ben might marry again. Although there is a great deal of awkwardness and wordiness in her prose, Spencer tries to unlock Kate's potential and show us how she changed her wrong attitudes as she saw a friend, Annie, suffer as her sister's replacement was suffering from Kate's own prejudice.

Annie Doolan's words were in her heart, and through them a sudden but overwhelming light shot, illuminating dark places in her consciousness that had known hitherto only the brooding gloom of settled conviction. 39

An example of Josephine Spencer's problem with awkward, wordy prose is the extended metaphors she frequently uses. They usually begin as clear, precise images ("ball of wrath"), but they soon become unclear and complicated.

Nell's child, whom she would not permit herself to imagine as anything but neglected, added girth to her roiling ball of wrath. Kate's brother Dolph, who had to pass Ben's home on his way to school, put in some sturdy kicks whenever the sphere seemed in the way of picking up no new accretion. ("Heart's Ease," p. 540)

39 Josephine Spencer, "Heart's Ease and Rue," Young Woman's Journal, 13 (1902), 541. She might have obtained the title of her story from a collection of
Her other story, "Barney Quinn's Courtship," has a much smoother prose style because Spencer's main purpose is not to preach, but just to present a simple impediment (of speech in this case!) to Barney's courting Milly. Barney is created as one of the most rounded characters in Mormon fiction because his stuttering problem evokes immediate sympathy and identification from the reader. But Barney has a musical talent which he uses to court Milly instead of his speaking voice.

One gift Barney possessed, however, almost made up for his verbal deficiencies. This was his singing . . . The strange thing about it was that in singing Barney's painful verbal defect was never in evidence.40

The novelty of this story comes in the way the plot is handled. Barney woos and wins Milly by singing everything he wants to say to her, and Milly is perceptive enough to figure out why he always sings to her. She refrains from indulging in the natural humor of the situation.

Twice a day they met, and Barney adapted the popular music of the time to his conversational poems by James Russell Lowell, Heartsease and Rue, published in 1888.

needs, Milly responding demurely, without a sign that she had not been accustomed all her life to being addressed in ballad and recitative. ("Barney," p. 245)

The total effect of the story is pure entertainment, and the desired end, an accepted proposal, is sung to the tune of an Irish melody.

A different type of courtship story is the one which never results in marriage. This type is sprinkled sparingly among the more common happy-ending stories, mainly I believe, to evoke pity from the audience because the unmarried women are usually described as cross, set in their ways, trapped by fate, and seldom cheerful. They are often the sole comfort of and nurse-maid for an invalid parent. Obviously enough, these stories are written to tell young women that the above attitudes must be weeded out if they are to avoid spinsterhood. Such stories are a type of domestic tragedy in Mormon fiction.  

"Mary Elenor" is a prime example. John, an easy-going cheerful bachelor, regularly calls on Mary over a period of twenty years, but her pride, sharp-tongue, and mistrust of his financial stability

41 There are many similarities between the "old maid" and "old bachelor" stories in LDS periodical literature and those of the regional writers (Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Edith Wharton.
prevented her from accepting his marriage proposal, even after he finally established himself in business.

Yet, without evidence to back up the concluding assertion, the author claims that after John finally marries someone else, Mary "ennobled" herself in saying no because of her previous unselfish sacrifices and a commitment to her mother to devote her life to her. The implication seems to be that Mary "ennobled" herself in the eyes of the community as well as her own because the writer leaves no room for Mary to compromise or to make other choices. The last statement seems contrived to evoke only teary emotion.

Good-natured John, finding his loneliness unbearable, married a good little wife, and two pretty babes now cheer his home. But who has a kind thought or a warm handshake for the other one? Who knows or cares, or gently soothes, or gives some word or look

and others) who recorded in their works the social realities of the dessicated New England scene.

Like the regional literature of New England, Mormon short stories raise sociological awareness about the apparent serious shortage of marriageable men in the LDS pioneer society and indicate this as a partial explanation for polygamous marriages. Extensive research that gives careful consideration to the nature, role, and degrees of social acceptance of the unmarried Mormon female (whether of "marriageable age or beyond) in both fact and fiction would make an interesting and valuable study.
of praise, or sympathy, to mitigate or soften the noble sacrifice of Mary Elenor.\[42\]

However, closer examination of the story clearly shows that the author is aware of the irony in her last paragraph. Earlier in the story, the author interjects this comment about the other side of Mary's snappish and cross personality.

Ah, there is a heroic side of Mary. She loved her invalid mother dearly and most unselfishly. Many was the time she made close acquaintance with sacrifice for her mother's sake. But there came a day when she made one greater than all the others, as you will no doubt agree with me when you hear it. ("Mary Elenor," p. 256)

This statement is a tongue-in-cheek one because the author completely ignores other possible solutions to the invalid-mother problem. Mary never suggests or asks John about having her mother live with them after they marry.

It is difficult to believe that a great deal of Mary's unhappiness as a crotchety old maid cannot be attributed to her own stubborn attitude, and thus her "heroism" does not deserve a full measure of admiration or of sympathy. Mary Elenor might have benefitted from Dorothy Duewell's parting admonition (see "The Duewell

Household" below): "Life is what you make it," an insight realized but not used in the story by the author of "Mary Elenor."

A story from national literature which correlates, but contrasts, with "Mary Elenor" is "A New England Nun" by Mary E. Wilkins. In the story, Louisa also turns down a long-time suitor, Joe, of fifteen years, but she doesn't use the excuse of having an invalid mother; this time it is Joe who cares for his infirm but spritely mother. Just before their marriage, however, Louisa overhears a conversation between Joe and a young working girl. She learns that they are seriously interested in each other and that Joe vows anyway to marry Louisa out of loyalty to their lengthy relationship. The girl declares that in that event she will leave and never consider marrying anyone else.

That evening Louisa quickly, but serenely, makes up her mind to break her engagement, although during the fourteen-year period Joe was in Australia she had already done so by becoming overly meticulous and set in her ways. For the past month of their engagement, her mental adjustment to moving out of her neat little house and into Joe's mother's home was almost more than she could bear.

Louisa had almost the enthusiasm of an artist over the mere order and cleanliness of her
solitary home. She had throbs of genuine triumph at the sight of the window-panes which she had polished until they shone like jewels. She gloated gently over her orderly bureau - drawers, with their exquisitely folded contents . . . Could she be sure of the endurance of even this? She had visions . . . of coarse masculine belongings strewn about in endless litter; of dust and disorder arising necessarily from a coarse masculine presence in the midst of all this delicate harmony.43

The writer of this story uses descriptive details more effectively than Peay did to portray this old maid. She also uses symbols more skillfully in her conclusion--by showing the reader the parallels between the lives of Louisa and a cloistered nun--than Peay did in her direct appeal for sympathy of Mary's noble sacrifices."

If Louisa Ellis had sold her birthright she did not know it, the taste of the pottage was so delicious, and had been her sole satisfaction for so long. Serenity and placid narrowness had become to her as the birthright itself. She gazed ahead through a long reach of future days strung together like pearls in a rosary, every one like the others, and all smooth and flawless and innocent, and her heart went up in thankfulness. ("New England," p. 17)

In "A Conference Bonnet" a wife of twenty years is the character who makes the "noble sacrifice" but who is

almost trampled into a doormat in the process. Under the guise of being a didactic story of Mormonism because of references to the semi-annual general conference in Salt Lake City, the story is actually a sentimental attempt to recognize the right of wives to direct their own lives, starting with financial independence.

Jennie Roberts, the writer, carries the theme a step further than necessary to prove her point. She presents us with a woman, Mrs. Dexter, who has worked hard on a farm all of her married life but has not ever been able to secure time or money for herself. She is not even given money for a new hat for conference. Her predicament and her miserly husband make this story similar to "Sally Ann's Experience" below.

When her daughter protests the callousness of men, Mrs. Dexter philosophically defends her husband with such honesty that afterward she determines to do something to make her husband remember to give her little pleasures and tokens of affection that will let her know that she is loved and appreciated. She rationalizes her plight by telling her daughter that

it seems like a woman's life is jest made up of little trifling things that man never knows nothin' about. Father, he don't mean anything.
He jest don't think, that's all. And I guess as I hadn't ought to judge him. 44

Mrs. Dexter stays home from the first day of conference because she does not have a bonnet which looks suitable, but after the husband and children leave, she decides to fix up her old black one anyway and go the next day. But in the meantime her husband and her children meet his wife's old school friend in the city, and her husband is shocked that she looks younger and happier than his wife. She commends Mrs. Dexter's unselfishness, and Mr. Dexter is stricken with guilt as "there arose before his mind the picture of a thin, patient figure, standing alone in the doorway of the farm house" ("Bonnet," p. 439). Consequently, the father, the son, and the daughter separately buy Mrs. Dexter a bonnet without telling each other.


Mrs. Dexter does not ever come to the point of action as does the heroine in Mary Wilkins Freeman's short story, "The Revolt of Mother) (1890), a good story for comparison. Both hide their frustrations with their husbands' inattention to their own needs but defend them as patriarchal leaders in front of their children. Sarah Penn, in fact, continues to bake Mr. Penn's favorite pies and sew his shirts while she is in the middle of a dispute with him over the new barn which he built instead of the new house he had promised her for the last forty years. While he is away, she quietly and cheerfully moves the family into the spacious new barn, and thus solves the problem without disrupting their essentially harmonious family relationships.
The ending is a sentimentally happy one, but too teary for the reader's comfort and his realistic identification. Confessions are poured on Mrs. Dexter by her husband and her children who plan to be more thoughtful of her in the future. Unbelievably, Mrs. Dexter "arose smiling through her tears . . ., placed her hands on his shoulders and kissed him for the first time in twenty years" ("Bonnet," p. 441). (Perhaps her lack of affection was the cause of her family problems!) Like her rare expression of love, the final evaluation of her family has a significant touch of realism: "I don't believe they mean to be so thoughtless and unkind, and I won't judge 'em that way. They jest don't think, that's all" ("Bonnet," p. 441).

The last three stories of this chapter show the departure from didactic LDS themes and the emergence of stories with themes of romance or of general Christian ethics. Many of the stories just after the turn of the century are entertaining love stories which inevitably end in a reconciliation, a marriage proposal, or both. Unlike the stories just preceding these, the next three omit the slightest mention of the LDS church nor do they contain any reference to its doctrines, particularly temple marriage. Although LDS references here are not blatantly evident, after reading a few of these stories, the values of personal integrity, choosing the right
marriage partner and the rearing of children as top priorities in life held by Mormons as well as other cohesive religious and social groups indicate the probable LDS origin of these stories. But the stories do show less sentimentality and more realism than any other three stories thus far in the Journal. This fact is a promising indication that from 1901 to 1905 Mormon fiction was moving toward the realism and, hence, greater literary sophistication evident in national literature.

The "Way of a Maid," is representative of several "romantic" love stories written by Edyth Ellerbeck. All of her fiction makes enjoyable reading. She uses conversation in a more clever and smoother fashion than did earlier LDS writers, and her descriptions are more imaginative. What her characters may lack in psychological depth, they make up in vivacity and humor, reminiscent of Miladi. For example, after a discouraging day job-hunting in a large city (for the first time, not Salt Lake City!), Gail tells her woes to her two room-mates.

I used to think I could sing, but . . . that was the greatest delusion of my life. I'm not even sure that I'm whole, . . . one man told me I had no ear; another that I had no
soul; . . . the last that I had no head, until I really feared that my anatomy must be hopelessly deficient.45

During their discussion of Gail's predicament, her friends teasingly suggest that she get married, an act which would neatly solve the problems of her short-lived musical career. They remind her of a forgotten beau, an Englishman, and later as a joke Gail proposes to him by telegraph.

Gail soon forgets the telegram, but the English gentleman arrives upon the appointed day to find her casually-dressed, drying her long hair before the fire and her nose buried in the pages of a romance. Despite the attire of the young lady, he vows his eternal love and promises to devote his life toward securing her welfare and happiness (as is always expected from a suitor in such fiction).

The winding-up scene, the proposal, comes too swiftly to be a believable resolution of their former misunderstandings. "'There's only one way to take me, dear,' he said, and his hand rested tenderly on her bent head as he spoke, '--and that is seriously and forever!'" ("The Way," p. 112).

We do not know enough about the pair as individuals and their former relationship to justify mingling our tears of joy with Gail's at the end. Lack of plot and character development still keep the story quite sentimental. Yet near the end Gail makes a more realistic and practical prediction to her Englishman: "If you can love me with my hair stringing down, my eyes swollen, my nose red and my kimono a wreck, I shall have no fears for the future" ("The Way," p. 112).

Besides just these general indications in the story of sentimentality, there are more specific qualities: the extreme suddenness of the story's denouement, the brevity of the entire story--telling us nothing of the Englishman's personality or his feelings for Gail, and the lack of an adequate transition between the extended humorous tone of the major portion of the plot and the serious real proposal at the very end. The Englishman's proposal to Gail and her unquestioning acceptance is incongruous with the body of the story. Gail's final statement to him about her inappropriate, unromantic attire (the story's last sentence), is a poor attempt to unite the humorous and the serious story elements: "You may possess humor, and a great capacity for seriousness, but you certainly have no sense of the eternal fitness of things!" ("The Way," p. 112).
Only one story, "The Beautifying of Rhoda," in the first fifteen years of fiction in the Journal reveals the psychological workings of its characters. There is not much there, but the fact that it is even present is a significant developmental step toward realism. Mr. Lambert, father of teenage Rhoda and ten year-old Ulysses, is a relatively complex fictional character because at least in one instance we can both see and identify with his thoughts, which vacillate between those of an emotional child and a rational adult.

Mr. Lambert automatically began to whistle just under his breath . . . but checked himself on the first bar . . .

He felt that it sounded frivolous, and remembered for the hundredth time that Ulysses was continually being reproved for whistling in the house and must not be encouraged by bad parental example. Mr. Lambert had often been made to realize the necessity of restraining some heretofore innocent impulse.

Tonight . . . the little man felt an inward sense of something as near rebellion as his mild, optimistic nature ever experienced. 46

The intended message of "Rhoda" is the importance of obeying the laws of healthy nutrition, good-grooming, and exercise which Rhoda follows faithfully until her father hurts his foot and she must go to his office to

46 Jessie C. Glasier, "The Beautifying of Rhoda." Young Woman's Journal, 16 (1905), 322.
fill in for him while he is laid up. However, Rhoda's mischievous ten year-old brother, Ulysses, is a more delightful character than she is in at least two episodes. The diction describing him is fresh, alive, and realistic.

At night Ulysses complained dismally that his supper choked him and his throat felt 'like's if a knife was sticking straight into it' when he swallowed. ("Rhoda," p. 318)

An idea was unfolding itself . . . under his blond thatch. Why shouldn't his poor, smashed-up, plastered-up pa (he vaguely thought of his father as akin to an architectural ruin) why shouldn't he have his own sister come and take care of him? ("Rhoda," p. 383)

Ulysses writes to his Aunt Rhoda and she does come. She compliments young Rhoda and her successful beauty plan. Her moralizing is the only sample in the story and is softened greatly from earlier didactic injunctions in LDS fiction.

'But I haven't had time lately for half the things I began to do,' the girl protested. 'I've tried to use my common sense about my eating, . . . but honestly, since father was hurt I've been too busy to think about myself.'

'Exactly. There you have it.' Aunt Rhoda's keen old eyes softened as she smiled into the bright young face. 'You've planned and worked for others, and done it cheerfully, and the story is there, in the look of your eyes and mouth, and the very way you carry your head.' ("Rhoda," pp. 384-385)
Aunt Rhoda's comments are a direct contrast to Mrs. Dexter's martyr tone in "Conference Bonnet." Her reaction is more positive and an attitude contrary to the "nobility of sacrificing for others" theme of earlier Mormon stories. The story gives the overall impression of being less sentimental, maudlin, and consequently, more refreshing in tone. Thus, it is a further, more significant step toward realism than "Conference Bonnet."

Like a fairy godmother, Aunt Rhoda rewards her niece by inviting her to go back with her to New York where Rhoda can take dancing lessons. For once, the conclusion does not involve tears, confessions, embraces, or the conventionally trite peal of wedding bells. Rhoda is physically beautified and thus "liberated" from girlhood to womanhood by a mature woman this time, not a young man.

The last story considered here, "The Essentials," by a Mormon writer has a more pointed message for young girls than the previous five stories, although LDS references are never used. Clearly, the most essential of "essentials" is marriage and family for a woman instead of a career; no matter how successful she may become outside of the home, only the traditional role will make her a genuinely happy woman.
Barbara, the heroine, learns this lesson the hard way by experiencing the meaning of her own maxim, "Essentials are only a matter of what you most care for." Her obstacle is her own ambition to become good at a profession which men dominated in her day -- architecture; "Hers was no ephemeral ambition. She meant to make of it the cause for her being. The magic of anything in connection with this work was such as to hold Barbara entranced." ("Essentials," p. 411)

As luck would have it, she falls, breaks her arm and is treated by a young doctor who engages her to design his dream house. When the plans are finally finished, he suddenly proposes to her, but she puts him off by discussing their differing opinions of what makes a happy life. He believes that her essentials should be love, marriage, and children. Barbara replies that he does not know her and reminds him that in order for her as a woman to be a successful architect, she cannot at present handle his "essentials."

She lifted the sketch of the dream-home... as she spoke. "These are my essentials. This plan means more to me than your wife would to you, or a child to me. See! I love it! ...You can go on with your ambition after marriage. I could not. ("Essentials," p. 413)

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47 Annie Pike, "The Essentials," *Young Woman's Journal*, 16 (1905), 411.
At age twenty-five, Barbara tells him, she has not much youth left, and she must work hard to be a good architect. But two years later, she is successful in her work, and she moves to a large city. One day as she looks out her apartment window she sees a woman carrying a happy, chubby baby, obviously her own. The woman looks so contented that Barbara cannot forget her face. She looks around her silent empty apartment and suddenly recognizes her loneliness. Falteringly, she admits that she has "everything but--but the essentials!" ("Essentials," p. 415) As an apparent reward for her new awareness, Barbara receives a letter from the doctor the very next day saying that the dream house is finished, and while he will never interfere with her work, he is coming to take her back. She weeps (with joy we are left to assume), and the story ends abruptly.

Earlier I hypothesized that short fiction would develop complexity and sophistication of style in relation to characterization, plot, and theme in a gradual movement toward the realism which we emerging on the national literary scene at the end of the nineteenth century. Over the fiftenn-year period of this chapter there were general changes coinciding with this hypothesis which evovled so slowly that they were almost imperceptible. I have identified three changes: first, the settings and character descriptions in the stories became more detailed, smoother, and more interesting to
read; second, humor and a lighter conversational tone replaced straight-forward narration, particularly as the stories became longer and some became serialized. Third, the melodramatic elements which were typical of many earlier stories (1890 and a few years after) were reduced or lost by 1900.

Despite these three changes, a great many of the stories throughout the 1890 to 1905 period remained very sentimental, although the form of sentimentality changed to fit the story theme or type. I saw this change in the form of sentimentality as a deterioration of quality. Subjects evoking sentimentality became more trivial and less dramatic. In fact, dainty objects, pets, and the physical settings of lovers' quarrels were wept over instead of individual characters themselves—drunken husbands, dying children, or young women who had succumbed to the enticements of dashing gentile suitors (and are married to them, a fate worse than death in early Mormon periodical fiction).

The most significant changes which I noticed came in the second general hypothesis I made in chapter one. I thought that short story writers would use their pens, consciously or unconsciously, to reflect, promote, and preserve the cultural values unique to Mormon culture. At first, especially during the first five years, this is evident. Themes and purposes in fiction are oriented toward instruction and such stories
are laden with didactic moralisms, couched within Latter-day Saint doctrine. But after Utah became a state in 1896, there was a definite shift in theme and style of fiction to conform with those of secular magazines published for adult readers. The quaint and authentic Mormon didactic flavor was replaced by stories with more literary sophistication and objectivity.

Writers often strayed to put across their message without coming right out with the concluding moralistic "lessons" which were so common earlier. There is a great deal of fictional experimentation with the treatment of themes around home, marriage, and family. Writers recognized and made the effort to solve domestic problems in their stories near the turn of the century. They no longer relied on a hasty conclusion and straightforward advice attached to the story's conclusion. Editors and writers were reluctant to be didactic in the way they had been earlier at the expense of being boring. They realized that they would have to compete with the lively, entertaining stories in popular magazines which were read by Mormon youth anyway. They sought new opportunities for slipping in object lessons around doctrines like temple marriage, the Word of Wisdom health code, and moral chastity. The effort to be more subtle in communicating a message
forced the writers to write in a more literary and sophisticated fashion; thus, they tended to retreat from a close regionalism in order to accommodate national literary styles.

The third hypothesis is related to the second one. I thought that fiction would reflect the social, economic, and political milieu of the Mormon people, and that it would reflect the concerns that adults had for their youth as they would interact with an increasingly enlarged world filled with opposing ideals and doctrine. By 1888, just prior to the origin of the *Young Woman's Journal*, the Mormon people were in closer touch with the outside world than they had ever been before. Since the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1969, communication lines had shortened to connect the West to the East.

On the other hand, the LDS Church had become aware that the cultural understanding of its missionaries must be broader as they went out in increasing numbers into the world. The cultural understanding of the frontier agrarian boys and girls had to be expanded. Young men and women were encouraged to read novels, besides reading from the best histories and science books. A little later, the Church leaders began to encourage members to write fiction for periodicals which would not only edify youth but instruct them so
that they could keep pace with the more artistically-experienced "gentiles" with whom they would associate.

With these developments in mind, let us turn our attention now to the period in Mormon fiction from 1906 through 1920.
Over the Hills to Happiness: Glimpses of
Greater Character Depth in Fictional
Romance, 1906 to 1925

The fiction in the Young Woman's Journal of the period of 1906 to 1925 covered in this chapter does not show as much diversity in twenty years as the fiction considered in the previous chapter does in fifteen. However, there are several interesting developments in both the general trends and in the emerging sophistication within individual stories. One of the few critical articles about native LDS fiction written at this time by a Mormon is rare because it is not wholly laudatory, Agnes Lovendahl's "Our Golden Windows" (in the 1921 issue [31] of the Journal, pp. 131-136). She begins on an enthusiastically idealistic tone as she describes the rich store of fictional wealth which can be gleaned from the romantic history of the Utah pioneers. Second in value to hearing pioneers tell their stories first hand and reading their diaries and reminiscenses, she claims, would be to have such stories put into imaginative form because "it is only
through the story that our hearts as well as our minds can be touched."¹

Such stories would be more uplifting for young people to read than popular fiction created for the "penny dreadful" age, youth who consumed the cheap mass-produced fiction of the day. Mormon history, she continues, can be the source for the production of literary forms—novels, tragedies, epics. It contains a liberal amount of what she considers to be necessary ingredients for youth literature: humor, love themes of all types, and adventure which will portray a positive image of the Church. If "anti-Mormon" novels can be used skillfully as propaganda tools, should we not use fiction ourselves to arouse interest in our Church and give a correct idea of our life and history?²

However, Lovendahl was also aware of some of the problems an LDS fiction writer would face in trying to fictionalize real experiences for an "outside" audience and for the purpose of gaining their sympathetic understanding of the Mormon pioneers. In other words, she thought that the major problem was in preventing stories from being overly sympathetic to the point of becoming sentimental and preachy instead of descriptive and

² Lovendahl, p. 135.
artistic. She asked a perceptive question: Can an LDS writer be sufficiently objective in order to successfully put the experiences of his own social group, even his own ancestors, into story form?

She extracts herself from the dilemma of authorial stance by the following statements, the last part of which solves the subjectivity problem stated in the first sentence,

If our literature is to have that universal appeal which all great literature does have—if it is to interest and instruct those outside our Church as well as those within, it must not be partisan. The purpose of fiction is not to give a eulogy, nor to preach a sermon, but to give a just and true interpretation of life as the author sees it.

We shall not, I think, add to the glory of the pioneers by making them all impossibly virtuous and beautiful and their prosecutors impossibly wicked.\(^3\)

In one short article, Lovendahl seems to go from an overly romantic and idealistic opinion of what Mormon fiction is and should be to a more calm, objective approach; yet she considers that the most important quality a Mormon writer should have is an expansive vision of the world so that he can see the value of his own culture more accurately. Ultimately, if he educates

\(^3\) Lovendahl, p. 135. Emphasis mine.
himself to see the world as it is, he will have the greater technical and artistic advantages he needs in order to write stories about his own culture.

The author must have not only a full knowledge and understanding of the material of which he writes, but also a broad experience with other peoples and other literatures, that he may select with true perspective what is significant in his own. 4

It is interesting that very few stories of the whole fifty year period in this study (1890-1940) attempt to treat the realistic experiences of the Mormon pioneers, although they and their lives are frequently eulogized in autobiographical selections and articles of the Journal. As it has turned out in this period of time and in the fiction of these periodicals, historical truth cannot be improved in either its romanticism or its realistic detail. In fact, most of the stories published from 1906 to 1925 are lighthearted in tone and increasingly sophisticated. They develop fictional themes centered around the dominant concerns of young women of that time from ages approximately sixteen to twenty-one: romance that usually leads to the altar, the social life of college students, possible careers for single women, and the necessity of a home-centered life for the married woman.

4 Lovendahl, p. 136.
One-third of the eighteen stories discussed below contain significantly more elements of realism than those of the 1890 through 1905 period. These elements will be pointed out and discussed in the stories themselves and summarized in the chapter's conclusion. Also, although there is still a strong strain of sentimentality throughout this period, it is of a different type. There is a gradual but definite departure from the predominantly didactic stories sprinkled heavily with references to Mormon doctrine and culture. Some of the few stories that do treat Mormon themes and use Utah settings are explored here because of the interesting, more sophisticated way in which native writers portray fictionally that with which they are familiar. Considering them is important because they are the most accurate and direct indicators of editorial policy of the Young Woman's Journal toward the role of fiction in the Church and how it should serve Mormon youth. Such stories also indirectly indicate the attitudes of Mormons toward national issues and their own uniqueness as a people, and they reflect the more personal concerns of young female readers.

The first six stories to be discussed in chronological order are representative of the increase of short, fast-moving tales of the "boy meets girl" type of romance story. Entertainment is the main purpose of at
least the majority of the stories. Only three of the eighteen stories of this chapter were written under writers' pseudonyms, which represents a movement away from anonymous authorship, and, we may surmise, toward what these writers may have considered as a more secure and acceptable position for fiction. This gradual change of opinion favoring fiction was a reflection of a more general trend of acceptance on the larger national scale.

Two of the six stories discuss as part of their characterization the importance of developing manliness, without defining it clearly or making didactic references to LDS theology or other religious beliefs.

In the first story, "The Last the Best," the leading female characters use the concept of "manliness" as a sinister kind of manipulation. They describe "manliness" to their unwitting male subjects as a disciplining process of maturation necessary for the acquisition of certain virtues: industriousness, thrift, and emotional control. The maturation process leading to "manliness" is a method of shaping the men into the mold the women want them in as "suitable" husbands, not as a means of personal development for the men. Manliness, in this fiction, then, is a certain brand of social orthodoxy demanded of men by women.
June Carew, Stanley Morton's childhood girlfriend, makes the following observations throughout the story about his manhood or lack of it.

She looked at the long lazy figure of the man and wondered how it was possible for so much solid manliness to be hidden beneath the careless, indifferent attitude of her friend.5

It's a thousand pities that boy doesn't have to dig for his bread and butter. It would be the making of a much nobler man.5

June doesn't worry about Stanley's manliness more than just in passing, and it doesn't have much bearing on her on her decision to marry him at the end of the story. However, in "Dora" the issue of manliness is a more important thematic element. It is even a major contributor to the story's drama and a subject on which Dora preaches to easy-going Frank at length.

In one passionate speech early in the story, Dora explains to Frank why she cannot marry him although she has loved him since they were children.

I must be honest with you. You know down in your heart, that you are not good enough to marry. I am not going to marry a man who is not steady and strong; who cannot resist temptation; who has no decided opinion

on anything; who spends his life in the pursuit of pleasure.\textsuperscript{6}

A little later in the conversation Dora tells Frank that she will be married in only one place, the LDS temple, a detail that is significant in this story because the concept of temple marriage for eternity is unique to the Mormon faith. This reference becomes increasingly rare in stories during this period and is almost non-existent in twentieth century stories.

Frank promises to shield her from all of the ills of life but Dora replies:

\begin{quote}
I should always be longing for something more. O! I am not going to preach, . . . but this I do say: I am going to be married in the Temple or not at all. It is only making me more miserable . . . for you to urge me further. ("Dora," p. 279)
\end{quote}

Despite Frank's weak character and love of "outside" influences and pleasures, he had the potential at twenty-two to rise above temptation. His neighbors often said, "Frank Cameron is not naturally a bad boy. He could not be with such a father and mother" ("Dora," p. 279).

As is typical of many such short romance stories, after Frank's proposal and rejection, three years of

\textsuperscript{6} "Thrall," (pseud.) "Dora," Young Woman's Journal, 17 (1906), 278.
estrangement elapse before Dora speaks to him again because "after studying all winter he spent his vacations in Boston working on the staff of a magazine, earning his own bread" ("Dora," p. 281). Somehow, Dora "kept other admirers from making their way to her heart" and when the three years of study were up, Frank happened to meet Dora on the street of their hometown and was very much affected by his love for her "though manlike he had hidden his emotions" ("Dora," p. 281).

Following a misunderstanding and a brief reconciliation, all turns out well for the couple: "Dora had her dearest wish fulfilled--she was married in the Temple to the man who was 'as she would have him'" ("Dora," p. 283).

A prolific native LDS short story writer and novelist, Josephine Spencer, wrote the fast-moving "Gutta-Percha Pledge," a combined romance and conversion story. Characterization here is supplanted in importance by plot and theme. In just four pages, the setting moves from the Alaskan Klondike where Bert, Kate's rejected lover goes to seek his fortune in the gold fields, to Seattle, San Francisco and Arizona. After a year Bert returns to Seattle where Kate's father informs him in a cryptic statement that Kate is dead. Bert returns to the North with his grief, and the scene shifts to a
little town in Arizona where Kate is alive and teaching school. Spencer explains that Kate was considered dead for the past three years since she "had braved public derision in open baptism into the despised church" -- meaning Mormonism. Through it all, she has kept her black ring of gutta-percha with which she had promised her heart to Bert, her first and "true" love.

Without warning, we next see a flash flood, and Kate saving a mother and her three children from drowning. Bert reads about the deed later in a front-page news story, thereby learning of her conversion to Mormonism and surmising by her name that she is still single. He returns to San Francisco to find and claim her for his own. He quickly goes so when he sees her wearing the gutta-percha ring he had given her. (There is no plausible explanation of how or why Kate happened to be in San Francisco.)

Interestingly enough, Spencer does not say much about Kate's conversion, especially from Kate's viewpoint. There is no preaching or a conscious effort in the text to defend Mormons or their religion against vilification except to say that it was an unpopular religion at that time. Contrary to earlier stories by

Spencer and other Mormon writers, the story's motive and focus are not to inform or convert readers to Mormonism. Rather, the story's purpose is two-fold: to make a conscious effort to confirm Mormon youth, and their culture at large, in their orthodoxy; and to entertain.

"The Unwritten Law" is also about being a Mormon, and while its theme is more complex and realistic than that of the previous story, the story is curiously more sentimental. Alice is waiting for George to serve a mission. However, in the meantime, she decides that she is becoming stifled in her own personal and career development because of her Mormonism. She comes to this conclusion after spending two years in a New York art school. In a thinly-disguised moralistic judgment of the situation, the author comments through Alice:

'I shall see and know the world, and the world shall know me,' had been her promise to herself. And she had looked upon it and its brightness had dazzled her eyes and hypnotized her senses. Poor little Alice had lost her peace of mind and a deep unrest had filled her soul . . . .

In her desire to achieve fame and financial success she had grown away from the true ideal of womanhood.  

In New York she becomes acquainted with a fellow artist, a non-member, who encourages her artistic

8 Lella Marler Hoggan, "The Unwritten Law," Young Woman's Journal, 18 (1907), 17.
efforts and eventually proposes to her. They plan a wedding, but at the last moment she experiences a change of heart and resolves to go back home to her former way of life in the mountains of Utah. Making such a move was a wise thing for Alice to do but it was not easy. However, the following authorial comment stifles what could have been psychological depth resulting from a more developed dramatization of Alice's decision to break her engagement and seek the peace of mind she lacks.

It takes a strong woman to give up a lover, a fortune, and a career, it matters not how, or why, or by whom the demand may come. But it takes a masterful woman to make the sacrifice when it is demanded by a power unseen and unheard, and felt only in her own heart. ("Law," p. 18)

The implication of this story is that only a return to a life of strict adherence to Mormonism can bring psychological rest to Mormons who have for some reason strayed from it. Her returned missionary friend, George, alludes to this and the assumption that Mormons are "destined" to marry only other Mormons, as he is reunited with Alice at the end of the story. She tells him, "I tried to be untrue to you, but some power greater than my own kept me true to myself and to you." He replies, "It was the great unwritten law" ("Law,"
p. 19). The writer gives her story a typical Mormon "happy ever after" ending without attempting to clarify George's last statement.

One of the most unusual stories in the Young Woman's Journal is a short two-page one, discussed here to provide a contract to the "boy meets and marries girl" theme. It is one of the very few "rejected" proposal stories because it provides no room for reconciliation or reconsideration. It its own way it is as sentimental as the other kind because it evokes pity from beginning to end, although the story's tone and brevity present sentimentality.

Hester Brooklyn, a single woman of forty-five, is proposed to by Henry, a widower of three years who had first asked for her hand twenty-five years previously. She believes that such a change for her is impossible so late in life (at a time when a woman's life expectancy was not what it is now). The last three paragraphs of the story indicate her seriousness in refusing him the second time because she is unwilling to forget the night he had broken his promise to visit her on her birthday—exactly twenty-five years before. The story's quick conclusion has dramatic highlights.

She turned toward the door; then as she reached the top step, she faced him again, her serene eyes on a level with his, and spoke gently:
'If you had come that night, we'd have grown used to each other--we'd have grown old together, but now--well, it's too late; it's twenty-five years too late. Good night, Henry.'

Then she went in, and softly closed the door.9

"The Second Time" has some important elements of realism: brevity, simplicity, finality in the character's ability to make a choice and live with its consequences, and a less than idealistic theme. Because Hester refused Henry's proposal, she must live the rest of her life alone. Yet this fact makes her an admirable figure instead of a pathetic one, without making an "ennobling sacrifice" as Mary Elenor had to do to preserve her own integrity and social standing in the community. She has retained her health, optimism, and serene beauty, by secluding herself with books. Through them she creates her own unreal but dignified and orderly world. Henry, in contrast, has become a rough, old man during the twenty-five year interim, while working hard to support his wife and family. The disparity between the two life-styles makes a union impossible and the writer seems to imply that marriage would force Hester to compromise her refinement and

sacrifice the personal improvement she had acquired over the last twenty-five years.

Thus, this story is unusual among Mormon short stories at the turn of the century because it suggests that celibacy may lead to greater peace, beauty, and personal satisfaction for a woman than marriage—a certainly different view for LDS readers to ponder in 1908.

In national literature a non-Mormon writer, Anne Warner, wrote a story in 1914 a few years after "The Second Time" with a similar theme—spinsterhood is much better than a loveless marriage of merely financial and social convenience. It is unlikely that the two writers read each other's stories, but both heroines have a surprisingly modern view of marriage.10

Emily Reed is "a large, well-built young woman of about thirty, with fine eyes and hair" ("The New Woman," p. 115) who becomes engaged to James Dwight, headmaster of his own private school. She half-heartedly accepts his proposal because she knows how happy it will make her widowed mother.

Yet, only a few days pass before Emily discovers that she is just a pawn between these two selfish

people who put tremendous pressures on her to marry. Dwight puts on economic pressures; he expects her to invest her savings into his school and teach in it full-time after their marriage besides keeping house for him. Even more devastating is her mother's excitement about her daughter's engagement, despite the physical sacrifices and emotional suffering marriage to Dwight would entail for Emily.

Consequently, Emily breaks her engagement while her mother vigorously chastizes her, clearly revealing a prevalent view of marriage by the older generation.

What difference does being a slave make, anyhow, if only you're married? The thing is to be married, Emily; and you've let the only man in town go. And for such silly reasons--just because he told you beforehand what most men leave the girl to find out afterward. ("The New Woman," p. 127)

While her mother weeps disconsolately, Emily tries to explain why it would not be to her advantage to marry him. She admits to herself that she is sorry for her mother's disappointment, but she cannot possibly regret giving up Dwight. With this conviction, she achieves inner peace at the story's conclusion.

Emily turned and walked quickly out of the room. Neither her lips nor her resolution trembled. She had meant all that she had said--all that she had said to Dwight, and also all that she had said to her mother. She went to bed, and on this night she slept soundly.
And later, much later, Mrs. Reed slept, too. ("The New Woman," p. 128)

Alice T. Blake begins her story "Heart of My Home" in a conventional pattern for stories in 1910 by using sugary, sentimental chit-chat between young housewives who were once school chums. As their conversation progresses to include husbands and children, they get into a heated discussion on birth control. What is unusual about this is not the topic itself, but the fact that it is treated and defended as explicitly as it is. The formerly harsh and abrupt didactic messages included in earlier stories of the Young Woman's Journal to defend LDS viewpoints, are softened by the manner in which they are integrated into Jennie's passionate response to May who thinks Jennie is becoming a slave in her home by assuming primary responsibility for her family. When May and her sister leave, Jennie begins to have bitter thoughts and feel sorry for her lot in comparison with their apparently carefree lives.

'Why should my life be so much harder than theirs? They are so free, so gay, and so happy. They look so young and pretty. They have nothing to make them tired and cross, only pleasure, pleasure! The dance, the social, the concert, the opera--they may have them all while I have none . . . I must
suffer and do as others choose for me.
Oh, it is hard!' And the tears rushed
down her fair cheeks unchecked.11

Her husband Richard comes home and tries to console
her. During this time, Jennie forgets about their
three year-old son, Dickie. When they search for him
and discover he is indeed lost, Jennie sheds more tears
as she confesses in anguish, "My sweet little boy . . .
lost and I am to blame. It is a punishment from the
Lord." She promises the Lord that if He will forgive
her "wicked thoughts" and return her "precious baby,"
she will "strive harder than ever to serve (Him)
faithfully" ("Heart," p. 141).

In an overly-dramatic scene, Jennie and Richard
find Dickie safe but the three of them have an accident
on the way home because of a horse stampede. Yet, when
Jennie regains consciousness, she has a calm assurance
of what she must do for Dickie although her husband is
distraught when the doctor is pessimistic about Dickie's
condition. The following paragraph is a good example of
a style which was becoming increasingly rare in LDS short
stories. It illustrates the writer's effort to prescribe
a religious ordinance of Mormonism without letting it

11 Alice T. Blake, "Heart of My Home," Young
Woman's Journal, 21, (1910), 140.
stand out in the story as an awkward and preachy insertion.

The Browns were Latter-day Saints and it seemed strange that despair and sorrow had so overcome the father that he had allowed the decision of the physician to be too firmly believed to even think of the powers of the Priesthood. ("Heart," p. 142)

The elders come and give Dickie a blessing, and his parents watch his immediate recovery, careful to attribute it to the Lord's will. That evening their friends come to escort the Browns to a ball and Jennie laughingly dismisses them by saying that she has another "engagement"—meaning her husband.

While the story is clearly sentimental, it does have smoother conversation, character development and drama than the earliest didactic stories by LDS writers of the 1890s. What it lacks in substantial plot and depth, it makes up in dialogue and implication of woman's glorious and fulfilling role as a dedicated homemaker, the "heart" of her home.

The preceding six stories of this chapter constitute one-third of the representative stories to be discussed in the period from 1906 to 1925 of the Journal covered in this chapter. They have dealt with the conventional themes of young romance, proposals, marriage, and rearing
children in the LDS faith. They resemble many of the stories of the 1890 to 1905 period in this regard, although the latter stories are better written and are mainly composed to entertain instead of to moralize di-
dactically. The plethora of sentimental plots, scenes, and characters certainly does not end abruptly in the first decades of the twentieth century although the senti-
mentality gradually loses its more extreme melodramatic forms and becomes less pervasive. Mormon sentimental literature becomes more muted as it begins to reflect popular national literature more completely.

Stories in the next third of this chapter reflect similar themes and styles in relation to each other, but different authors use different approaches. As far as LDS stories are concerned, they are particularly light-
hearted, innovative, and humorous. In short, they make enjoyable reading. "Of Pleading Eyes, Beware!" was written by Ethel B. Connelly, whose stories frequently appear in fictional sections of the Young Woman's Journal. It is relatively free from references to LDS doctrine or place names. The only moralistic element is the subtle reminder that "mother knows best" or "parents should be obeyed" near the end of the story.
Dick Carey is a likeable eighteen-year-old college student away from the farm for the first time. He gets into a number of scrapes because he becomes involved with a rich girl. While dating her he feels compelled to spend all of his limited resources. When his money is spent, she drops him, his roommates tease him good-naturedly, and his mother bails him out by sending him twenty-five dollars on two occasions. She warns him to beware of girls who demand expensive dates by reminding him that because she was once a girl of eighteen she understands his plight. What makes this story worthy of note is its excellent, fresh diction which brings the characters and the situation to life. Slang phrases date the story, but it still has appeal because of its fast-moving, clever conversation, its humorous tone, and its descriptive details of commonplace down-to-earth episodes.

A typical example of this style is given below.

Dick's housemates gather round him after dinner and try to give him advice after he discovers he is in serious financial trouble.

Alf concealed a smile.

"Here, cut that grave-yard tone and talk sense. The thing you'd better do is to drop that girl."

"Easier said than done," muttered the poor culprit.
"Tell her its Lent and you are abstaining from female society," put in Nate.

Dick got up, leaving his dinner untasted. Surely Vida would be more sympathetic than these grinning idiots, who he thought grimly, would joke at their own funerals.¹²

This story also differs from all previous stories in the *Journal* because it is told from a young man's point of view instead of a girl's. Perhaps the editorial board thought that this element and the story's plot would teach high school and college-age girls to understand that their escorts are not made of money, no matter how dashing and unassuming they may appear.

Ideas and character development are more important than plot in the next story by Kate Thomas. It is the story of a single LDS girl who is by herself on Christmas. Eleanor begins to think of her former boyfriends and to wish she were married. There are only scattered hints at the beginning and end of the story that she loves an older man whom she cannot hope to marry for a long time.

Most of the story takes place at a Christmas party she is invited to attend. As the evening progresses, she notices that an old admirer of hers has lost his charm.

¹² Ethel M. Connelly, "Of Pleading Eyes, Beware!" *Young Woman's Journal*, 21 (1910), 194.
since being married. He is hardly able to socialize at all because his wife is so garrulous that she dominates the conversation. Some of the parents start boasting about the wonderful qualities of their children and soon Eleanor finds the conversation mundane and the company boring. With womanly wisdom and insight, the writer, through Eleanor, makes the following observations about the marriage of her former boyfriend and what the institution is generally capable of doing in a negative sense to the character and personality of its members.

At dinner Eleanor found herself paying a great deal of attention to what Mrs. Warren said, and deciding that she was tiresome. Wilfred, too, had deteriorated. He had descended hopelessly to the petty level of his petty wife. After all, thought Eleanor, a woman makes her husband quite as much as he makes her.¹³

Before the party Eleanor had admitted to herself that she was lonely and that "careers for women were empty things" ("Afterglow," p. 667). Yet, after the party she returns to the peace of her own room to doze and dream before the fireplace. In her calm, pleasant way she soliloquizes as she finally turns out the light and looks at the snow-covered yard.

¹³Kate Thomas, "The Afterglow," Young Woman's Journal, 21 (1910), 669.
She opened the blinds and looked out long upon the wide stretch of glowing white and the trees heavy with armfuls of fluffy white.

"'Tis a cotton batting world at the best," she said, "in spite of its glorious seeming. But there are some true hearts in it, and they beat for me. It's natural, I suppose, to be lonely sometimes, but better no love than not the highest," ("Afterglow," p. 670)

A representative serial story is "The Glimpses" by a Mormon writer, Elsie C. Carroll. Because it is much longer than previous stories, it has more descriptive details of characterization and plot. The writer makes better use of them in continuity and development and even handles character introspection more successfully than most of her predecessors or contemporaries. She attempts, often quite effectively, to contrast idealistic illusions about LDS marriage or marriage in general against its realities.

A good reason for Carroll's expertise as a writer is largely due to the fact that she was a literary "professional." Later in her life she taught literature at Brigham Young University and thus was aware of current patterns in fiction.

Gwendolyn, the central character of "The Glimpses," is young, romantic, and an idealist. She resists her mother's warnings to her about the adjustments which are unavoidable in all marriages. She firmly maintains
that all other couples may experience conflict and misunderstanding but her marriage will be pure, unique, and perfect. The two women's perceptions of marriage from two vantage points create an interesting dialogue. Gwendolyn's mother introduces the story's theme and meaning of its title as it relates to her daughter's future.

"Marriage is as sweet and wonderful as we dream it is going to be--if we make it so, but"--the mother paused. Her loving heart shrank from shattering the beautiful, unreal fancies of the little bride. . . . "It is not like your dreams. You know real life is never just like dreams. . . ."

"You may think you understand each other perfectly, but each soul must walk its way alone. You will get a glimpse now and then of the companion climbing with you up the rugged path of life, but much of the time you will be hidden from each other by a mist of misunderstanding, or disappointment, or heartache."

The girl's eyes were wide with questioning incredulity. "But Jack--and I--are--going to be--different."14

As can be expected in Mormon stories by now, "Mother knows best." Within twenty-four hours after the wedding, Gwendolyn and Jack have a misunderstanding which almost evolves into a serious argument. The remainder of the

story involves a whole series of small domestic crises which contain realistic details of commonplace events.

Yet, the overall plot is not realistic because it is largely melodramatic. (In fact, just the following sketch of domestic arrangements sounds like good story material which could keep the most intricate modern soap opera on television going for years!) Marie, a former girlfriend of Jack's, comes to visit and then stays with them for a month to care for the household while Gwendolyn is sick. Marie leaves suddenly, and before she has been gone long, Jack, who is a lawyer, discovers her alleged connection with a local counterfeiting gang. Years later, in the story, she turns up again when she participates in the robbery of a stagecoach containing Jack and Gwendolyn.

All in all, the domestic crises are more important for our purposes because of their realistic touches and the way Gwendolyn grows as a result of them, receiving "glimpses" of herself and Jack by overcoming jealousy, fear, and communication barriers in their relationship.

After a baby is added to the family, Jack and Gwendolyn discover that their expectations of each other's roles differ greatly. The writer, using techniques of the domestic novel, discusses the disparity between the expectations of each person and the real situation. Carroll, however, attributes Gwendolyn's
neglect of the house, the meals, her appearance, and especially her husband as due primarily to her lack of preparation in housekeeping skills and to her not having learned to understand her husband's needs. Gwendolyn's overcompensation as a new mother, she believes, is normal but not helpful to the marriage in general.

She had assumed the responsibility of motherhood before she was prepared for it. She must do the preparation work now if she expected to make good. Consequently, her whole interest was absorbed in the baby, and like so many of her sisters she forgot there was a man. ("Glimpses," p. 152)

While this quotation (and others from the story), is overtly didactic, it is not "preachy." Its didacticism is softened because it does not "preach" by addressing the reader and giving him advice. (For example, it lacks the prescriptive introduction, "Now girls, let this be a lesson to you when you marry. . . .") Surely, however, the reader can sense that he is being given a message, but with a little more distance between him and the writer. He learns vicariously what the writer wants him to know through the medium of the character, although the character isn't developed enough to speak alone.

As a result, the intrusive author, often speaking as Gwendolyn's mother, has an important place in the story and an impact on its aesthetic nature. The story
is more effective as a teaching tool than the more didactic and preachy stories discussed earlier. (See quotations in chapter two from "Whatsoever A Man Soweth" and "Reclaimed.")

On the other hand, the intrusive author in "The Glimpses" does not allow the reader to be shown what Gwendolyn does, thinks, and feels through using carefully selected detail. Carroll is still too ready to intrude and interpret the story for the reader so that he is never free to identify with or get inside of Gwendolyn, or any other character, to learn from her experience. Characters in the story are only allowed to grow and become "rounded" to a certain limited point. As a result, "The Glimpses," has made significant progress toward a more realistic Mormon fiction, but the story on its own merits is considerably lacking in artistic excellence.

Another well-done scene in this story is an attempt to define the realistic aspects of Gwendolyn's marriage by comparing them with her idealistic notions. Gwendolyn discovers that the deterioration of her relationship with Jack may be related in part to the deterioration of her physical appearance. The writer, then, gives a lengthy explanation of Gwendolyn's efforts to improve. As Gwendolyn waits anxiously for Jack to notice, Carroll comments:
Now of course in story books, Jack would have taken in all the details of Gwendolyn's reform and would have understood what it meant. They would have embraced and been happy for ever after. But he did nothing of the sort. He gave her one look of surprised wonder and that was all. Then he began romping with the baby. ("Glimpses," p. 153)

Gradually, Gwendolyn becomes closer to Jack as she grows in self-awareness and mature judgment of how to relate to him. The story ends happily in a dramatic sequence of events, but more important than its plot is the evidence of increased skill in the manner in which a common subject but complex relationship (marriage) is handled. "The Glimpses" is one of the few longer stories by an LDS writer which relays morals to its readers without being either preachy, redundant, or stale. Despite its melodramatic elements, it is a relatively good example of a well-developed, realistic short story for this period of Mormon fiction.

A shorter and more sophisticated treatment of the same theme, expectations of the marriage partnership versus the reality of individual and role differences, is found in "Double Tragedy," written by Nephi Anderson, one of the most prolific and best-known novelists to Mormon audiences. His most popular novel, Added Upon (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967), is still read because of Anderson's unique application of the LDS doctrine of the Plan of Salvation to fictional form.
Its main difficulty for young readers is in its lack of delineation between what is based on LDS doctrine and what is authorial imagination and poetic license.  

"Double Tragedy" covers only a day's time, but Anderson selects details that show some typical but deep-seated marital problems of a young couple with a baby. Unlike "Glimpses," this story does not focus on character development, nor does it necessarily aim to entertain its readers or please them by providing the usual reconciliation and happy ending. In fact, it is the only short story thus far in the Young Woman's Journal which is surely written by a Mormon but does not have explicit optimism built into it, especially in its conclusion.

15 Originally in 1898, Added Upon is currently in its forty-second printing. Jean Clark assesses Added Upon in her thesis as no more than a treatise on the LDS belief in eternal progression. As a piece of fiction it fails from the initial page. The scope is too vast for the short novel form, too vast for any novel form. Anderson himself must have felt the inadequacy of his prose, for "Part Fifth" of his novel is written in blank verse.

A reviewer contemporary with Anderson had a similar evaluation:

We cannot but feel that in this venture, Added Upon, our brother has been either too bold or not bold enough. Either he should not have attempted a theme at once so lofty and excessive or else he should have given himself room for a treatment of it somewhat commensurate with its largeness. ("Book Review," Improvement Era, 1 (1898), 704.)
As the title implies, both the husband and the wife are tragic figures in the sense that each is not only myopic to his or her spouse's love, but also blind to potentially simple solutions for interpersonal problems. Both fail to communicate their feelings, but Anderson uses irony skillfully and lends omniscience to his readers by letting them know that the thoughts of the two characters are the same although not overtly expressed. Both characters believe that their main differences are inherent because of differences in their sex roles. Neither one discovers that the harmony between them is deeper and stronger than male-ness or female-ness. Neither one learns to appreciate and praise the spouse's role in their marriage on occupation. The husband does not love their baby in the way that his wife thinks he should, and she does not admire the new book he wrote in the way that he would like.

Anderson ends the six-page story by saying that the husband couldn't love the baby and his wife openly until his own needs for recognition and affection were met and that she felt the same way. Consequently, they were stalemated, possibly for a tragic, life-long "marriage

Cracroft and Lambert add that Anderson's work is generally ignored by scholars but is "of interest to modern Mormons, less for the literary than for the cultural insights it provides." (A Believing People, p. 390.)
of convenience." The last sentence of the story indicates that although the marriage may permanently lack complete emotional fulfillment, the husband would remain faithful and devoted to his wife and child:
"He turned from the window with a heart like lead. There were two hours yet left of the afternoon in which he might finish the coal-shed." 16

The next story for consideration, "Marjorie," deals with a frequently used plot in popular literature based on contrasts between characters and tailored to appeal to teenage girls. A plain, sensible country girl, Marjorie, and her dainty, feminine, city cousin, Helen, are rivals for the heart of Bob, who has lived most of his life next door to Marjorie. Marjorie and Bob used to go to high school every day on horseback. Their school was in a nearby village, and as they rode back and forth they grew to be pals. Their idyllic friendship becomes temporarily discontinued, however, when Bob goes away to college to become a doctor. In the meantime, Marjorie's educational plans suddenly change because of the irreversible circumstances described in only one short, sentimental paragraph.

Then had come the dark days when her father had left them. She had had to abandon her plans, the village school had been offered, and she had thankfully accepted it, glad to be able to stay with her mother and little Dorothy.17

Although this is a rather isolated example of an unalloyed attempt to evoke pity, the writer cannot get away from the "sermonizing mother syndrome," seen in the excerpt below and used earlier in "Glimpses" and many other LDS short stories for the instruction of young girls.

When Bob invites his new city girlfriend, Helen, to his home town for the holiday, Marjorie is surprised and hurt to see how involved he is with her. Marjorie's mother who had "seen Marjorie's grief and divined the cause as true mothers can" ("Marjorie," 156), gives her daughter the typical fictional advice and encouragement. It is the only obvious moralizing in the story but it is pivotal because it eventually changes Marjorie's whole attitude about herself.

"Girls like Helen with all their vanities and powder and paint aren't as pretty or sweet, nor half as likeable as some Oakdale girls I know, and won't, as a rule, win out in the long run. A good girl, even if she does have a 'slow' time, has more lasting pleasures." ("Marjorie," p. 156)

17 Isabel Hoggan, "Marjorie," Young Woman's Journal, 28 (1917), 154.
At the time Marjorie does not believe her mother, but at the final party of the season's festivities, she decides to try being her best self and forgetting about Helen's glamour. The experiment is successful because Bob notices the contrast between the two girls and begins to worry that Marjorie might possible marry either of the young men she was with, the bachelor-doctor or Dick, Bob's best friend.

The most entertaining part of the story comes at its climax when Helen induces Bob to kiss her at the door. Youthful readers of the *Young Woman's Journal* must have devoured this part eagerly because it is the longest, most detailed description of physical intimacy thus far to be encountered in the *Journal*.

However, Helen's kiss is the kiss of death for her in the story. After it she is totally unimportant. Bob's inner search of his motives in kissing Helen is a rather thorough, repentant one, a subtle indication that he was in the wrong to do so. He discovers that of all girls, she is definitely not the right one for him. His soul-search is valuable because it precedes a "revelation" that will lead to his proposal of marriage to the "right" girl.

A sort of disgust came over him. Had he any reason to believe she (Helen) wouldn't treat anybody the same? He was provoked with himself. He thought of Marjorie who had done
her best to make the holidays a success. . . . "Best friend a fellow ever--," he stopped short, surprised at a revelation that came over him. ("Marjorie," pp. 157-158)

Bob asks Marjorie to "wait for him" the following day prior to his departure with Dick and Helen. The conclusion cleverly shifts the point of view to Dick and away from the central characters. Dick's farewell thoughts are of Marjorie and her changed relationship with his friend, Bob.

Dick knew it was useless for him to entertain any hopes when he saw her say goodbye to Bob. He went away soberer than when he came, but glad to have had the privilege of knowing her. ("Marjorie," p. 158)

The story's conclusion not only verifies the appropriateness of the advice from Marjorie's mother, but it implies in a more general sense that LDS youth are better off marrying childhood friends within their own faith, no matter what their associations may be if they go away to school. Although lacking reference to the LDS Church, temple marriage or gentiles, the difference between the two lifestyles is clearly discernible to young readers because the story's content follows the familiar Mormon pattern. Hoggan smoothly mixes pleasure and preaching in the story and makes her point that social success--as the most important
achievement in a young person's life—is at best a superficial success.

In the volume of the Young Woman's Journal containing the previous story and the next one are a few stories with references to World War One. The overall tone of this fiction becomes suddenly serious. There seems to be an emphasis on a retrenchment to specific LDS ways and values. War stories are not represented here because of their extremely maudlin and melodramatic character. However, their presence alone reflects the somber mood of LDS communities at the outbreak of the nation's involvement overseas. 18

"Whom the Lord Loveth" harks back twenty-five years in the Young Woman's Journal to the abundant "Mormon girl marries gentile" stories. It has its share of preaching as Margaret's father tries to convince her and John, her gentile lover, that Mormons are a distinct religious and cultural group, and marriage with non-members can only bring sorrow and regret, especially to the Mormon partner. Although Margaret loves John and is determined to marry him without her father's

18 A typical example would be the first published story by Ivy Williams Stone, "Somewhere in France," Young Woman's Journal, 28 (1917), 475-481. Mrs. Stone's fiction has covered a long span of LDS short stories. A discussion of Mrs. Stone and her work can be found in the Improvement Era, 33 (1929-1930), 58. See also the first footnote of the following chapter.
consent, at times she feels less than satisfied about the future she has chosen. The writer forthrightly describes the situation.

It seemed a time for happiness and love. And yet there were moments when the young girl's sewing lay untouched in her lap, a far-away look came into her eyes, and they were misty with tears. For Margaret was marrying against the wishes of her people. 19

However, the earlier forebodings are almost forgotten as Margaret and John go away to live in New York City, in the area where his parents live. Margaret's first year of marriage is filled with fun and excitement. John shows her every attention as they explore the city together. Gradually, though, she begins to assess the sharp differences between the values of her in-laws and John and her own values, but the differences don't worry her until a daughter is born to them. Judd comments that "with her coming, Margaret experienced her greatest joy and saw the beginning of her greatest sorrow" ("Whom," p. 314).

A series of crises begin when Margaret is overruled in having the child named after her deceased mother, having the baby named and blessed "according to the custom of her people" ("Whom," p. 314), and having the

19 Mary Grant Judd, "Whom the Lord Loveth," Young Woman's Journal, 28 (1917), 312.
elders of her church come to give the baby a blessing when it becomes ill. Margaret feels additional responsibility for her child's physical and spiritual development as she hears her husband's refusal to let her rear their children in the Mormon faith.

After an argument with John, Margaret makes a crucial decision, but she is so exhausted in doing so that she was not herself. To her fevered brain values appeared out of proportion. She only blamed herself for what had happened. This child was John's as well as hers... Then could she take it from him? No, for hers had been the sin. To John the light had not been given. "Perhaps when I am gone he will see things differently," she thought. "Perhaps God will accept this sacrifice and through it rectify the mistake I have made." ("Whom," p. 316)

Margaret's "sacrifice" is to abruptly leave her husband and baby for the next twenty years. She manages to make a meager living alone as a seamstress, and since her father died about the time she left John, she has no home to go to. In a swift, sentimental denouement, Margaret finally returns to Salt Lake City, her family home, to be with her own kind.

A year later she is sewing wedding clothes for a young bride toward whom she has strangely maternal feelings. One day as she is finishing her work, she unexpectedly sees a tall gray-haired man at the door,
the bride's father, who immediately recognizes Margaret as his lost wife. He explains to her his experience during the past twenty years.

"Since you left me I have spent my life in atonement. I have known suffering, but through it all I have been brought to see the light and now I think I can say that my faith is like yours. Let us begin again. It is not too late." ("Whom," p. 317)

From his statement the moral seems to be: Marrying outside the LDS faith is a sin which both parties must fully repent of before their union is acceptable in Mormondom. Full repentance in fiction requires that the gentile must join the Church and both must be true to its precepts. This moral reflects LDS culture but not LDS doctrine. (Marriage to a non-Mormon is not technically a "sin" today despite the fact that some Mormons in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would have interpreted it as such.) Written especially for youth, this story would still be a strong deterrent against marriage outside the faith even if the readers knew that its message went beyond actual doctrine.

A story which is more interesting than "Whom the Lord Loveth" for its specific stylistic qualities but not for its overall theme or implications is "A Maid and Her Admirers." Bessie is a sixteen year-old girl who goes away to the Brigham Young Academy to school
the predecessor of the largest private Mormon school, Brigham Young University) and lives in Provo with her widowed aunt, Mrs. Pinkhurst. The story is a delightful serialized account of Bessie's social life at college. Other than the realistic details in the paragraph below, plot and character are not noteworthy enough to explore further. When Bessie tells her aunt that her parents have decided to sell their farm and move to Provo,

Mrs. Pinkhurst, whose inner nature was highly emotional and sympathetic under her well controlled exterior, gave a gasp of surprise and pleasure. For an instant a little line of red ran around her eyes and she blinked them as if they smarted.\textsuperscript{20}

The kind of descriptive detail capsulized in this brief paragraph demonstrates that there were occasional bits of quality observation and expression in early LDS short fiction. The first sentence would not be unusual in contemporary "American" stories, but the focus of the last sentence, on her eyes, is quite a sophisticated technique for suggesting emotional impact on a character. Details like this were not found in LDS-authored stories earlier and are only sporadic before 1920. Their inclusion does indicate a growing awareness of style among some native LDS writers.

Although the theme and plot line of the following story, "Annette's Gift," is geared to stir sentiment and pity in readers, the story has generally more depth and shows more of an effort to get at character complexity than do many previous stories. Its conclusion is an unusual balance of realism and idealism. Within the time frame of the story, Annette does not see the fulfillment of her plans to become a nurse, but she reconciles herself to what she decides is a greater gift to humanity because it is heightened by her personal, unseen sacrifice. She determines to remain at home and care for her younger brother and sister and her invalid father, because her plans to complete a nursing course in the city are spoiled by a younger sister's sudden engagement and forthcoming marriage to a college sweetheart. Since her sister will go with her husband to another state to school, Annette must stay home at least four more years until another sister can take over her duties and she can leave.

Annette's internal conflict is handled quite completely, and thus more realistically than such conflicts in other stories with similar themes of personal sacrifice for a perceived greater good. In such cases that "good" for unmarried women is the typical injunction to "stay at hearth and home" indefinitely, if necessary, instead of pursuing a career. Unlike most other stories,
Annette experiences several painful moments of jealousy, anger, and rebellion throughout the evening after Alicia announces her marital plans. Her turbulent thoughts and feelings are described with an unusual amount of detail for this period, and despite some awkward diction, they are insightful contrasts to the casual, cheerful comments she makes to Alicia.

An interesting statement defending continued female education and training is inserted within Annette's reverie after the two sisters have gone to bed. Although her logical argument is still centered around the possibility of finding a husband while pursuing a career outside her home, it is significant, nevertheless, that at least for this reason a professional career for a woman can be justified.

In her youth she had dreamed of the princes who rode on white horses, discovering shy maidens spinning in their humble, rose-covered cottages. Her seven and twenty-years now told her that, while maidenly modesty was still an important factor in the world of true romance, the modern maiden must go out upon the busy highway of life, thereby creating a chance to meet her prince.

Her bitterness arose like a flood tide. . . . She would not give up her dream!21

A unique and striking example of the change LDS conversion stories had undergone since their popularity in the 1890s is "Zion Cosma." This story is longer and has more realism and depth of character than did earlier ones with thoroughly Mormon settings and characters. The theme is actually a daring twist of the regular conversion story and one never before broached in the Young Woman's Journal. It is the story of a teenage girl, named Zion Cosma by her devout Mormon mother, who experiences dissatisfaction and alienation from the Church after she moves to Salt Lake City from the Midwest. Another Mormon girl in Utah, Lael, befriends her, takes her home, and tries to bring her back into the fold. Their religious discussions are remarkably relevant for modern Mormon readers, especially as Lael tries to help her friend understand that the "Zion" in Utah glowingly described by Cosma's mother is a real place filled with real, imperfect people. Lael begins by affirming that Cosma's initial idealistic notions were at least partially correct.

"But Salt Lake City does have wide streets and the temple and conferences and the homes of the prophets and mountains. . . ."

Cosma replies:

"Yes, but it has other things that mother and the homesick elders never included. . . . It has theaters that stay open on Sunday, and
places of crime, and instead of being the center of joy and virtue, . . . I found it the place where my sorrows centered and where I had to drudge just to keep myself alive."  

She continues by describing her disappointment with the Church members in Utah and the essence of her complaint is as meaningful now as it was over fifty years ago.

"And when I went to church everyone seemed to take their religion as an everyday affair of no great concern instead of a flaming, joyous blessing, . . . I couldn't see the spirit we had in our little branch out in the world. I gave up everything to come to Zion and in Zion I found loneliness and indifference and hard work," ("Zion," p. 380)

However, through Lael and her family's love and friendship, Cosma gradually becomes an active Mormon again. At the same time, Lael grows and changes in character just as Cosma does when she discovers that a young man she has become particularly fond of is indeed the same elder who had become attracted to Cosma in the mission field. She struggles to deny her personal attraction toward him when she learns that he was also the major factor in Cosma's spiritual disaffection later when she accidentally met him in Salt Lake City, only to find him nearly drunk. Although his shock in

seeing Cosma instigated his speedy reform, she had already vowed to have no future association with him or his religion.

One of the more realistic passages in the *Young Woman's Journal* depicts Lael's struggle to cope with her feelings without letting him see that she has suddenly made the mental connection between her friend and Cosma's description of her "lost" missionary. The author, as in "A Maid and Her Admirers," skillfully focuses on small physical details that suggest powerful human emotions beneath the surface.

*If it had not been for that hat over the young man's eyes, he might have read something of what his words meant to Lael, in the trembling of her fingers as she broke grass blades in pieces and fought for control of her voice. It seemed that something died inside her, as she read her own heart during that moment and found in its depths a love . . . already lost. When she spoke again, she had taken the resolution that nobody should ever suspect what she had just discovered and renounced. ("Zion," p. 427)*

The anonymous author of "Zion Cosma" successfully combines a conversion story with a romance as Lael reunites Cosma with her boyfriend without specifying a definite proposal situation. The pace of the story is more leisurely and casual than that of most romances, and thus more realistic since the emphasis is on friendship instead of courtship. Both the conversion/romance combination and improved description and
development of characterization place this story among the more sophisticated ones stylistically in early Mormon fiction.

"Over the Hills to Happiness"\textsuperscript{23} is the longest story (about twenty-five pages) to be discussed in this chapter and has the best overall character development, stylistic qualities, and most consistent plot of any of the LDS-centered serial stories in the \textit{Journal} thus far in its history. Along with "Zion Cosma" it is one of the few long stories which is relatively well-written because of its successful use of detail in the integration of a strictly Mormon theme and the exploration of a female character's personal life, particularly the romantic experiences before marriage and the results of marrying the wrong person.

Yet, Cherril, the heroine, is a very different character than others had been in the same basic situation (like Margaret in "Whom the Lord Loveth"). She is "rounded" enough to realize she has made a mistake in marrying Ken, but also human enough to love him after they go through two trial separations and also human enough to miss him when he leaves her forever. She regards her marriage choice more as a result of faulty

\textsuperscript{23} Ruth Martin, "Over the Hills to Happiness," \textit{Young Woman's Journal}, 33 (1922), 525-529. The final segment of the story is in 34 (1923), 251-254.
human judgment than as a "sin," although she does admit briefly, "we've wrecked our two lives, Ken and I--we must atone with what is left" ("Over the Hills," 34 [1923], 254).

Her only bit of sermonizing at the end of the story serves a double role as a concluding moralistic note and as a preface to a proposal from John, her former boyfriend and her benefactor after her permanent separation from her husband. "It was my fault too, you know. But I've learned there can be no true happiness without spiritual harmony between husband and wife" ("Over the Hills," p. 254). Although Cherril is only twenty-two, she has two children, and John, a doctor, knows all about her past but is willing to start over again with her in Paradise, Utah, their hometown.

Besides the moral message of the story portrayed through its characters, the details are important because of the way they suggest mood and setting. When Cherril first goes to New York City with her artist husband, she is fascinated by the unusual sights and lifestyle of Greenwich Village where they are to make their home, Ruth Martin shows us through descriptive passages the sharp contrasts Cherril notices between the Villagers' values and her own. The following paragraph is typical of such detailed description, exaggerated for effect.
The excerpts also clearly indicate Cherril's reaction to the "Bohemian" people.

Leaning against the window was a huge poster, whose main subject was a long-faced woman with purple circles outlining sinister eyes of scarlet, a blue mouth, green hair standing out separately like wires, and a slim, three-fingered hand in which a cigarette glowed scarlet and sent up ribbons of blue smoke. It advertized a Village dance.

Cherril was diffident, shy among these radicals although she had been a radical at home. She began to worry a little when she sometimes heard Ken ridiculing government, religion, marriage--things she had always held sacred, with these other . . . artists. These people interested her but she was frightened of them. She knew little of the things they talked about. . . . She was an outsider. ("Over the Hills," Vol. 34, pp. 83, 85-86)

Cherril's realization that she is basically different from non-Mormons comes gradually and naturally, unlike Margaret's sudden confrontation with her husband late one night and her secret departure from New York the next morning. In comparing the two stories, "Over the Hills to Happiness" is more realistically developed despite its compliance with the typically Mormon "happy ending" borrowed from the bulk of sentimental fiction popular at that time.

See "Whom the Lord Loveth" above.
This story also has an interesting sub-theme which runs through other LDS stories of the period from 1890 to 1940. There seems to be a consistent implication that artistic and creative people are bad risks as marriage partners. Marrying a doctor, a lawyer, or even a farmer is preferable because those occupations seem to infer a more predictable, substantial income as well as stability of temperament, character, and good sense. It naturally follows, then, that marriage to an artistic non-Mormon is inevitably doomed from the start.

The next to the last representative story of the 1906 to 1925 period in the *Young Woman's Journal* is a delightful one. "From a College Woman's Journal" involves a fresh look at the traditional tension between marriage and a career for a woman. Even in the fiction of the 1920s women did not do both simultaneously. Just the fact that the young woman here anticipated a literary and teaching career with optimism instead of as a last resort because she was unmarried makes the story unique. Humor, tone, and style are skillfully integrated by the anonymous writer to simulate the private thoughts and confessions of this vivacious, unnamed coed.

In an early entry of her journal, she describes her Scottish grandmother's reaction to her decision to enter graduate school in Chicago. Grandmother
Cunningham is the only one who vigorously opposes the move for several reasons. Her granddaughter records the central objection.

She says, "You should be married. When I was your age (twenty-two--think of it--venerable is it not?) I was married and had a child. Your mother was married when she was twenty-two."

I sputter, "I don't want to get married. There's no one on earth I want to marry. Marry and become a deadly dull kitchen drudge. Marriage is for the girl who can't do anything else. I'm going to have a career. I'll study, oh, so hard, and become famous as a writer and lecturer. You'll see."

Grandma just smiled and said, "Remember this, my girl, you'll never be so happy as when you have a home and husband and little children of your own." 25

Grandma Cunningham's sage advice is not taken seriously until the coed meets Lynn Forrest, who is the subject of an interesting contrast, contained in a single journal entry, between her growing feelings for him and her career plans: "Lynn Forrest's letters have been like a golden thread running through the drab colored warp of this year. I am out of debt. Free! Now for unhampered devotion to a career" ("College Woman's Journal," 35 [1924], 26).

After she earns her master's degree in Chicago, she returns to her hometown to teach college. About a year later Lynn proposes to her, and although she says nothing and yields to him, her reason and her emotions conflict later when she writes of the experience in her journal. Her realization that falling in love is enjoyable foreshadows her subsequent marriage and the implication that at least for awhile she will give up her career for a home and family.

I knew in my unconscious mind that I should not, could not, would not marry him or anyone else; knew that marriage meant the end of my best hopes and dreams; that it meant the servility of the woman who bears and rears children... Yet, knowing all this, I shamelessly confess that I thoroughly enjoyed this new, world-old bliss. I can't quite account for it. ("College Woman's Journal," 35 [1924], 27)

The story's conclusion is within the accepted realm of LDS short fiction for young women: marriage and children are what a woman's life is all about. However, there are hints in this story of the exciting new educational and career options available for young women before they settle down. This story is unusual because it not only depicts a coed who likes school and does well, but she successfully completes a master's degree and teaches a short time prior to marrying at age twenty-five. No other fictional female characters in Mormon stories had the freedom to use their
opportunities to climb to high educational or professional levels. What makes the story most unusual, though, is her attitude, her clearly stated preference from the beginning for a career instead of the "drudgery" of married life. It is the opposite of the young woman's attitude toward her chosen profession and her subsequent marriage in "The Essentials" at the end of the previous chapter.

An interesting national story to compare with this one is "The Second Choice" (1918) by Theodore Dreiser. The protagonist, Shirley, is a working girl in Chicago without the professional ambitions of the "college woman," but she shares the same opinion of marriage when she reconciles herself to the fact that her romantic "first choice," Arthur, will never return and they will never marry. Shirley is stuck with Barton and his boring, dog-like devotion to her.

On the surface, she is in a better situation than was Emily in Anne Warner's story because her mother doesn't push her into a relationship. In reality, though, the social pressure for her to marry is strongly present, although not so conspicuous. Shirley feels the pressure inside of herself and rebels against the staid lifestyle of her lower middle-class neighborhood which she is expected to follow.
To think it had all come to this! . . . To see only Barton, and marry him and live in such a street, have four or five children, forget all her youthful companionships—and all to save her face before her parents and her future. Why must it be? Should it be, really?26

The more she tries to think of a way out, the more she feels trapped into not just a marriage with Barton, but into a grey, monotonous life. Finally she gives up her dreams and rationalizes her future.

"But what's the use?" She asked herself wearily and resignedly. . . . "Why should I cry? Why shouldn't I marry Barton? I don't amount to anything, anyhow. Arthur wouldn't have me. I wanted him, and I am compelled to take someone else—or no one—what difference does it really make who? My dreams are too high, that's all. I wanted Arthur, and he wouldn't have me. I don't want Barton, and he crawls at my feet. ("Choice," p. 147)

Shirley summarizes her soliloquy by calling herself a failure and going into the kitchen to help her mother with supper. Both the college woman and Shirley are idealistic young women about love and marriage but are still realistic enough to observe that married life can be dull, at least part of the time. They knew that life with a man does not necessarily become a state

of being "happy ever after" just because it was first sanctioned by a marriage ceremony.

"Sara," the last story to be discussed in this chapter, is significantly more sophisticated in its description and development of character than many other contemporary stories in the *Journal*. Published in 1925, it is full of youthful exuberance and the upper middle class consciousness of social graces and materialism. An early dilemma Sara faces is acceptance into the crowd of her pretty older sister, Afton. Eighteen year-old Sara is depicted as being rather old-fashioned in appearance besides being less outgoing and social than Afton.

Her fine, pale features and smooth coil of dark hair showed mature contrast to Afton's blonde prettiness; and the strong quiet movements of Sara's tall figure, in action or repose, made Afton seem all the more giddy and youthful--and fascinating. . . . She was . . . without that shimmer of irresponsible gaiety that makes eighteen so different from twenty-eight.27

Like the college woman, Sara is a practical girl who must consider the possibility of the necessity of having to support herself. Her mother is deceased and her father has been troubled with long periods of ill health for several years. Another similarity in addition

to the need for financial independence, is Sara's ambition to improve herself in the process. The detailed way in which her feelings are presented would seem banal today, but even the fact that she had different occupational ambitions than the usual domestic, academic or professional ones, is as unique to female fictional characters of the *Young Woman's Journal* as the marriage-after-career pattern is prevalent.

Sara had always vaguely supposed that she would make her own living . . . and already, in solitary practice, she had become a proficient typist. In the slow mastering of speed and accuracy she felt a definite thrill of achievement. Learning to type had satisfied, in a measure, something that gnawed within her. Something that wanted to be doing, climbing, conquering. ("Sara," p. 349)

However, as the overwhelming majority of stories go, Sara meets and gets to know dashing Jim Hamilton, of special interest to Afton, while typing his thesis, a prerequisite for medical school. Yet, she is surprisingly not romantically interested in him during the months she does his typing. In fact, "Sara . . . almost yearned for him to like Afton," and her shyness kept her from being anything but "ascetic . . . in her thoughts of personal romance" ("Sara," p. 351),

A year or two after her typing experience, she is chosen for a major role in a locally-produced moving
picture; Jim is cast as her counterpart. She then discovers in the process of their newly evolving friendship that a misunderstanding prevented him from declaring his love to her earlier. When they discuss it, Sara admits to him that she needs time to overcome her feelings of insecurity. As her own amateur psychologist she explains her weaknesses and fears to Jim. She lacks adequate self-confidence to believe anyone could love her in the way Jim professes, and her confession gives her personality a realistic and human dimension.

I've been afraid, terribly afraid of things, all my life, I was afraid of Afton, of myself, and frightfully afraid of you. Nowadays they'd probably call it an inferiority complex. At any rate, I couldn't believe that love and happiness and you, Jim, could belong to the little thing I was. I was afraid of love, afraid to trust it. ("Sara," p. 541)

Besides her occupational ambitions, her shyness, and her down-to-earth attitudes toward romantic love, Sara is different from other heroines in LDS short stories because she is the one who proposes to Jim after he becomes a doctor and she has quit her secretarial job. However, in her proposal letter she spends most of her effort philosophizing and even moralizing on the process of achieving personal happiness and does not elaborate on the proposal or their relationship. The story ends
with the letter, an effective device for avoiding a sentimental "happy-ever-after ending." (Its almost sterile content is softened a little because Sara closes the letter by telling Jim that she does love him.)

Dear Jim:

This is a proposal of marriage from a woman who is both fearless and very modern... Isn't it odd, to think how meaningless most of our sacrifices are, to anyone except ourselves? I have thought that most of my life has been giving up things, for people who didn't really want them at all. And in the end, it is all for my personal happiness, and has been all along. If you don't do those things, you are the one who loses. That's my ultimate lesson, I think. ("Sara," p. 542)

As we scan the array of short stories in the Young Woman's Journal from 1906 to 1925, we find nearly all of them fit into Agnes Lovendahl's general formula (see introduction of this chapter) of being partisan, giving a eulogy, or preaching a sermon. Yet virtually no stories of this period center around the historical pioneer themes she had hoped to see fictionalized in the Journal.

In fact, instead of Mormon themes becoming "great literature" with "universal appeal," the dwindling number of strictly Mormon-centered stories in this period had lost so much of their early distinctive
flavor that they entertained readers more readily than instructed them. Even conversion stories, "Mormon-girl-marries-gentile," or "Mormon-girl-marries-returned-missionary-in-temple" stories lack sufficient explicit references and detail to make them look like overtly didactic Mormon "instruction" stories for youth.

The stories of this chapter evidence the dramatic shift of Mormon fiction to conform with national literary styles and themes, which occurred around the turn of the century. As was mentioned earlier, this change occurred when responsibility for editing the Young Woman's Journal was officially put under the auspices of the Church's general boards instead of remaining with an individual editor. As we will see in the next chapter, the trend toward accommodation increases in strength and scope to include all LDS periodical fiction during the period from 1926 to 1940.

Only a few LDS writers such as Nephi Anderson and Josephine Spencer, as well as a group known only by their pseudonyms, retained enough of a Mormon flavor in their writing that they are singled out for inclusion in Mormon literature classes and anthologies. Unfortunately, in their efforts to instruct readers, their use of the literary medium is awkward and amateur compared with other native authors and those of their stories which do not emphasize LDS references.
The only types of stories which come close to bridging the gap between message and medium are the relatively few long serials. Of all the short stories in the Journal thus far, "Over the Hills to Happiness" comes closest to the realism in the aspects which might be considered as centrally realistic: character, events, representativeness of setting, and the interplay of external forces and internal forces to the main characters. Yet, it also includes aspects which are more peripheral to the definition of realism used here, but which are necessary steps toward it: thematic treatment of an LDS doctrine or practice, the inherent problems of interfaith marriage described in detail, and the adoption of an interesting, entertaining style.

In essence, then, the unique and quaint qualities which have characterized Mormon fiction as a sort of regional literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have all but been lost in the tide of secularization.

However, there are some significant compensations for this loss. Story themes in the next chapter have more universality; they relate to young men and adults of both sexes as well as to young women. Characters are better developed and believable, more real than ever before. Plots are more relevant for readers and
easier to follow because they integrate greater detail and intricacy within a shorter time frame,

The first apparent difference, though, is in tone and style—more humor, gaiety, and a carefree lightness, which makes the stories fun to read for their own sake. Writers more successfully balance their new and nearly equally-balanced dual objectives: to teach and to entertain.
Promise of the Wheat: A Ripening of Reality, 1926 to 1940

Stories in LDS periodicals for youth from 1926 through 1940 continue to follow contemporary themes and reflect national values, at least those printed in nationally distributed magazines. The prevalence of certain themes demonstrates this fact. Themes or subject matter most commonly used during this period in the Young Woman's Journal, the Relief Society Magazine, and especially in the Improvement Era, can be grouped into six categories. Some story plots are more complex than others because they combine these themes, but the vast majority of stories deal with at least one of them. They will be discussed below in the following order:

1) rural values, a sort of "return to nature" emphasis during the Depression and pre-World War Two years; 2) women's issues, particularly women's rights as homemakers; 3) the process of marrying and of rearing families; 4) athletics, including some of the first LDS fiction written exclusively for young men; 5) social development for young adolescents; 6) ethics in the social and the business world.
All of these categories are very much in keeping with the interests and movements which became fictionalized on a national scale. For instance, there was a great interest in organized sports like football, baseball, and basketball in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s. One story discussed here exemplifies the enthusiastic reception of the national Boy Scout movement by the Mormon Church.

For young women readers, romance has less emphasis during this time than the importance of women asserting themselves adequately in their spheres of influence. These stories are more realistic in their treatment of home and family. For instance, girls are not only told how to get their man to the altar, but they are advised on the intricacies of creating a happy and healthy emotional climate in their future homes for their husbands and children while not neglecting their own growth. Also important in the stories of this period is the new self-consciousness the business world felt about ethical matters, probably precipitated by national anti-trust legislation, worker unrest, and the emerging power of unions. Finally, the fact that many stories were written to totally or partially extol rural living and nature demonstrates a desire for self-sufficiency and security during the long period of
national economic distress which was felt most keenly in urban areas.

In the first category, rural values, Ivy Williams Stone has written an excellent story for the Improvement Era called "The Spawners." The title refers to salmon, a central symbol of the story because the older couple in the story, John and Amelia Gibby, decide to remain on their farm after a devastating flash flood. Like the salmon's instinct to reach its birthplace for laying its eggs, the Gibbys know that once they establish themselves on a parcel of farmland, there will be no retreat from their home, no matter what natural disasters might occur.

Mr. Stone's frequent use of descriptive detail almost overshadows both the plot and the theme of "The Spawners" but it is well written.

Little beads of perspiration trickled down John Gibby's face as he unharnessed the horses and turned their heads toward the barns. He loosened the neck of his blue shirt and shook the timothy chaff, but it did not fall loose. Instead, it formed in damp ridges in the creases of his neck, and lay in moist clusters on his shoulders and overall straps.¹

When Mrs. Stone was asked to name her two favorite stories of all those she had written for Church

publications over a fifteen-year period, this story was her second choice. In it she used the natural settings and incidents that she was personally acquainted with and which she used for most of her stories. The idea for "The Spawners" emerged as a result of a flood in northern Utah. Mrs. Stone had this to say about the background of the plot:

One farmer, who had built upon his father's old homestead, could not be persuaded to move away from the mouth of the little canyon, down which the flood had spent its greatest fury. He rebuilt his home in the same draw, and like the salmon who return to their native hatching place to spawn, he is willing to face what God may care to send.²

One volume of the Improvement Era is replete with stories centered around farming and good, old-fashioned rural life. Some are especially interesting because they are almost didactic in their effort to convince newly-married couples that the best way to start a family is in the country where the air is clear and where a family can be more self-sufficient than in town. In 1932 and 1933 the Depression was upon the nation and the Church members in full force so it seems logical that such stories would proliferate as positive propaganda.

One rural story, "Poetry and Prunes," is a one-page fable of an unhappy, unsuccessful poet who eventually finds himself and begins to write successful poetry when he goes out into the countryside to work with his hands. There he finds the inspiration which had eluded him when he had been sedentary and had only used his brain. Just a few sentences show the obvious plea to young people to work hard physically and thus be rewarded eventually in additional areas of their lives. The diction is somewhat awkward and trite, but the message is clear.

Enough of poetry--he would go to a farm and toil with his bare hands. He would get away from . . . rejection slips. He'd show the world that he was not above hoeing corn and milking cows. He would proceed to earn shekels by the beady moisture of his brow. 3

Isabel Neill wrote a story which combines a rural setting with the vicissitudes of a new marriage relationship. It has a classic conflict as the basis for its plot. A young city-bred wife begs her husband after their first five years on a wheat farm to take her back to the city to live. She feels that his passion for raising wheat on his own lands is more powerful than his love for her. If this were not the case, she

reasoned, why would he stay and continue to plant new crops, even after they had failed? At first the wheat had prospered and sold well, but Frank would not consider selling his farm or moving into town. He explains his feelings to his wife Fay when she again tries to convince him to move.

"No, Fay," he . . . answered slowly. I can't do it. I had thought that I could, but I can't. These years have done something to me. Growing wheat makes me feel that I am really worth while in the world. I am helping stay its hunger. I must stay here.  

The author finds a rather simple and straightforward solution to Fay's dislike of the farm by having Frank give her a trip by herself to the city for a few weeks. While she is there enjoying the companionship of old school friends and participating in their parties, she becomes more and more homesick as she realizes what a good, honest man she married. She realizes that his work on their wheat farm and on other farms is evidence of his unselfish effort to contribute wheat to city people who are out of work and don't have another source of income. Her loneliness among her self-centered city friends tells her that she loves and appreciates him for his

generosity. Fay cuts her vacation short to return to the farm and let Frank know that now she understands and shares his feelings for their wheat crop.

Women's issues and rights in stories of the early 1930s center around the typical home and family motifs. Estelle Webb Thomas wrote a delightful story in the *Relief Society Magazine* about Anne, a young wife and mother of two small children who is sternly warned by her doctor to spend a day in bed to calm her nerves. Although she needs the rest and decides to take her doctor's advice, her day in bed turns out to be twice as strenuous as her regular days. She uses up more of her nervous energy worrying about her household and her children than she would have normally had she been up. After a series of domestic crises—a child briefly lost, an heirloom broken, an elderly neighbor's fainting spell, two muddy children, and an unexpected visitor and dinner guest, to name a few—Anne decides to get up and put things back in order. The ending is humorous because Richard, her husband, makes an ironic comment to her and their guest at dinner. He lacks Anne's and the reader's knowledge of what actually went wrong at home that day.

Richard looked at Anne deftly serving the guest and a shade of annoyance crossed his face.
"You don't look rested as I expected, Annel
I don't believe you really try to relax and control your nerves! Now, shouldn't you think, Frank, that a woman should be as fresh as a daisy after a long, restful day in bed?"  

A similar short story which portrays a typical day from a young wife's point of view is "Supporting Cast" featuring Gloria, the wife of a graduate student in chemistry. This story was cited by the Improvement Era editors as the best one in their short story contest, despite the fact that this was the writer's first story to be printed.

Gloria differs a little from most fictional housewives because she teaches school and has a teenage babysitter for her son. But her teaching job is still only a temporary arrangement to tide them over until Jim's schooling is finished. On this particular Saturday, Gloria prepares a special third-year anniversary dinner as a surprise for Jim. After her waiting and waiting till midnight for Jim to return from the chemistry lab, he surprises her with news of a job offer which would mean an immediate salary but without the completion of his degree.

Gloria experiences a severe inner conflict as she weighs the value and security of a steady income against

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her continuing to support their family so Jim can achieve the degree he has worked so hard to get. All turns out happily in the story as Gloria finally decides to swallow her own feelings and urges Jim to reject the offer. The ending also has an ironic twist as Gloria hurries to the kitchen to bring out the long-awaited chicken dinner and Jim casually asks her a question from the next room:

I say . . . we have an anniversary coming up this month, don't we?" 6

LDS stories of the 1930s demonstrate how far women had come in their sustained battle for not only legal but domestic and social rights in their own homes. A quick mental comparison of "The Legacy" with an earlier LDS story, "A Conference Bonnet," (see below) is enlightening here. Ivy Williams Stone's "The Legacy" (1929) describes Mary Crowley's plight as a farmwife whose efforts are not appreciated by her husband and grown-up children. The two female characters of both stories are not sufficiently rewarded for their untiring efforts in their homes, and they long for specific compensations. For Mrs. Dexter in 1904 it was a new bonnet, but for Mrs. Crowley twenty-five years later it was the opportunity to get away and spend some of her unexpected inheritance

money on herself instead of using it for the farm or her family.

Unlike Mrs. Dexter who stays home from conference and does chores while her family is gone, Mary Crowley runs away. She rents a room in a resort hotel, breakfasts, shops, has her hair done, and does all of the little things she has wanted to do for years to pamper herself. Her husband soon finds her there and in a climatic confrontation, he learns that he must make compromises if his wife will ever consent to come home.

"We're going home!" This ultimatum was issued with all the old authority that came with the Crowley traditions. Roger settled in the chair ... and calmly waited for his wife to obey.

Thereat Mary Crowley rose to her full height, leaned over ... and faced her husband with indomitable calm.

"Roger," she announced, "I am not going home today. Nor tomorrow, nor the next day, unless I choose. I shall go when I am ready."

Mary successfully stifles her immediate impulse to compromise her newly acquired personal rights until she can gracefully accept his concessions, a new car for her and time to go visiting in it whenever she wants.

Thus, LDS stories of this period are consistent in reflecting the same themes that are in national periodical

7 Ivy Williams Stone, "The Legacy," Young Woman's Journal, 40 (July 1929), 440.
literature concerning women asserting their rights in their own homes. Yet, compared with the first decade of the century, the Mormon writers discuss this issue now more openly, realistically, and emphatically.

Turning from women's issues in marriage to the closely related topics of romantic love and starting families, two stories in the Improvement Era stand out as particularly good examples of the type of literary quality characteristic of this period in LDS fiction. "How Lovely Youth" is the first Mormon story to focus successfully on a male protagonist. It goes a long way to compensate for the dearth of short stories, especially romantic ones, told from a male point of view. Mormon men got little attention in previous Mormon fiction, primarily because the Journal was for young women readers. With the advent of the Improvement Era, however, writers had to address both sexes.

The plot involves Robin, a returned missionary, and Carol, the girl who has waited faithfully for him and whom he plans to marry. It thickens as the reader discovers that Robin and Carol have both recently fallen in love with other people without the other's knowledge. They don't know how to straighten out their feelings let alone tell each other that there are other people involved. Complications arise when Robin tries to mentally weigh the practicality of marrying Carol versus the ethereal
joy he felt when he met Jennifer for the first and only
time and the romantic fantasies he still has of her.

Carol was a fine girl, he meditated, as he
walked along. She'd be a fine wife . . . He
thought a great deal of her . . .

His life would be neatly, wisely managed, neatly,
wisely tucked into a big white house with green
shades at the windows. He thought, queerly,
that he would probably have to eat a good deal
of spinach, because that was good for him. When
a woman loved a man she always saw to it that
he got what was good for him. Carol did love
him. 8

As Robin thought of Carol he couldn't help contrast-
ing that dream of his future life with his conversation
with Jennifer who shared his desire to visit exotic
places before settling down to a more sedate domestic
life. Robin remembers Jennifer, though, instead of
Carol, in specific detail which clearly conveys to the
reader his true feelings for her.

Well, it probably wasn't real love. It was an
infatuation. Anyway, why had he thought she
loved him? . . . Maybe her blue clothes and
her red hair and her bewildering eyes had
dazzled him.

Maybe it was the way Jennifer laughed, and the
way the stars looked like candle flames, and
the color of the moon. If he saw her now,
everything might be different. It was her
funny little voice that sounded like ripe
fruit and very clear cold water and a little

8 Ardyth Kennelly, "How Lovely Youth," Improvement
Era, 36 (August 1933), 594.
girl singing. . . .

He had not even touched Jennifer. Her hair must smell of flowers and her eyelids would be very soft. ("Youth," p. 634)

Near the end of the story Robin meets Carol, and she tells him that she really loves Richard. He walks back home even more confused than ever. But then he miraculously finds Jennifer waiting for him at his house and discovers that nothing he had thought or imagined about her was untrue.

The plot may not be very realistic, but there are passages of characterization and description that are well-developed indicators of Robin's inner mood.

Outside it was colder than he had thought. The dry leaves rustled and blew, and the skeletons of trees scraped and rattled in the smoky-colored wind. The moon was a broken white china saucer on the dark floor of the sky, with bits of it swept carelessly about to make the stars. ("Youth," p. 594)

The second story also has a romantic boy-meets-girl plot. But it is handled humorously rather than seriously as stories of earlier decades were. Bill proposes marriage to Susan but she refuses him on the grounds that she prefers to do something worthwhile and noble to risking failure in matrimony. Her plan is to use her small savings to adopt and rear orphan babies. However, getting permission to adopt the babies is more difficult
than she had figured until one day she finds twin babies on her doorstep.

With no time to sit and contemplate the mystery, she hurriedly rearranges her house and schedule to accommodate her new "family." She enlists her family as her assistants when, to her surprise and dismay, a baby arrives on the doorstep each morning until she has fifteen children ranging in age from one month to three years.

During this time, Bill is in Philadelphia before going to medical school in Vienna for three years. After receiving a desperation telegram from Susan urging him to come home, he does only to find her struggling to care for all of the children. Her help had just left because five babies had a rash they thought was smallpox. All day Bill and Susan weathered a series of domestic and hilarious mishaps.

Susan and Bill gave up eating and Roderick got his head wedged in between the bars of the bed. Jackie put Susan's ivory nail set in the toilet along with Bill's hat. Maybe this incident should not be mentioned and there are many more which cannot be.

However, with Bill's help, Susan renews her faith in her mission, and Bill leaves that day bewildered by her determination. He comes over the next day to announce

his final departure for Austria and manages to convince Susan that marrying him would be the best way out of her dilemma. She becomes incensed, though, when he confesses that he arranged for the fifteen children to be sent to her from the orphanage. At the same time she is relieved to know she can still visit them without assuming full responsibility for their care. This story has all the makings of a situation comedy for a motion picture (of the Doris Day variety) or a television series.

As professional sports and their athletes skyrocketed to national popularity in the late 1920s and the 1930s, fiction for boys also proliferated in this area. Almost every issue of the Improvement Era beginning in the early 1930s had at least one substantial, fast-moving sports story.

Team spirit and the glory of athletic stardom all became a part of one character's desire to win the big college football game of the season against his team's arch rival. In "The Business of Being a Star," the emphasis is not on character development, theme, or even on plot, in the usual sense, as much as on the exciting action of the sport. The writers of these stories focus on the tension inside one key player who tries to win the game single-handedly when the odds are completely against him and his team. To Wendell White, the football star of this story, being a star is more important than anything
else to him at the time the story takes place. Although he makes mistakes in his performance, he, like other fictional athletes, always succeeds in winning the game with a significant degree of self-respect and popularity which are natural by-products.

Then the signal was given. He saw the ball leave the center's hands, and in an instant, he was carrying it against his body. With the touch of the smooth pigskin against his nervous fingers, every muscle ceased twitching and he was at once a cool, mechanical machine, ready for action. He forgot the yelling crowd, forgot the opposing team, forgot everything but the business that loomed before him--the business of being a star.\(^{10}\)

What "the business of being a star" actually means in football terms is not clearly defined in the story although the phrase is repeated dramatically in several places, adding unity to the story and emphasis to the title. It seems to fit into the realm of escape literature for adolescents because it does not even mention the long hours of practice required for football "stars" or teamwork involved. This story and others like it do not deal with the complexities of a football player's real life either, and other people in the story are merely stock characters and foils.

Didacticism in LDS periodicals, especially in the Improvement Era at this time is not so explicit as in previous decades, but it is still alive and well. In several stories readers are presented with social weaknesses or ethical problems of a rather complex and sophisticated nature which the characters face and overcome.

In "Farmer Gone Wrong;" Sadie Ross goes through a painful social learning process as a college freshman. She is told that she talks too much and must replace her country idiosyncracies with a more becoming gracefulness. After her first year, a male friend and peer gives her some needed advice. The content of it differs from that which the aunts and grandmothers used to preach to young LDS girls about chastity and temple marriage in the Young Woman's Journal at the turn of the century and earlier. But the intent to educate and warn is basically the same.

Now, for example, here are a few things I suggest. Don't be in a rush about everything. That walk of yours will never do. You aren't jumping mud puddles on Market Street. . . . Let men do the talking. Always think twice before you say anything. Your mind is one-hundred percent, but your tongue is always in ahead of it when you get out. 11

11 Ralph Harvard Olson, "Farmer Gone Wrong," Improvement Era, 36 (July 1933), 575.
Readers were not just given advice about their social interactions, but several stories of the 1930s emphasized ethical values such as honesty, trust, integrity, and fairness.

Samuel Taylor wrote a story for the *Improvement Era* with this interest-catching introductory statement:

Gil Mathew was just a "stooge" to Beth Lewis, when she entered the class in accounting—a studious person who would serve as a crutch to assist her to a good mark in the class without much work—but she learned that he played tennis rather well and that brought on complications.  

The "complications" are easy to predict. Beth discovers that Gil is more than her "stooge." He is an excellent athlete, student, and works at a part-time job to support himself in school. Beth slowly learns to admire his ambition and to appreciate his many talents. When she realizes that he has the integrity that she lacks, she is ashamed of herself for trying to use him, and she begins to do her share of the work in the accounting class. The story is a well-written combination of themes: athletics, ethics, character revelation and growth. It also includes a typical ending for Mormon fiction, newly found romantic love.

"Hang it all, Beth, I'm in love. Laugh if you want to. I'm the stooge, and here's your chance for a wise crack."

Beth didn't laugh; she didn't even smile. She merely said, "Gil" with a sort of tremendous connotation to the word, and they continued walking slowly down the street. ("Squeeze," p. 515)

Some of the ethics stories involve businessmen who decide that scrupulous honesty in their transactions is the best policy. Typically, they also find that it can bring unexpected cash benefits. These kinds of stories are usually very short, just a page or two. One, however, goes into more detail. It was printed posthumously in the Improvement Era.

"A Matter of Principle" is about a prominent businessman who goes fishing and loses his best pocketknife in the stream. He fortuitously spies a young boy, Pat, who retrieves the knife but refuses to take more than a quarter for it. Mr. Shane learns that Pat is a Boy Scout and that although he is poor, he is firm about sticking to his principle of not accepting extra money as a tip. When he is questioned, Pat replies that the principles he is learning in Boy Scouts will bring him eventual lifelong happiness if they are strictly obeyed. Mr. Shane is so impressed by Pat and his belief in ethical principles that he decides to adopt them in his business dealings.
Mr. Shane visits Pat and his widowed mother in their little cottage surrounded by flowers. Here the story gets sentimental. Pat's mother sheds tears when the businessman offers to pay for picking the hollyhocks that were planted in memory of Pat's father. The flowers themselves are sentimental symbols as is his mother's reaction to them. Pat tells Mr. Shane the oft-repeated didactic advice of his father's while his mother cries some more: "Stick by your principles and you'll just have to be happy--only those who lose their principles lose their happiness."  

After a close study of the Mormon short stories from 1926 through 1940, we reach these conclusions: 1) the stories reflect themes very similar to those found in nationally popular periodicals; 2) the stories are more sophisticated in a literary sense than earlier time periods; and 3) the stories retain a dominant element of conservatism and didacticism although this element is not so narrowly confined as before to Mormon doctrine and mores. Of the last conclusion one editor of an LDS periodical made this evaluation in 1932.

For every short story writer in the earlier days of the Church, there are a dozen or more today. Because of the fact that they write for the

Church periodicals—magazines with necessarily a definite editorial policy—their themes are somewhat alike and are apt to have a didactic tone. This latter characteristic is not always a necessary one, for all of the Church magazines occasionally carry stories with this element lacking. 14

What It All Means: Implications from Past Fiction for Present and Future Mormon Writers

As early as 1908 Annie Wells Cannon made a critical evaluation of Mormon fiction. In the beginning of her article she speaks favorably of Mormon literature in its totality:

That Utah has now and always has had such works [Mormon "classics"] I do maintain, whether the world's critics received them as such or not. The writings of the Utah authors should justly claim a first place in the ranks of erudition, composition, inspiration, and sentiment.

Then she adds a qualifying comment:

True, in the field of literature known as Fiction, (sic) Utah can make little claim to excellence and yet . . . all the world's experiences, and sentiments so abound in those attributes and acquirements which are necessary for the making of a successful novel. A people taught, however, almost from the beginning to refrain from reading that class of literature are not very likely to study the art of composing it, and what few attempts have been made have been confined largely to the story telling for magazines and newspapers by some of our later writers with probably the exceptions of Edward W. Tullidge and that rather striking story of Corianton from the Book of Mormon by
Brigham H. Roberts and some religious novels by Nephi Anderson.¹

In just a few sentences Mrs. Cannon summarizes the results, in part of all three of my hypotheses stated in the conclusion of Chapter One. As was evident in the stories written for the Improvement Era (see Chapter Four) from 1930 to 1940, the tone and style of the more recent Mormon short stories had changed from extreme sentimentality and didacticism to a more sophisticated, objective realism.

One of the main reasons for this change was the almost complete abandonment of strictly "Mormon" themes and even details around principle doctrines: temple marriage, observation of the Word of Wisdom, obedience to parents and especially to the priesthood form of Church government, and the spiritual sustenance of a "testimony" in the LDS Church as the only true church (and often interpreted by Mormons as the only "true" lifestyle which generalized to include the Mormon Utah culture as well). These are just a few of the Mormon themes we have seen in the short stories of this study.

The abandonment of explicitly stated Mormon references occurred because the LDS people went through a gradual

process of accommodation and assimilation with the larger society of the United States during the late nineteenth century and picked up speed after the turn of the century when Utah had finally "arrived" as far as statehood was concerned. The fact that this accommodation and nationalization took place is not surprising because it was a natural process that happened all through the country during the fifty years from 1890 to 1940. In the Utah Mormon culture, however, the process may have occurred more slowly than in other parts of the country. The Mormon people had greater religious, economic, and social cohesiveness and conservatism in comparison with most other groups, especially non-religious ones, in the nation.

It is my belief that assimilation of the national culture by the Mormon culture lagged at least a decade behind assimilation in other geographical areas at least partially because of the inherent tension between my second and third hypotheses. The second was that the accommodation of Mormons to the national trends would be reflected in the Mormon literature. The third one states that Mormon literature reflected the conscious and unconscious effort of LDS parents and leaders to keep their youth active in the Mormon Church and satisfied with its way of life. Thus, even with the strong forces of accommodation to a larger culture, exhibited by
different and increasingly sophisticated literary styles and a sharp decrease in overt didacticism, Mormon writers continued to write moralistic stories. Their messages centered around somewhat different themes: ethical ideals (like honesty or integrity), observance of the Ten Commandments, economic conservation and hard work, and families with traditional values.

It should be remembered that while Mormon stories show a great deal of accommodation in the twentieth century to national literature and culture, they initially had unique qualities in comparison with evangelical Protestant groups who wrote in a similar vein. I will briefly mention four areas, or story themes, which occur only in Mormon short stories and which were discussed primarily in the second chapter (1890-1905).

First, the way LDS writers portrayed gentile (non-Mormon) males as slick, suave and unscrupulous city-bred villains is not unique in itself to Mormon fiction. Nor is the image of the "good guy" as a rugged, honest and awkward country hero a new one. However, the Mormon people who pioneered the American West valued thrift, self-sufficiency and moral innocence and highlighted the preference for the rural suitor over his city rival.

Second, conversion-to-the-church stories are not unique types to Mormonism but are given more emphasis than they would be given by non-LDS groups. I believe
this is because of the conviction among Mormons that their church has special rights as the only true church and, consequently, they as a people have inherent privileges.

Related to the conversion story is the Book of Mormon type of story, adapted from the then well-accepted historical romance to teach "appropriate" didactic messages to youth.

However, the only truly unique Mormon theme or element in the stories of this study is the doctrine of temple marriage, or marriage for eternity. (The practice of plural marriage was rarely found in fiction but closely related to temple marriage in its aims.) Temple marriage is the single concept I found in the stories which did not originate with Protestant groups in America and became adapted to fit the fictional needs of the Mormons.

It is important to keep in mind that one of the chief reasons why literary development was retarded was what Mrs. Cannon alluded to when she said that the Latter-day Saints had been taught for decades to refrain from reading literature. In Utah from 1847 through the 1880s there was a limited access to "classical" literature as opposed to the cheap mass of "pulp" fiction available for only a few pennies after the completion of the railroad in 1869. After hearing Church officials preach from the pulpit against the reading of fiction, it is logical, as Mrs.
Cannon said, that Mormons would not feel inclined to concentrate on a study of the art of writing fiction. These previous injunctions would have an effect even later when Nephi Anderson encouraged and pled for the acceptance of fiction and for Mormons to dedicate themselves to "artistic preaching" in their writing.

A Mormon writer, Samuel W. Taylor, has written of the tension between the development of literary art in Mormon fiction and the stronger tendency to write the type of fiction that is more acceptable to the LDS audience. He makes some rather caustic but pertinent comments in his condemnation of the narrow and sentimental tastes of the Mormon reading public. His accusation is that there is no market for stories which aim to strike at the heart of ethical controversies fought in the soul of the individual Mormon who, for example, struggles to reconcile his beliefs with the demands made on him by his complex "gentile" environment. The Jewish people, Taylor says, have developed the ability to examine themselves and the contradictions in their beliefs and cultural values whereas the Mormons have not thus far (as of 1969).

To make his point, Taylor satirically lashes out at Mormon writers, but particularly the audience they cater to, by focusing his attack on Jewish writers of realistic material like Phillip Roth (Portnoy's Complaint).
What's wrong with the Jews? Don't they realize that they must never, never, never countenance a book that doesn't portray all Jews the way our own approved books depict Mormons--as cardboard stereotype, perfect, flawless, sexless and gutless? Don't the Jews realize that to put real human beings with real human problems into their books will destroy their public image? Apparently they're not as smart about such things as we are . . . .

No people in this entire world have such a wonderful public image as the Jews. Their literature doesn't seem to have hurt it one bit. Matter of fact, if I weren't a Mormon who knew better because I've been told to a thousand times, I'd say an honest and realistic literature goes a long way to build a fine public image.2

It is hard, if not impossible to judge exactly how much of his opinion can be applied to all of the Mormon writers throughout the fifty years of this study. Certainly, some of it can well be. If Mormon writers did have sufficient contact and acquaintance with national literature of quality, why didn't they improve their literary styles to conform more completely with the better literature that they read?

Taylor attributes the persistence of sentimentality and its accompanying lack of character depth, and the lack of systematic progression toward critical realism to the demands and interests of the market. He didn't feel that it was due to the knowledge or skill of the Mormon writers

themselves. He gives a tongue-in-cheek "success" formula to those who aspire to write for that market.

Writers don't make the market, they simply fill its requirements. In preparing yourself for this market you must work very hard to develop your adjectives to praise. . . . If you think this is poor writing, just try it. . . . It is a must for the market. When in doubt, praise.

Controversial material can be used in this market only if you give it the positive approach.  

What, though, is wrong with the use of sentimentality in Mormon fiction, especially if it seems to be preferred over realism? Taylor concludes that there is nothing inherently wrong with it or any type of literature which seeks to entertain its audience, whether the audience is Mormon or not.

There does seem to be just one type of Mormon literature acceptable both in the national market and among the Saints. This is the memoir--life-with-father, how-dear-to-my-heart-is-the-old-nostalgia. I have no quarrel with this genre; it is Americana, and I like it. **But certainly with the infinite richness of the material, there ought to be a broader field.**

In the ten years since Taylor's last statement (above), several Mormon writers have made preliminary explorations of the broader field of source material and

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3 Taylor, p. 38.

artistic approach. Some are heeding Agnes Lovendahl's plea for the selection and appropriation treatment of Mormon pioneer history as a basis for writing fiction. I think that the reason more hasn't been done with history is that the history is still better when told as it actually happened without fictionalization. It is not my purpose to discuss the most recent developments in Mormon fiction except to point out that it has a literary parentage in the short stories of the early periodicals I have studied. The fact of literary parentage alone is proof that such early short stories are worth perusing for their wealth of social, religious, historical, and psychological raw material, if not for their literary characteristics and development.

I tend to agree with Gean Clark's final evaluation of the "fictional" material she studied in Mormon periodicals up to 1900, although I made my study forty years after hers and included more recent periodical literature:

It is my belief that there is not much literature of worth. Perhaps an occasional story may deserve applause for literary excellence, but for the most part, the fiction is of value for the sole reason that it preserves the attitudes and sections of life of the early Latter-day Saints out of which true literature may evolve.  

Another part of the answer to the question, Why didn't Mormon writers produce fiction of a higher quality, is similar to what Howells said in *Criticism and Fiction* about Sir Walter Scott's romantic novels, very popular in the nineteenth century. Not only do audiences differ and confine a writer to certain genres, literary styles are often crude in their inception when measured and judged against more modern methods of literary criticism.

In the beginning of any art even the most gifted worker must be crude in his methods, and we ought to keep this fact always in mind when we turn... to Scott himself, and recognize that he often wrote in a style cumberous and diffuse; that he was tediously analytical where the modern novelist is dramatic... that he was tiresomely descriptive. The generation which he wrote for was duller than this... unaesthetically trained, and in maturity not so apprehensive of an artistic intention as the children of today. All this is not saying Scott was not a great man; he was a great man, and a very great novelist as compared with the novelists who went before him.⁶

Consideration of the intellectual and social milieu of the Mormon people from 1890 through 1940 is important as we try to assess the place and literary value of their fiction. Their times were not like ours are now, but they faced similar problems of a dynamically changing society.

⁶ Howells, (Section IV), p. 17.
Thus, efforts to preserve Mormon culture and religious ideals for their youth perpetuated the sentimentality and didacticism (in some form) in their short stories despite the unconscious assimilation of Mormon society with national social and economic patterns.

Looking at these stories with modern eyes has been a rich experience for me. I have enjoyed watching the never-ending tug-of-war between the forces of accommodation toward sophisticated literary styles and themes and the tenacious clinging of familiar Mormon religious beliefs, as expressed in the Utah-centered LDS culture. It is my hope that others will be able to build upon the foundation I have laid in this study in their efforts to understand the Mormon people better.
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ABSTRACT

Previously, no one has analyzed the short stories of Mormon periodicals from their inception in the late nineteenth century until 1940. The body of this study attempts to do so and has two main aims.

First, it evaluates the literary development of largely sentimental stories written for Mormon youth. Sentimentality in fiction was an extreme form of romanticism which flourished in America throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. As other forms of realistic writing became more acceptable in the nation, Mormon writers gradually accommodated their literary styles to conform with national trends. They retained a significant amount of sentimentality in their short stories, possibly to preserve their religious and cultural values.

Secondly, this study describes the sociological implications of Mormon short stories. This aim is secondary to the literary aim but none the less valuable for students interested in discovering Mormon cultural trends as they are reflected in Mormon short stories.

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