



June 1854 Letter from Warren F. Reynolds to Asa Reynolds

This letter written to Asa Reynolds in Rose, Oakland, MI by his younger brother, Warren F. Reynolds living in South Cottonwood, Salt Lake, Utah on 24th June, year probably 1854. Original held by Dan Mahaney and copied by Robert C. Mahaney on 30 July, 1994. Copy sent by mail to Robert N. Reynolds July 27, 2009. Transcribed into Segoe script with original spelling preserved and footnotes added by great grandson Robert N. Reynolds August 3, 2009.

Letter addressed to: Rose Postal, Oakland Co. Michigan, Asa Reynolds, Esq.

Top line illegible.....

It has ben nearly seven years since I receved your letter & I have not writton any to you since that time¹ but feeling

¹ This statement is the first verification that Asa wrote a letter to his brother Warren in 1847, after leaving Michigan. Warren married Edna Merrell in Rose, Michigan on 3 January 1846. Soon afterwards he and Edna left Michigan with the Merrell family and traveled to Nauvoo, Ill. arriving there in a tumultuous time as the LDS people were being driven from their homes and businesses by angry mobs. Nevertheless, Warren found enough peaceful moments to be baptized in the Mississippi River by a Mormon missionary, Mephibosheth Serrine, who he had met in Michigan. Church records show the ordinance date of his confirmation as 1 March 1846. This ordinance followed that of baptism which was performed in the Mississippi River. The newlyweds proceeded on until coming to the frontier village of Farmington, Iowa. Here Edna's mother gave birth to a son, naming him Porter William Merrell. The date was 10 September 1846. Over the coming days the family struggled on across Iowa until they reached Garden Grove. We know that Warren and Edna stayed at Garden Grove, Iowa until they could gather enough support to make it across the plains to Utah. Family tradition holds that Warren and Edna came west with the 1848 Heber C. Kimball Wagon train. Evidence from newspaper and census records confirm the Reynolds family traveled to Utah in either 1848 or 1849. He likely came in 1848, as stated in his obituary. He is listed on the 1847 Iowa Branch Records in Garden Grove, and his first child was born in Utah in May 1850. The Merrell Family followed later.

much interested in your welfare and in the rest of my Brothers and sisters I imbra this opertunity as one to converse with you I have writon sum to Charles and have had sum 3 or 4 from him & he has not sayed any thing about Ester yet I wish to know abought all of you & how you are getting along.² I have had sum thoughts of comming to see you this fall and returning next spring if I could do any good to any or - my time & my tallant & my property is nothing to me. I have had sum harde times since I left you have had sum harder times and sum good but I hav no reson to com plane for the God that I serve & worship the God of Abriham Isiek & Jacob has precieeved & led me carefully to these peacefule valleys of the mountains whare thare is rest at least for a season.³ I was left in Nauwoo with but one horse and wagon & had my wagon robed at farmington and I was turned out - as the huskers would say to eat root little pig or die but I have had plenty to eat & to ware & I am out of the reache of mobers & mobicrats & devlish men who seak to destroy the kingdom of God and take the preasthood from the earth.

2 Charles Douglas Reynolds, younger brother of Warren and Asa, died on 14 July 1854 - just days after this letter was written. Nothing is known of the whys and wherefores of Charles' death except that he was buried at Rose, Michigan in the family plot where his mother Betsy was laid to rest a decade earlier. Facts regarding the life of sister Ester are silent also.

3 Warren's "season of rest" would be seriously interrupted at least twice in the coming 46 years of life at his home in South Cottonwood. The first would occur just three years later in 1857 during the Utah War when Johnson's Army intruded the Salt Lake Valley, coming to rest for a time at Camp Floyd in Cedar Valley some thirty miles south and west. The Army remained at Camp Floyd until their recall back east at the time of the Civil War. Like all of the other inhabitants of the area the citizens prepared their meager homes to be torched and left the Salt Lake area for refuge further south. They remained in this state of readiness until the following spring. The second period of unrest was during the "Crusade against Polygamy" which seriously interrupted Mormon life in Utah from the late 1870s until 1890, when Mormon President Wilford Woodruff signed what has become known as the "Manifesto" which succeeded in a few years of officially terminating the practice of Plural Marriage among the church's accepted membership.

Asa I Have sean Abil Lam⁴ - he lives in this city - you mite suppose he wood look verry old but he holds his age vere well - he has been amongst those kind of men which I have ben riting about ho sek to disimbody men & force thare spirets back to God..

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This morning I went to help mr Huffickker get his hors & buggy out of the crick⁵ - his hors was drowneded & his buggy shattered. This is a very rushing crick & the water very hie at presant - the mountains are full of snow - you would think it very strange to se snow in summer but I have seen it the summers round for near five summers - this is a very groing time here - crops look well generaly - everything is price very hie this season oing to the emigration booth our ones and the gold digars. I think fore men to leave homes thare famales & thar all & go to

4 "Abil Lam" was Abel Lamb, an acquaintance of Asa and other Reynolds family members during their days at Avon, New York. Abel Lamb, a school teacher just like Asa, in 1826 married Almira Merrill, daughter of Daniel Merrill who lived close enough to the Reynolds to be recorded in the 1820 Avon census, immediately adjacent to them. Abel and Almira married and lived at Livonia, just seven miles southeast of Avon. By 1836 they had six children. Abel and Almira were converted to Mormonism by Brigham Young who at that time lived at Mendon, ten miles northeast of Avon. Abel was baptised in Conesus Lake by the father of Joseph Smith. In 1836 the Lambs left New York and followed the Mormons to Kirtland, Ohio. In the next ten years their lives were entwined with the Mormon persecutions in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois. When in 1857 they were again forced from their home in Salt Lake City by Johnston's Army Abel was recorded as saying that he had experienced this sort of thing enough times that "it seemed perfectly natural."

5 The Huffaker family lived neighbors to the Reynolds family in South Cottonwood for well over one hundred years.

the regions of goald must be lovers of the God of this earth - they will you thare everything for the sak of worshipping the god of thare fathers & whie should they not - this is the way they hav taught - this is thare education & that forms thare religion. Asa I am proud of my religion - it embrases every good thing under the hull heaven - it is that which will bring man back to his maker. I know very well the world are in trouble about it & the invisable are in trouble about it - they are mutterring & pscaping & what is the mater - I will tell you the Lord is making a short work on the earth as he sayed he would & the devle is in trouble about it & he is bringin up his spiritual rapers & medidms - his magisonars & astrolagers just as he always did when ever God had a prophet on the earth. Since I began this letter I have rcd one from Aunt Lusinda⁶ - she rites that Charles has got religion - she rites many news - I should like to be

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thare awhile but when I ac I no not but I believe that I shall see you yet & all the rest of relations that live in that country - that part seams like home to me & your hows like a fathers hous⁷ - things have alterd verry much no

6 "Aunt Lusinda" is Lucinda Mosher, wife of Betsy's youngest brother Reuben B. Artlip. She was fifteen years senior to Warren but they were acquainted from the New York days when many of the Artlips lived there. Some like Reuben Brace and Lucinda went onto Michigan to make their new homes. Reuben died in 1870 and was buried at Greenwood Cemetery, Oceana County, MI. The gravestone is the only one in the cemetery and it is deteriorated and broken. Robert Mahaney captured photos when he visited in 1985.

7 This statement confirms the father-son like relationship that existed between Warren and his older brother Asa.

dout & you are an old man with a hed as whit as a sheat
& I presume I should not now you - my looks hav not
alterd but very little - I have had good health since I left
michigan & this one of the greatest blessings God evr
bestoed on man. I want you to rite a letter & I want you to
rite all the news about all the friends & relatives. I
receved Marys letter⁸ & to from Charles the fifth of June .
The male could not get hear this winter for snow. I sent to
papers to Charles last fal - the friends all well hear but
Joseph⁹ he is sick & has ben for near on year - he got hurt
by a fal a tree & I am afraid he will have to take a mison
to the spiret land. I will close my leter by saying good by
to you until another day. I remane your affetionate
Brother & friend. Warren F. Reynolds to Asa Reynolds

NOTE: This little piece of Reynolds Family history was made possible by the research and generosity of Asa's descendant, Dr. Robert C. Mahaney of Holland, Michigan.

Robert N. Reynolds, Littleton, Colorado, 8 August 2009

Asa was thirteen years senior to Warren; he had helped Warren and some of his siblings and his mother after the death of their father in 1835. Asa was a school teacher and of the mind and ability to become a County Supervisor and State Legislator -- so Warren looked up to Asa with due respect. On the envelope to this letter he attached the title Esq, noting the respect he felt.

8 "Mary" is Mary Gage, second wife of Asa. We don't know how Mary related to the "Mr. Gage" which WFR family tradition has "giving a helping hand to Warren when he left Michigan." This help allegedly included the offer of a home if he stayed to work for Mr. Gage as well as a yoke of oxen and wagon to carry him away. We have no way to ascertain the veracity of this or whether it is one of those family tales which gets better with time. The generosity and kindness of Mary Gage, however, is a matter of record.

9 The "Joseph" spoken of here would be seventy-seven year old Joseph Saxton, maternal grandfather of Edna Merrell. The Saxtons came west with the Merrells and Reynolds and settled at Payson some sixty miles south of Warren's home in South Cottonwood.

This letter written to Ann Reynolds in Bosc, Rutland Co. VT by his brother, Warren F. Reynolds living in Salt Lake City on 24th June, year probably 1876. Original held by Ann Nichols and copied by me on 20 July, 1954.

Ann Reynolds
Bosc Vermont
Warren Reynolds



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... I shall see you yet: & all the rest of
relations that live in that country. It seems like
home to me & your doors strike a fatherly hand
have altered every mind. It you are resolved
my with a head as solid as a rock & a passion.
I should not now you my looks have not altered
but very little & have made good health since
I left Michigan & this one of the greatest blessings
you are bestowed on man. If you will let me
I want you to send all the news about all the
relations of relations I receive may let it to you
I believe the people of your the male could not get
this this winter for I saw I sent to papers & was
last fall the friends all well but Joseph
she is sick & has been for near 2 years his got
heart by a fall a few & I am afraid he will have
to take a miser to the spirit land.

I would also include by saying good bye to you
and all my friends I remain your affectionate
brother & friend
Theo. Reginald