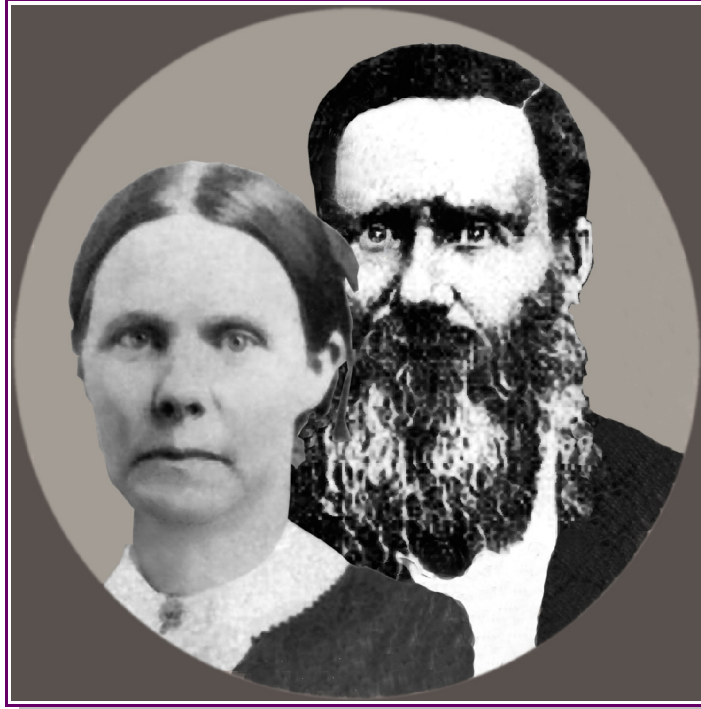


Warren's Courtship and Marriage to Edna Merrell



Collage created from historic modified photocopy images
by Robert N. Reynolds.

Warren was twenty when his mother passed away. His courtship with Edna either began or was maintained with greater focus from that point on. While facts relating to the Merrell family and this young couple's prenuptial relationship did not survive we can easily surmise that the church played a significant role in bringing them together. From ordinance records we know that Edna's parents had joined the church in the 1830s; and, there were active branches of the church close to where Warren and Edna were living.

By 1845 there were over 25 LDS branches in Michigan with 12 branches in Oakland County alone. In August, 1838 Elder Mephibosheth Serrine (from New York) started his missionary labors in Lenawee county when he organized a church of eleven members. He worked with Orson Pratt in 1839 in Washtenaw county (north of Lenawee). He engaged in debates with the ministers of other faiths at every opportunity. By the early 1840s, branches were located in Oakland, Lapeer, Wayne, Livingston, Washtenaw and Lenawee counties. On 12 January 1844, Serrine reported that in the previous six months,

more than 100 converts had left to gather in Nauvoo. Visiting Church authorities created more branches in June 1844. With the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith on 27 June of that year, many members accepted the leadership of Brigham Young and joined the westward movement. ¹

Warren and Edna were married on Saturday, January 3, 1846. Just over two years and three months had transpired since Warren's mother died. Warren was 22 years old and Edna had just celebrated her 17th birthday on Christmas day.



1 Browne, Hilda Faulkner. *The Michigan Mormons : their history from 1831 to 1952 and a little beyond.* (Provo, Utah: H.F. Browne, c1985).