



**DIANTHA FARR
CLAYTON**

A BIOGRAPHY

BY: SHARON JEPPSEN

FOREWORD

On behalf of the Winslow Farr Sr. Family Organization, we wish to express our deep gratitude to Sharon Jeppson for her excellent biography on the life of Diantha Farr Clayton.

You will find this biography on the life of Diantha well written and interesting. Sharon did an outstanding job, not having any journals and only one letter written by Diantha personally. She had to rely on William Clayton's journals and other family sources for her research. We also want to express our gratitude to Claudine Barnett, our long-time executive assistant, who helps make our organization the success that it is. Claudine spent a lot of time in editing, placing graphics and making very useful recommendations for the completion of this biography.

You may order a copy of this biography from the Winslow Farr Sr. Family Organization, on our website at www.winslow.farr.org.

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PREFACE

This is the story of Diantha Farr Clayton, a young woman whose short life was closely intertwined with the early history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She knew little islands of peace, but most of her years she was swept-up into virtually all of the turmoil and the persecution experienced by the early Saints. We would wish that Diantha had recorded some of her youthful observations and tender feelings for future generations to read. Most of what we know about her comes from the journals of her husband, William Clayton. It is evident that she had a deep testimony of the Church and a great desire to be obedient to counsel given by the prophet. She did all that was asked of her, but her most cherished dreams to raise her little children in the valley of the Great Salt Lake and to mature through the years in service to her Heavenly Father were not to be. Nevertheless, Diantha has something to teach us about doing the very best you can in whatever circumstances you find yourself. That said, the history of Diantha Farr Clayton follows.

Sharon Jeppsen

Diantha Farr Clayton



Diantha Farr was born the 12th of October 1828 in Charleston, Vermont, the fifth baby and fourth living child of her parents, Winslow, Sr. and Olive Hovey Freeman Farr. Her oldest brother, John, had died in infancy. Aaron was almost ten, Lorin was eight, and Olive was four-and-a-half years old at her birth. Eight- and-a-half years later, in 1837, a final brother, Winslow, Jr., would join the family. Not many months earlier, the Farris had moved northward from their comfortable home and farm in Waterford, Vermont to Charleston, near the Canadian border, leaving behind virtually all of their relatives. In 1830, William Snow, their cousin and a brother to Erastus Snow who later became an apostle in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also moved to Charleston.

Winslow and Olive were religious people, having belonged to the Congregational Church in Waterford. They were apparently active members, as they were granted a letter of recommendation from the congregation in Waterford to their new church in Charleston, when it should be established. The first churches were not erected in that area until 1843 and 1855, so formal religious meetings such as they were, were provided by circuit preachers who came to town as they could and held gatherings in the home of Abner Allyn. The Congregationalists were among those who sent itinerant preachers to Charleston.

Winslow was a man who enjoyed being involved in the affairs of the community, and he soon became a selectman in his new town, an opportunity to serve his fellow townsmen and make a difference. The Farris purchased 2,000 acres of land and began the heavy labor of preparing it for planting. Clearing the land of the heavy timber covering it was difficult, but the soil was so rich, that they found themselves dreaming of future prosperity and of having the means to send the boys in the family to Dartmouth College. (3, pp. 3, 11-14), By 1832, though only 100 acres had been cleared and cultivated, the Farr farm was known as one of the best in the area. (3, p. 21)

This is the busy frontier life that the Farr family was happily involved in when 1832 dawned and Mormon Elders arrived in town. Diantha would have been but three years of age, which was, perhaps, old enough to retain some memories of the events surrounding her family's conversion to the Church. It is certain that as she grew-up in her family, she would have heard the remarkable story repeated again and again. The Vermont Gazeteer published a story telling of the arrival of the Elders:

“Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson, Mormon priests, came to town in 1832, formed a large church from East Charleston and Brighton; but in a few short years this whole church with the exception of one who renounced the faith, gathered up their effects and removed to Missouri their ‘Promised Land’. This sect professed to work miracles, heal the sick and performed all to the satisfactions of their followers. Their numbers were greatly increased through the faith of the people in the healing of a Mrs. Farr who on account of sickness had been unable to leave her bed for 3 years.

After a season of prayer, the Mormon priests commanded her to ‘rise and walk’; upon which she was baptized in the waters of the Clyde. After which she engaged in the busy avocations of active life during the remaining 3 or 4 years of her stay in Charleston.” (3, p. 17)

The Millennial Star gives this further account:

“1832. May 14, Monday”

“Elder Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson left Bath, N.H., traveled north and came to a town of Charleston, Vermont, there they tarried ten days; preached seven times in this region and baptized fourteen, among them were Winslow Farr, William Snow, and Zarubabbel Snow. In these parts the Lord wrought by his hands many miracles of healing.... to Troy and baptized eighteen in extreme northern part of Vermont and returned to Charleston after baptizing eleven, one who was John Badger.

There (Charleston) they heard Orson Pratt, who by lying on of hands was instrumental in healing Mrs. Farr of consumption and other ailments for which she had been a sufferer for five years. The healing was instantaneous and permanent. She was then an invalid of thirty-two years, living until she was ninety-four.

This healing caused no little stir for miles around. Among the first to hear of this miracle were their cousins, the Snows, who lived at Saint Johnsbury (Chesterfield district) and came immediately to hear Apostles Pratt and Johnson preach. With seven preaching events fourteen were converted and baptized in this small district. Young Lorin was baptized by Lyman E. Johnson in the Clyde River, near his father’s house, and was confirmed by Orson Pratt.” (L.D.S. Biographical Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p.749-Jensen).
(3, p. 20)

In addition to the baptism of Lorin, parents Winslow and Olive and their son, Aaron, also joined the church. When cousin, Erastus Snow, was baptized, Lorin cut a hole in the ice so he could be properly immersed.

Tullidge, the historian who wrote a history entitled Northern Utah and Southern Idaho, noted the following: (pp. 174-176)

“... In the spring of 1832, when Lorin was eleven years of age, in the month of May the family, for the first time heard the gospel preached by Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson, who had come all the way from Ohio to Charleston on foot, a distance of eight hundred miles. They stayed over night with his uncle Isaac Farwell Freeman, who came to Father Farr next morning, he being a prominent man in the town, to see if he could get permission for them to preach in the schoolhouse.

Father Farr asked what kind of religion they had to preach, and was answered that they said that the Lord had raised up a prophet by the name of Joseph Smith; that he had found a record of gold plates, and was inspired of the Lord to translate the characters on those plates which gave an account of the aborigines of this continent; that the Lord had revealed himself to this prophet, and had organized the true Church of Christ on the earth, with all the gifts and blessings of the ancient gospel. These elders represented that they had been commissioned by divine authority, had been sent there to preach the gospel and wanted to obtain a house to preach in. Accordingly Father Farr gave them the use of the schoolhouse and an appointment was given out for preaching that afternoon. Lorin and his father went to hear the elders. Orson Pratt spoke first,

and neither of the elders was twenty-one years of age. Orson Pratt commenced to preach to a crowded house, and told them the nature of his mission.

He said, "They had come to preach the principles of the everlasting gospel, as taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles. In his discourse Orson said that the gifts of healing and the working of miracles was in the Church for the Lord's people in those days; that the Lord had called upon all men to repent for the true Church was not on the earth until organized by the Prophet Joseph Smith; after which they must be baptized for the remission of sins, and that they should then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands." He also discoursed on many interesting things pertaining to the gospel.

Afterwards Lyman Johnson arose and delivered one of the most powerful testimonies pertaining to the mission of Joseph Smith, and the great work of the last days, that Lorin ever heard. He also said that he knew the Book of Mormon was true, for he had seen an angel and he had made this known unto him.

Father Farr invited Orson Pratt home with him and Mr. Freeman took Lyman Johnson. After supper the evening was spent in the house of Mr. Farr, to a late hour, in conversing upon the glorious principles advanced by Elder Pratt. Father and Mother Farr were devout people and belonged to the Congregational Church.

Before retiring to bed, Father Farr asked Elder Pratt to pray. In his prayer he prayed for the healing of Mrs. Farr who had been sick for nearly seven years with the liver complaint, and had been confined to her bed most of the time. Her husband had been to a great expense with the doctors, who said that she had gone into consumption, and could not live another year. After prayer Elder Pratt went to the bedside, where Mother Farr was lying, and as they had mentioned her sickness during the evening's conversation, and had talked freely upon the gifts of healing, he asked her if she had faith to believe that she could be healed. She said she had faith; she knew that all things were possible with God. If it was His will that she might be healed, she believed that it would be done.



Orson Pratt

Elder Pratt then took her by the right hand and asked her name, and said unto her, 'Olive, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth I command you to be made whole.' She was healed and made whole, in the twinkling of an eye. She raised herself and sat up in the bed, called for her clothes, dressed herself, walked the room and sang praises to God. It caused such rejoicing in the family that there was no sleep that night.

At one time Mrs. Farr was given up for dead by the doctors and relatives. While the family stood round thinking she was dead, the minister and the doctor prayed over her. Some of the doctors, after this miracle, said if she remained healed for twelve months, they would join the Church. This miracle caused a great sensation throughout the region of that country, Father Farr being a very popular man and one of the judges of the county.

Next day, Mrs. Farr went to meeting, and the day after, and on hearing the third sermon, father, mother, and their cousin, William Snow, brother of Erastus Snow, since one of the Apostles, obeyed the gospel, they being the three first in that part of the country. Elders Pratt and Johnson

continued to labor some two or three weeks, preaching nearly every day, and baptized and built up a branch of the Church of about sixty members.” (3, pp. 21-23)

It is no surprise that the Farr family had receptive hearts for the message of the gospel. T. Earl Pardoe, a family historian, recorded a family story told to him by his grandfather, Lorin Farr. Prior to Diantha’s birth, Grandfather Elijah Freeman came to visit the family. Lorin was just six years of age, but he would sit by his grandfather, and hear him say again and again that the true Church of Christ was not upon the earth. Grandfather Freeman was a devout man who had withdrawn from the Congregational Church, because he felt that it covered-up serious wrongdoing and protected the offenders. He had immersed himself deeply into the scriptures and would tell his loved ones that when the true church was restored it would have apostles, prophets, and gifts of the Spirit. He told them that Israel would be gathered again and Jerusalem would be rebuilt. He informed his family that they were living in the last days and that they might be fortunate enough to see the gospel restored in all of its beauty.

By the time the Mormon Elders arrived, Grandfather Freeman had passed on, but his family recognized the truth. When Lorin first heard the teachings of the Elders, he exclaimed, “Why that is what my grandfather said.” After his baptism, Father Winslow was ordained a Teacher, a Priest, and then, in July of 1834, an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood. As the Farr family began serving in the church, they found their testimonies growing, and they developed a yearning desire to join the body of the Saints in Ohio. (3, pp. 23-25)

This desire was realized four years after their baptism, when Diantha was eight years of age. As Winslow was a man who was highly respected in the community, the townsfolk were not pleased to hear of his desire to move from the area and join the Mormons in their gathering place.

Tullidge in his biographies of Men of Northern Utah, p. 177 writes:

“Father Farr sold out his property, he having some 2,000 acres of land, but found it difficult to sell for anything near its worth, his neighbors throwing every obstacle in his way to prevent him from selling as he was a prominent and influential man in the country, they did not want him to leave to gather with the deluded Mormons. Determined, however, to leave in the fall and winter of ’36-7, he sold a portion of his property for one-fourth less than its true value. By September 1837, he got his teams ready and the entire family prepared to go to Kirtland, Ohio.”

“A village party was given the Farrs for their leaving, but many of Winslow’s and Olive’s friends stayed away, telling them frankly that such going showed little wisdom and warranted naught but trouble and ultimate disgrace.”(3, p. 26)

The family left Charleston sometime during the fall of 1837. Added to the family was a new baby boy, Winslow, Jr., who had been born in May of 1837. The Farris passed through their old home of Waterford on their 800-mile journey to Kirtland to pay their final respects at the graves of their loved ones. On approximately October 1st, they drove their teams into Kirtland. Watching over the city, on a hilltop, which could be seen for miles, was a beautiful temple, which was nearing completion. When Winslow, Sr. first saw the building from the inside, he told his family only the worlds best craftsmen could construct such a place. (3, pp. 27-28) Diantha and the rest of the family must have been thrilled to be with the Saints at last. They did not know that three years of persecution and trial were to follow before they would again have a real home.

The family spent a very busy winter. Diantha was old enough to be of some real help, as they struggled to purchase some land, erect a log cabin, settle into their new home, and find time to work on the temple. There was little peace to be found, however. The Farris had arrived in Kirtland during a troubled

time, for a strong spirit of contention, apostasy, and persecution pervaded the city. This must have been a great disappointment and shock to them. In peril for their lives, Joseph Smith and his family fled to Far West, Missouri sometime during that winter, leaving behind a large group of Saints who, when they heard of their departure, longed to join them. The Farris immediately made plans to move again. Aaron and Lorin were sent on ahead, and father Winslow returned to Charleston to try to collect more money for his land. Father and sons parted company at the temple. On May 1st, Lorin arrived in Far West ahead of his brother, Aaron. Left in Kirtland with little money, Olive supported herself and the three remaining children by spinning and sewing, waiting for Winslow's return. Olive and Diantha helped by caring for the family cow and assisting their mother in managing the home. When Winslow arrived back in Kirtland, it was with little money to show for his efforts.

In the fall of 1838, the family left Kirtland and joined Aaron and Lorin in Far West, Missouri just in time for the siege of that city, having traveled with the families of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, and others. Perhaps it was on this journey that Diantha and Heber C. Kimball's daughter, Helen Mar, began the close friendship, which would last until Diantha's death. It is said that Winslow, Sr. heard the shots being fired in the massacre at Haun's Mill as they completed the final leg of their trip. When he discovered what had happened, he must have been horrified. It was evident that Missouri was to be no haven for the Farris.



Winslow Farr Sr. Home in Nauvoo, Illinois

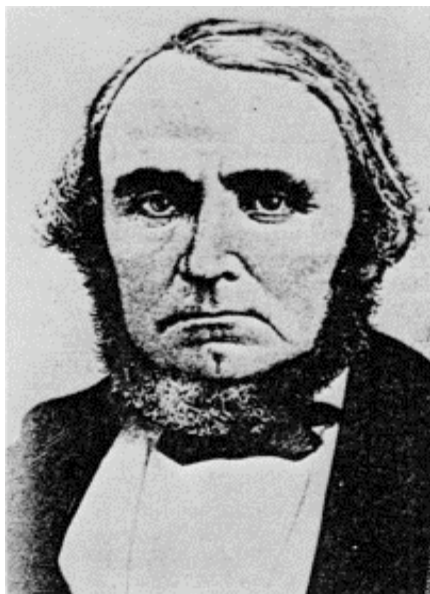
In the dead of a bitter Illinois winter, the vicious persecution forced the family to flee to Illinois, crossing the Mississippi into Quincy. They moved to Lima, twenty miles north of Quincy, and then, in the spring of 1840, they moved to Commerce and began to erect their 7th home. It would be a double two-story home, with steep stairs climbing to the second story and a brick wall extending the height of the house, separating the two halves, each of which would have their own front door. Aaron, who was planning to marry soon, would occupy one side and the rest of the family would take the other.

Diantha was a teenager and would eventually marry in this city which would soon be renamed Nauvoo, the beautiful. Even at this early date, it must have been apparent she was becoming a very attractive young woman. It seems she quickly became popular and had her share of lively friends. Joseph Smith III made an interesting observation of Diantha, stating she was a very beautiful woman with whom Chauncey Higbee had become enamored. Chauncey was the son of Judge Elias Higbee and the brother of Francis. Joseph Smith III notes that Diantha was not attracted to Chauncey and later became a polygamist wife. (3.pp. 27-32, 38)

Perhaps we should now turn our attention to the man whom Diantha would eventually marry. William Clayton, was born July 17, 1814 in the little village of Penwortham, Lancashire, England, two miles southwest and over the River Ribble from the fast-growing industrial town of Preston. He was the first of fourteen children of Thomas Clayton, a schoolteacher, and his wife, Ann. Little is known of his childhood except that he was taught by his father, who helped him to develop the excellent penmanship and writing ability that would later make him so invaluable to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. It was during those years that he learned to play both the piano and the violin and that his gift for music, which would one day bless so many, blossomed. His entire family, complete with the surviving brothers and sisters that followed, would one day leave the Church of England and join the Mormon Church. (1, pg. 12) and (8, p. 35)

William became a bookkeeper, and at the age of 22, fell in love with his first wife, Ruth Moon, a lovely 18-year-old girl who had also grown-up in Penwortham. They were married on October 9, 1836 in St. Mary's,

the attractive village church situated on the hill above the valley through which flowed the River Ribble. (1, pp. 12,14)



William Clayton

Less than two years later, the Mormon missionaries arrived in Preston, and first Ruth and then William were converted. Heber C. Kimball baptized William in the River Ribble on October 21, 1838. (1, p. 17) Within 6 months, William was set apart as 2nd counselor in the British Mission Presidency, with Joseph Fielding Smith as president and Willard Richards as first counselor. He spent most of the next two years in fulltime missionary service, leaving his family to be cared for by his in-laws.

On September 8, 1840, the Clayton family, consisting of father, mother, two daughters, and Ruth's elderly parents and two of her sisters left Liverpool, England on the North America, bound for Zion. (1, p. 47) They arrived in Nauvoo, Illinois on Tuesday, November 24 and were filled with joy at being able to gather with the Saints at last. (1, p. 58) After a difficult beginning, the family established themselves in this growing city, and by early 1842, William Clayton had become the personal clerk, scribe, and close friend and confidante of the Prophet Joseph. (1, p. 81) This closeness, combined with the unwavering testimony William had that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, explains William's willingness to enter plural marriage when Joseph introduced that principle. (1, p. 130)

William's marriage to Ruth was a happy one. Hand-in-hand they had faced severe trials and come through. He felt closeness with her family and was, in turn, very much loved by them. On July 12, 1843, William Clayton recorded Section 132 of what is now The Doctrine and Covenants for the Prophet Joseph. This section contained the doctrines of eternal marriage and plural marriage. The former had been preached for some time, but the latter was taught only privately in 1843. Section 132, itself, was not openly presented until 1852.

According to his diary, William initially heard the doctrine of plural marriage in March of 1843 from Brigham Young. Two days later the Prophet himself instructed him further in this new commandment. On March 7, after his discussion with the Prophet Joseph, William recorded, "...I feel grateful to God & his servant, and the desire of my heart is to do right and be saved." In 1843, William and Ruth had four young children; their first son was born just two months before William took his first plural wife (1, pp. 130-131, and 134). Though it must have initially been difficult and required adjustments, family history records that Ruth received a testimony that plural marriage was a true principle and with an open heart, she warmly welcomed each of her husband's wives into the family and treated them affectionately throughout her life. (1, p. 135) Eventually William would be wed to ten women, (see Appendix A) and with them he would father a total of forty-two children. (1, p. 188) Young and beautiful, Diantha Farr would become his fifth wife.

Diantha was among the first women in this dispensation to accept and enter into plural marriage. There can be no doubt that she first obtained a testimony of this principle before entering into a marriage arrangement so different from what her tender heart had been taught from childhood. It is evident that she felt a deep love for William. A brief description of the Clayton family as it was constituted when she married into it might assist with understanding the struggles this very young, sensitive girl occasionally had living this new doctrine on a daily basis.

It was not many weeks after being taught the doctrine of plural marriage, that William put the principle into action. Living in his home were Ruth's mother and some of Ruth's siblings. Of special interest to William was Ruth's younger sister, Margaret. It is likely that Ruth consented to her husband's courting of her sister, but it is not known when he first approached Margaret with the teaching of plural marriage and a confession of his love for her. The situation was touchy, as Margaret was engaged to Aaron Farr, the oldest brother of Diantha, who was away on a mission. At this time, Diantha was but fourteen. As Margaret struggled to know what to do, the Prophet Joseph himself urged her to be united with William. Margaret was deeply in love with Aaron, but she held William in esteem and desired to be obedient to priesthood counsel, so finally, and perhaps reluctantly, she consented to the union and was wed to William on Thursday, April 27, 1843. The Prophet Joseph Smith performed the marriage in Heber C. Kimball's home.

A letter was dispatched to Aaron, informing him that Margaret could not marry him and why. However, almost two months later, when Aaron returned, their continued love for each other was very evident. Margaret and Aaron were in anguish over the situation, and William was miserable with their unhappiness and Margaret's resentful efforts to avoid contact with him. William prayed that either his love for Margaret would diminish or that her affections would be turned wholly toward him. At one point in his sorrow, and against Margaret's wishes, William even approached the Prophet to see if his union with Margaret could be annulled. The request was denied. The situation was complicated by the fact that by the time Aaron came home, Margaret was almost two months pregnant.

It is to Margaret's credit that despite her personal feelings, she was determined to be true to the covenant she had made with William, and repeatedly told him so. Another two months passed, and in late September, William left for St. Louis to take care of some bookwork for the Prophet Joseph. It had been planned that he would be gone for a month, but less than two weeks into the trip, while sitting on a hill overlooking the town of Peru, his thoughts turned homeward, and he recorded, "Never did M[argaret] and my little family appear more lovely and endearing." Upon arriving in St. Louis, he took passage on the Swifture, and was home in Nauvoo in less than two days.

On the morning of October 7, William unexpectedly stepped across the threshold of his home and, almost as if by divine design, Margaret was home alone. Everyone else was attending a general conference meeting. Tensions between the two melted away as they embraced each other with warmth and tenderness. Apparently Margaret's thoughts and dreams had turned toward William during his absence. He noted, "We had a joyful meeting, and she gave me a warm evidence of her love, and never did my affections glow more warmly than during our meeting embrace."

Never again did Margaret and William experience serious problems between themselves, though, unfortunately, Aaron doggedly continued in his efforts to turn Margaret's heart toward himself. In January of 1845, it finally became necessary for Heber C. Kimball to talk with Aaron about his lack of wisdom in persisting, and the whole unhappy affair was at last at an end.

The Winslow Farr family could not help but be caught-up in the anguish of this situation, and naturally they felt resentful toward William for his actions. None of the Claytons were invited to daughter Olive Farr's wedding celebration. Diantha, a young teenager, was terribly upset about the rift between the

families. As time passed, however, the feelings were softened, for not many months after Margaret's marriage to William he began courting Diantha. (1, pp. 189-195, 198)

Alice Hardman, a woman with whom William had developed a close friendship while serving as a branch president in England, became his third wife on September 13, 1844. Heber C. Kimball performed this marriage.

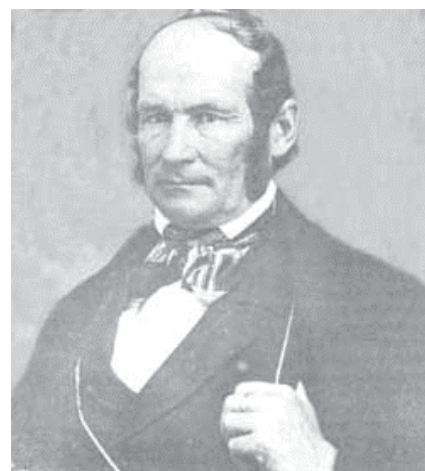
Alice did not move into the Clayton home after her marriage, but continued to live at her own home, where William frequently visited. It seems that her addition to the family was acceptable to both Margaret and Ruth.

Alice's cousin, Jane, a woman who was older than William, was sealed to him as his fourth wife on November 20, 1844, with Brigham Young serving as officiator. Jane had been baptized by William while still in England and had contributed money to assist him in completing his mission over there. It is not known what caused this marriage to end so quickly. Jane did not accompany the family when they left Nauvoo in 1846. Later, she remarried. (1, pp. 188-197)

It is not certain just when William Clayton began to seriously turn his attentions toward the pretty teenage daughter of Winslow and Olive Farr. A short sentence in his journal dated May 3, 1843 notes that Diantha rode with him to Carthage, where he had gone to settle a tax dispute. This is the first time that William penned her name in his personal record. (2, p. 100) A second entry by William on August 19th of the same year sorrowfully recorded Diantha's anguish over the strained feelings that existed between the Farr and Clayton families because of William's marriage to Margaret. Diantha had apparently had all she could take and in a rush of emotion told Margaret that she almost felt like going from house to house telling "all she knew" and then rushing home to kill herself. William's final comments of that day were full of sadness and concern for his wife, Margaret who was still not at peace over their marriage. (2, p. 116)

Diantha was young, just 16 when she married William, and quite naturally she delighted in the youthful activities of an attractive teenage girl living in Nauvoo. William was fourteen years older, methodical, and of a much more serious turn of mind. He had held very responsible positions in the church and by this time had quite a growing family. He was British, as were all of his other wives, and Diantha was a daughter of New England. This may explain the discomfort he noted in his diary with a few of her young friends expressing his opinion that at times Diantha was too "gay and trifling." Perhaps the real problem was the difference in their ages rather than a lack of wisdom on Diantha's part. On a Sunday in August of 1844, William took occasion sit Diantha down and talk seriously with her about the gospel. That day he commented in his journal, "She seems to be true and faithful." Whatever concerns William harbored, they were put to rest, for very soon his ardent admiration of Diantha was not to be squelched, and she found her heart beginning to turn toward him, though not without a stumbling block or two to be overcome. (1, p. 199) and (2, p. 142)

By December of 1844, William's feelings of admiration had apparently progressed to the point that he asked Heber C. Kimball to approach Brigham Young for permission to marry Diantha. This permission was granted on December 5th, and Heber C. Kimball was appointed to unite the couple. Diantha herself had not yet consented to the marriage, but that night a hopeful William wrote, "I feel humbly grateful for this grant. And feel to ask the father in the name of Jesus to give me favor in her eyes and the eyes of her parents that I may receive the gift in full." (2, p. 152)



Heber C. Kimball

An unusual little story from this period has come down through the family. On December 8th, Ruth Clayton delivered a little girl. One day later, Diantha and her close friend, Helen Mar Kimball, dropped by to admire the baby. William, perhaps unwisely, told the two young women that if they desired,

they could decide on the new child's name. The girls happily suggested, "Helen Diantha Clayton." This idea was short-lived, however, for the rest of the family raised an objection, and the little girl was christened Vilate Ruth.

As Christmas approached, an optimistic William continued to earnestly press his suit, but to his frustration, pretty Diantha vacillated. By December 27th, when her father gave William his personal consent for the marriage, she was busy eyeing young Franklin Cutler. A determined William was not to be dissuaded, however, and as he pondered his desires for the upcoming year, he yearningly wrote, "I have a good prospect of adding another crown to my family." He continued to pepper his diary with concerns and prayers for her welfare, and he continued his frequent appearances on the Farr doorstep. Sometime, at the very end of December or the first part of January, William's anxious moments came to an end, and Diantha consented to give him her whole heart for all of eternity. From William's writings, it seems that she was as in love as he was.

On the evening of January 9th, 1845, Winslow and Olive Farr prepared for the marriage of their youngest daughter, which was to take place in the family's two-story red brick home. The Farr family gathered together, including Diantha's brother Lorin and his wife Nancy and her sister Olive with her husband William Walker. Though they lived just through the wall in the other half of the Farr home, Aaron and his wife did not attend. The reason has not been recorded.

At 7:30 P.M., William Clayton and Heber C. Kimball arrived. (1, p. 197-199) First Diantha's parents were sealed together, followed by the marriage of William and Diantha, to which all of her family present consented. Wonderful blessings were promised her, including a posterity that would become as "numerous as the sands on the seashore." William departed an hour later for his own house, leaving her with her parents and her dreams. That night, however, his thoughts were with her, and he recorded, "May she never violate her covenant, but may she with her companion realize to the full all the blessings promised. And may there never [be] the first jar or unkind feeling toward each other exist to all eternity." (2, pp. 154-155)

Diantha was the first member of her family to enter into plural marriage. Her father would follow a year later, eventually taking five additional wives. Her brothers Aaron and Winslow would each marry four wives, Lorin would have six, and her sister, Olive Hovey Walker, would see her husband sealed to three more women. (10) At the time of their marriage, as noted earlier, William Clayton had three other wives, and he would take no more until after Diantha's death. (2, p. lxxix) and (10)

Three days later, she spent the night at the Clayton home. The next morning, William wrote, "This A.M. I had some talk with D[iantha] in bed. All things seemed to go right." On January 14th he wrote, "Talked...with D[iantha] and was with her until 12 ½ [P.M.] and accomplished the desire of my heart by gaining victory over her feelings. May the Lord bless her until her cup shall run over and her heart be pure as gold." On Sunday, January 26th, they missed church and spent the day together (2, pp. 155-156). She continued her visits to the Clayton home, interspersed with frequent visits from William to the Farris, where Diantha continued to live. She was still attending school, and the principle of polygamy was not yet generally known, though rumors about the practice were beginning to be whispered throughout Nauvoo.

The difficulties faced by those in this first generation of saints to enter into plural marriage can well be imagined. They loved their families deeply and most really wanted to extend this love to each new wife that joined them, but inevitably there were struggles in the day-to-day practice of this principle. Though Ruth and Margaret welcomed Diantha into the family, they were naturally close as sisters, and, as the Moon Family was already living with the Claytons, the two women were easily able to continue living together with their husband under the same roof. Diantha was very young and very beautiful. It would not be unusual if, with all of their warmth and good intentions, they felt a little anxiety about her addition to their family. For her part, Diantha began to feel that her husband's other wives did not trust her, and she struggled with jealousy for the rest of her life.

Diantha's parents always happily welcomed William. In February, when Diantha tarried unusually late before coming home from school, Olive sent for William, and he visited with her until his young wife arrived at about 7:30 P.M. That night he recorded, "She grows more and more endearing." By late summer, Diantha was pregnant. (1, pp. 198-200)

Despite her love for her husband, Diantha struggled with uncontrollable emotional outbursts when she was upset, escalating at times into what William called "fit[s] of mental derangement." In July she was upset about something that had transpired during a visit to the Clayton home. William stopped by her house, and it all came out as they walked and talked together. By the time the two returned to the Farr home, Diantha had worked herself into a frenzy. In an attempt to calm her, William and her mother forced her into bed, where she began to toss and rave as if she were in great pain. It took William's full strength holding her hands to prevent her from tearing out her hair. Finally, at 10:30 P.M., after struggling with her for fully 45 minutes, Diantha's mother called to her father for assistance. He came down and gave her a blessing, rebuking the evil spirit that raged within her, and she immediately calmed down and fell into a gentle sleep.

Soon thereafter, she appeared to be talking with departed Saints on the other side of the veil, answering their questions about loved ones they had left behind. Prominent among those with whom she conversed were the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum. Her experience lasted about two hours, and then she expressed a desire to hurry back home as she said her time had not yet come to remain. William recorded that she appeared to be overjoyed throughout the entire experience with "a pleasant smile... which continued after she awoke." He further noted, "It was one of the most interesting and sweet interviews I ever witnessed, and a very good spirit seemed to prevail all the time." Much relieved, he left for home about 1 A.M. The next day Diantha had no recollection of the events of the night before. To William's concerned eye, she appeared frail and exhausted from her exertions of the night before. (2, pp. 173-175)

Just a few months prior to William and Diantha's marriage, a great change had occurred in Nauvoo that brought profound sorrow to the populace. On June 27 of 1844, the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum had been murdered at Carthage Jail. Much has been written concerning this tragic event. Suffice it now to say that peace was taken from Nauvoo as the strength of the wicked persecutors of the Saints intensified and the atrocities committed against church members increased. It quickly became apparent that the Saints were to be forced to leave their beloved city, which they had raised up, on the banks of the Mississippi. They struggled to quickly complete the beautiful temple located high on the hill, for they desired to receive the sacred blessings that were available for them only within its holy walls. William, Diantha, and the rest of the Clayton family would have been part of those efforts.

The cornerstones for the Nauvoo Temple had been laid under the direction of the Prophet Joseph on the 6th of April 1841. The building itself commanded notice, being a striking edifice of light grey limestone that could be seen for some distance by boats plying the Mississippi river. As portions of the temple were finished they were dedicated as quickly as possible, so they could be put into immediate use for their intended purposes.

It was not until the 30th of April 1846 that Joseph Young was able to dedicate the completed temple as



a whole. This was done in a private ceremony for fear that the mobs roaming the city would violently disrupt Nauvoo Temple the solemn proceedings. On May 1st, a public dedication was held, with Orson Hyde acting as voice in offering the prayer. (5, pp. 441, 463)

The Claytons were among those who partook of the sacred blessings within the temple walls prior to the final dedication. On December 29, 1845, William escorted Diantha, who was pregnant and not feeling well, through the endowment ceremony. Almost a month later, on January 26th, 1846, Ruth, Margaret, and Diantha entered the temple with William to be sealed to him for time and all eternity. Brigham Young officiated. All had been sealed to him earlier in various homes in Nauvoo, but there must have been a most sacred, sweet feeling as they stood together in white and had the promises affirmed again in that holy place. (1, p. 200) This was the second anointing for all four of them. The reason for the absence of Alice and Jane, William's 3rd and 4th wives, is not known. Alice as well as Jane would later divorce him. After the sacred proceedings, Margaret tarried in the temple until morning, while William escorted Ruth and Diantha home. (2, p. 197)

As the bitter cold Illinois winter lingered, the mobs increased their pressure on the struggling Saints. The Saints had hoped to be able to delay starting west until early spring, but that was not to be. The first groups of pioneers crossed the Mississippi in February of 1846. With them was William Clayton. Accompanying him were three of his wives and his four surviving children. It was the 27th of February. It is hard to imagine how he must have felt with the heavy responsibilities facing him, not only as a husband and father, but also as a priesthood-holder with significant, time-consuming, official duties in the Church. Left behind in the care of her mother was Diantha, just seventeen, and due to deliver her first baby in a month.

The separation was not easy for either of them. Diantha surely worried about William and the rest of the family who would be facing harsh winter weather, bitter wind, cold rains, and mud with only thin shelter to protect them. William was worried about Diantha who was young and not physically strong. He was unhappy to have to leave without her, but he feared for her health and for their baby. He gave vent to his feelings and assured her of his love and kept her informed of the fate of the family in the frequent letters that he sent back to Nauvoo.

Diantha, her own heart aching with loneliness, penned a tender letter to William dated March 16, 1846.

*“My Beloved but absent William,
“It rejoiced my heart to heare a word from you but it would have given me more joy to have had a line from you but I am thankful for a little you know that is the way to get more. To tell you I want to see you is useless yet true you are constantly in my mind by day and I dream about you almost every night, as to my helth it is about the same as when you left onley a little more so I often wish you had taken your house along for it looks so lonesome it seems a long time sinse I saw you but how much longer it will be before I can have the priviledge of conversing with you face to face it is yet unknown to me father is [] as fast as he can he wants to get away soon after conference if possible Mother sends her best respects to you, and often says how lonesome it seems dont you think Wm will come to night I expect it would cheer her heart as well as mine to hear your voice once more, dear Wm as often as you can send for one line from you would do my heart good. I must draw to a close for I am in haste. I will try to compose myself as well as I can. I never shall consent to have you leave again. Farewell, Farewell” (1, pp. 200-202)*

The morning of Wednesday, April 15th dawned none too soon for William. He had spent a rough night on watch trying to control unruly horses and cattle that kept breaking into the tents and wagons for which he was responsible, which included his own vehicles and fifteen wagons carrying Church property. For two weeks he had been very ill with aches and terrible chest pain. Suddenly, the day brightened. Diantha's old friend, Ellen Kimball, sought him out with some good news. Brother Samuel Pond had received a letter announcing that Diantha had borne a son. William hurried to read the letter for himself and that evening recorded, "...she had a fine fat boy on the 30th...but she was very sick with ague and mumps. Truly I feel to rejoice at this intelligence but feel sorry to hear of her sickness.”

After all of his worry for Diantha's well being, William was so overjoyed that he wrote a new hymn that very morning. That beautiful, moving hymn quickly became beloved of all the Saints scattered across the prairies and continues so today. He named it "All is Well!" (2, p.270-271) and (8, p. 36)

"All is Well!"

*"Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear
But with joy wend your way
Tho' hard to you this journey may appear
Grace shall be as your day.*

*"'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! All is well!*

*"Why should we mourn or think our lot is hard?
'Tis not so; all is right.
Why should we think to earn a great reward
If we now shun the fight?*

*"Gird up your loins; fresh courage take
Our God will never us forsake;
And soon we'll have this tale to tell—
All is well! All is well!*

*"We'll find the place which God for us prepared,
Far away in the West,
Where none shall come to hurt or make afraid;
There the Saints will be blessed.*

*"We'll make the air with music ring,
Shout praises to our God and King;
Above the rest these words we'll tell—
All is well! All is well!*

*"And should we die before our journey's through,
Happy day! All is well!
We then are free from toil and sorrow, too;
With the just we shall dwell!*

*"But if our lives are spared again
To see the Saints their rest obtain,
Oh, how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! All is well!" (6, pp. 30, 31)*

That night, William invited several friends to his tent for a “social christening” of the little son he had decided to name William Adriel Benoni Clayton. He was William’s second surviving son, the eldest also being named William. The baby came to be called “Moroni.” The group sang, played, and drank to the health of the tiny boy until midnight, when they finally retired. William wrote, “I feel to thank my heavenly father for my boy and pray that he will spare and preserve his life and that of his mother and so order it so that we may soon meet again. O Lord bless thine handmaid and fill her with thy spirit, make her healthy that her life may be prolonged and that we may live upon the earth and honor the cause of truth.”

On the 19th of April, William received a letter from Diantha confirming the birth of their son. By then, William had requested of Brigham Young the privilege of sending for Diantha, which wish he was to be granted when the company arrived at the Grand River. Until then, he had to be content with sending her messages and long notes. (2, pp. 270-272, 292n30)

For William, the wait was not easy and was attended with some anxiety. He wanted to have his family together once again, and he wanted this mother and baby under his care. On May 3rd, after spending the day in attending council meetings and reading, William dreamt that Diantha’s new baby had passed away. It worried him so much that he could not get it off his mind, and he wrote her a letter the next day. A description of the dream was recorded in his journal. He wrote, “I dreamed last night that I saw Diantha and her babe. Her babe was dres[se]d in white and appeared to be [layed] down with its eyes closed. She was bent over it apparently in sorrow. When I went to her she flew to me earnestly but the babe seemed to be kept still and I awoke. This dream has troubled me considerable.” (2, p. 273)

It was just a little less than two years since Margaret had lost her first child, a little boy age six months. That baby, Daniel, had been William’s second son and had been born at a time in Nauvoo when William could openly acknowledge neither mother nor child as belonging to him. At the time of his son’s death, William had recorded, “Thus has ended the earthly career of an innocent sufferer who has known no comfort in this life...The tongue of slander has swung freely against him.” It may well be that lingering grief over the death of the earlier baby and the anguish surrounding his unacknowledged birth had evoked the dream of that night. (1, p. 195) Another month and a half would pass before William and Diantha were reunited.

On the 22nd of June, William received word that Diantha was just twenty miles east of Mount Pisgah, traveling with her brother, Lorin, and his family. Her father was further back yet, and her trunk had been sent on ahead. William had prepared a wagon for her two weeks earlier, so all was in readiness. He planned to start after her the next morning, but his little 18-month-old daughter, Vilate Ruth, was stricken quite ill, and he dared not leave her. In the meantime, that same day, two letters from Diantha found their way into his hands, one from Nauvoo dated May 17, 1846 and the other sent on from Big Prairie, dated June 18. Diantha’s yearning to rejoin him was so strong that he determined again to go for her himself, and despite the cold, wet weather, he departed from camp on the 24th. The Claytons were some miles west of Mt. Pisgah. The journey took four days. It is interesting to note that on the 27th, while still west of Mt. Pisgah, William passed the U.S. officers who were traveling to talk with President Young and the Twelve about raising 500 volunteer soldiers from among the Saints.

At last, on the evening of the 28th, the joyful reunion took place. William faithfully recorded the happy scene in his journal. He wrote:

“We arrived at Father Chases between 4 and 5 o’clock. Diantha was very glad to see me and burst into tears. My little boy is far beyond all my expectations. He is very fat and well formed, and has got a noble countenance. They are both well and I feel to thank my heavenly father for his mercies to them and Father Chase and family for their kindness to them and may the Lord bless them for it. And O lord bless my family and preserve them forever. Bless my Diantha and my boy and preserve their lives on earth to bring honor to thy name and give us a prosperous journey back again is the prayer of thy servant William. Amen.” (7, pp. 50, 51)

A sweet benediction to the end of the day followed, as William recorded, "At night we had a heavy thunder storm. It rained very heavy. I slept with my dear wife and boy in father C[hase]'s wagon..." (2, p.285)

At 10:30 A.M. the next morning, furnished by Father Chase with enough "bread stuffs" to make it back to camp, William and Diantha departed, arriving at Mt. Pisgah that night, where they camped near the Huntington's. Two days later, as they journeyed, they met Parley P. Pratt who, though they didn't realize it at the time, was hurrying back to Mt. Pisgah to raise 500 volunteers to go to Santa Fe to fight the Mexican government for the United States. On the 3rd of July they met Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards heading east on the same mission. This group explained their purpose to the Claytons who felt that this battalion would prove to be a blessing for the Saints. (7, pp. 52-53)

After suffering two separate incidents of lost horses and having run out of food on the 3rd, William, Diantha, and baby rejoined the rest of the family on the afternoon of the 4th of July. Happily, they found all well, except for little Vilate who was still very ill. (2, p. 286) The Clayton family now included William, his four remaining wives, and five children (the eldest of whom was a daughter, age nine). (1, p. 203)

In common with so many others of the outcast Saints, the close of 1846 found the Claytons residing in Winter Quarters. This was a temporary settlement established by President Brigham Young near the site of present-day Omaha, Nebraska, where the Saints could rest, weather-out the winter storms, and prepare to depart for their ultimate destination in the early spring. William and his family shared the challenges of that winter with the 3,500 other Saints residing there, the story of which is well known.

While in Winter Quarters, little nine-month-old Moroni, William and Diantha's son, suffered an accident that could have resulted in real tragedy. As a healthy baby, he was just the right age to experiment with crawling or even taking early toddling steps. There were so many dangers both inside and outside the home for little ones of the time that even loving, vigilant mothers like Diantha, busy with so many duties, could not always completely protect their babies. Somehow, on the 2nd of January 1847, he fell into the fire and was badly burned. His father was at the store working on the accounts when he was urgently sent for. Rushing into his cabin, he found his little son burned about the face, with large blisters already forming around his left eye. The burns were severe and extended down the left side of his head and neck. William immediately applied consecrated oil to the burns and instructed his family to keep it on the baby's wounds at all times. He then returned to the store. (2, pp. 292-293) & (1, p.221) There is no further mention of the incident in William's journals.

On the 14th of April 1847 at 11 in the morning, William Clayton was in bed suffering with severe rheumatic pain in his face. Unexpectedly, Brigham Young and Willard Richards called by to speak with him. President Young looked down and instructed William to immediately arise and prepare to depart with the pioneer company in just half-an-hour. This was the first that William had heard that he was to go with the company that was leaving ahead of all the others to select the site where the Saints would build their new city. It took the family until 2 P.M. to prepare his clothing for the trip. He then departed with Heber C. Kimball and others in Heber's carriage, and after camping overnight on the prairie, the little group caught-up with Brigham Young and the rest of the party twelve miles west of the Elk Horn.

Left behind to fend for themselves until their husband and father could return was the surprised, but faithful little family (2, p 295). It says a great deal about Diantha and the other wives that William was able to depart with apparently no fussing or objections, despite such little notice. It is probable that with his heavy clerical duties for the Camp of Israel these women were already carrying a significant burden of responsibility for the family's welfare. Once again, family ties were strengthened with letters sent back and forth and notations made in a journal late at night by a lonely father pleading for God's blessings to rest upon his "dear family" so far away. (2, p. 324) William would not rejoin his loved ones until fall.

William's associations on the journey and in the valley with other members of the Pioneer Company are well documented in his journal, but we must imagine for ourselves the struggles of the precious family he left behind, for food was short and housing inadequate. William entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake on Thursday the 22nd of July with the rest of the pioneer company. Before descending the last mountain, he sat down to view the scenery below. As he pondered, he found himself to be "happily disappointed." What he wrote that night in his journal reveals once again the tender feelings he had for his wives and his children.

"When I commune with my own heart and ask myself whether I would choose to dwell here in this wild looking country amongst the Saints surrounded by friends, though poor, enjoying the privileges and blessings of the ever lasting priesthood with God for our King and father, or, dwell amongst the gentiles with all their wealth and good things of the earth, to be eternally mobbed, harassed, hunted, our best men murdered and every good mans life continually in danger the soft whisper echos loud and reverberates back in tones of stern tho' quiet determination. Give me the quiet wilderness and my family to associate with, surrounded by the saints and adieu, adieu to the Gentile world....If I had my family with me, oh, happy could I be for I dread nothing so much as the journey back again, and when I think of the many dangers from accident which families traveling this road are continually liable to...it makes me almost shudder to think of it and I could almost envy those who have got safe through, having their families with them...."

The Pioneer Company stayed in the Salt Lake Valley for only three weeks, making what preparations they could for those who would follow the next season. On August 16, 1847, in consultation with Brigham Young, William chose lots 1, 2, and 3, just west of Temple Square, on block 95 for his family. The next day he started east with the rest of the group. The journal writings of his travels to and from the valley are fascinating to read. (2, pp. 361-363, 383)

On Thursday, October 21st 1847, after a six-month separation, wives and children saw him ride into Winter Quarters a little before noon with the advance group of the Pioneer Company. With great relief, he found his entire family well, except for two: Diantha, who was a little under the weather, and 18-month-old Moroni, who was quite ill. He wrote, "Their circumstances are not good, but in other respects they have been prospered for which I thank my God.... my secret gratitude shall ascend to Heaven for the unbounded kindness and mercies which the Almighty has continually poured upon them in my absence." Well might he have been grateful. That winter had seen much sickness and many deaths in Winter Quarters, and many more were suffering severely from lack of common comforts.

By October 31st, the rest of the Pioneer Company, including the Twelve, returned to Winter Quarters. They had been delayed by sickness, shortage of provisions, stolen horses, and exhausted teams. In the ten intervening days, William had taken the time to try to fix-up his houses, but he found it difficult to get ordinary supplies, such as sugar and other small necessities for his loved ones. One bright light shone. Little Moroni was getting better.

As the Clayton Family headed into another winter on the plains, they found that despite William's efforts, their homes were still not tight enough to prevent the cold, driving rains from soaking their belongings, and with dwindling provisions, they had to use all of their resourcefulness to provide for themselves, at one

point killing an old church ox to obtain food. No one was without concerns in this area that winter. On the 27th of November, with some despair, William wrote, “Gloomy prospects seem to thicken around my family and it requires a constant effort to keep pace with crowding scenes of suffering and sorrow.” (2, pp.392-394)

While traveling between Winter Quarters and Nauvoo, William and his family had been quite generous in sharing what they had with those who were more destitute. It is likely that where they had anything, this continued as the Saints struggled to survive their second winter. (7, p. 29)

Those cold months must have been very busy ones for the family as they prepared for their departure to the Salt Lake Valley in late spring. That winter Diantha, now age 19 and caring for an active toddler, had an additional challenge. She was in her second pregnancy.

Spring came, and June of 1848 saw all in readiness. On the 7th of that month, the Clayton Family left Winter Quarters and became part of the first two huge pioneer companies led by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball that started for the Salt Lake Valley. Brigham Young’s company consisted of 1,229 people with 397 wagons, and Heber C. Kimball’s group included 662 individuals driving 226 wagons. Willard Richards followed in July, bringing 526 people and 169 wagons with him. The departure of these three companies stripped Winter Quarters of almost all of its inhabitants. Included in the little group left behind were Diantha’s mother, Olive Farr, and her youngest child, Winslow, Jr. Father Winslow had been called on a mission to the Eastern States in 1847, where he faithfully served until 1849. Following his release, Winslow and Olive would leave Winter Quarters with Captain Gardner Snow’s Company on June 12, 1850, and would arrive in Salt Lake City that same year. When Diantha bid her mother goodbye, it was probably the last time on this earth that they ever saw each other, for the Winslow Farr Family was still at the Upper Platte Ferry on the 28th of August, just two weeks before Diantha’s death in Salt Lake City.



The speed at which these pioneers of 1848 crossed the plains was slow, determined by the best efforts of families bringing children, sheep, pigs, chickens, cats, dogs, geese, beehives, doves, and ducks, and various household belongings. Heavy with child, the journey must have been most uncomfortable for Diantha. On the 7th of August, 1848, at Deer Creek, a clear, rushing stream nestled by a grove of trees just five miles beyond the North Fork of the Platte River and a little more than 411 miles east of the Salt Lake Valley, Diantha's first little girl, Olive Diantha, was born. Intimate family details of the event have not survived the years, but there must have been a great deal of joy in the Clayton Family with the arrival of this new family member and the safety of her mother. The Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball groups ultimately arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on September 24th of 1848, followed by the Willard Richards Company in October.

William's journals are not available for this time period, or perhaps he did not keep them. It was late September when the Clayton family arrived at their new home in Great Salt Lake City, which had been so named on August 22, 1847, joining the 2,000 pioneers who had arrived in the valley the year before. Included among those who spent the winter of 1847-48 in the valley were Diantha's brothers, Lorin and Aaron Farr and their wives, and her sister, Olive and her husband William Walker, who had arrived on September 20th 1847. That second winter, there were 5,000 settlers in the Salt Lake Valley. (11), (4, pp. 98-99, 123), (1, p. 251), and (3, pp. 66-67)

In common with other faithful Saints determined to build Zion in the mountain valleys of the West, the next years were challenging ones for the Claytons as they erected a lovely adobe home two blocks west of Brigham Young's estate and tried to find their place in the fast-growing community. William became a well known and respected resident of Salt Lake City, but was never again to serve in the Church as closely with the leadership as he had when the Prophet Joseph was alive.

An incident involving Diantha occurred on Monday, the 18th of February 1850, which caused him a great deal of distress. William had continued his practice of bringing in additional income by occasionally playing at various functions as part of a band. On this particular night, he was playing for a dancing party. He had brought Diantha along with him, and as the evening progressed, he suggested that she dance with Mr. Grist, who was a non-Mormon in attendance. Diantha complied, and, as luck would have it, the band struck up a waltz. Some staunch members of the church frowned on waltzing, as it involved more intimate contact between partners than the livelier dances of the day. They were shocked to see the pretty young wife of Brother Clayton waltzing with another man, and to make it worse he was a gentile.

Greatly embellished gossip flying on rapid wings soon reached the ears of the General Authorities. Wednesday morning, after William left for work, an apostle and another elder appeared on the Clayton doorstep and confronted Diantha. William records that they accused her of three very serious transgressions that were unworthy of a faithful Latter-day Saint: 1) She had waltzed in plain view with a gentile on Monday night; 2) During the past winter she had harbored and encouraged gentiles in her home; and 3) She had been guilty of "slandering the authorities of the church to the Gentiles."

Quite upset at the "very severe chastisement" his young wife had received and declaring, "The peace of my family is in a great degree destroyed," William filled six legal-sized pages with his extreme dismay and sent them to Brigham Young. To his distress, he alone seemed willing to defend her good name. With barely suppressed fury, he explained that it was he who had suggested that Diantha dance with Mr. Grist, that only two gentiles had been in his home all winter, each at his own invitation and in his presence, and that Diantha was



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absolutely loyal to the authorities of the church and always spoke well of them when speaking with non-members. Though he did not desire to criticize an apostle, he declared that a more discreet method could have been found to confront the family, beginning with informing himself of the complaint before approaching his wife behind his back. With a stabbing “P.S.,” William informed Brigham Young that since music had caused the whole situation, he now intended to renounce it forever. This resolve, fortunately, was short-lived. (1, pp. 252-256)

It is sad that Diantha’s story ended so young. She was in the early stages of her third pregnancy when the dancing incident occurred. Little Rachel Amelia Clayton was born on the 18th of August 1850 in Salt Lake City. Diantha survived her baby’s birth by less than a month, passing away on September 11. She left behind Moroni, who was almost 4 ½ and Olive, who had just turned two, as well as tiny Rachel. William, filled with sorrow at her passing, poured-out his grief in a poem that was filled with love, despite his acknowledgement of the jealousy she had struggled with throughout their marriage.

*“Sweet in life, beautiful in death.
Aged twenty-one years, ten months, and 29 days.
Diantha has gone to the regions of rest,
To commune with her friends in the realms of the blest.
Her sufferings are o’er, her deep sorrows past.
And the long sighed-for-peace is her portion at last.
No more shall the poison of jealousy fill
That bosom so pure, so free from all ill.
Henceforth thou art free from all sorrow and pain
Our deeply felt loss is thy infinite gain.” (1, p. 204)*

William was determined to be a good father to his motherless children. When Moroni was age sixteen, farming his own land, and having just completed the planting of an acre of wheat, he wrote: “My great anxiety is, as I have often told you, to have you do well for yourself, and to do this you, with all the rest of us, will have to work and work hard, for there are but few men who can live without hard work of one kind or another. Idleness begets mischief, and a long train of other evils, while the hard working, industrious man is generally virtuous, honest, and respected...As I have said previously, I want you to listen to uncle Winslow’s counsel, and not follow, too much, your own opinions. You are young yet in experience, and if you will listen to your uncle he will do you good.”

Diantha’s last child, Rachel, inherited her mother’s beauty and attracted many young admirers. William had watched this daughter grow-up motherless and was naturally especially concerned about her welfare. He wanted all of his children to marry faithful members of the church, so he very firmly barred the gentile suitors who knocked on his door seeking Rachel. Rachel, however, had a mind of her own, and found a way to thwart her father’s efforts where one young man in particular was concerned. His name was Jimmy Day, and he was a Gentile. The young couple fell in love and, determined to have their own way; they ran away to be married. When William heard of his daughter’s actions, he promptly disowned her and refused to see her. Less than a year later, on her 21st birthday, Rachel gave birth to a tiny baby. It soon became evident that she would not survive. Her father was sent for, and he came, full of regret for his

previous rash actions, and the two were reconciled. Both Rachel and her baby died, but Jimmy Day joined the church and was soon sealed for eternity to Rachel. (1, pp. 214-215)

After Diantha's death, William married five more wives, (1, p. 204) passing away in Salt Lake City on the 4th of December 1879. He was sixty-five years of age. (10)

Victoria Clayton, a daughter of William and Sarah Ann Walters Clayton, later remembered her father with these words:

“He was methodical, always sitting in his own armchair, having a certain place at the table...his person was clean and tidy; his hands small and dimpled. He wore very little jewelry but what little he had was the best money could buy.... and his clothing was made from the best material. His children remember him best in black velvet coat and grey trousers and, in cold weather, a broadcloth cloak in place of overcoat...his home was open always to his friends who loved to gather there for social hours. Civic affairs always interested him. He was a musician and played in the pioneer orchestra and that of the Salt Lake Theater.”

It is said that during his youth, William Clayton learned to appreciate the fine work of outstanding craftsmen, and the story is told that throughout his life he only carried watches that displayed precisely the correct time. Another daughter observed that her father was “not demonstrative,” but that he had a “great love for his home and family and provided well for their comfort.” Thus was the husband of Diantha Farr Clayton. (2, pp. liii, liv), (1, p. 12), (2, p. xxx)

Their son, Moroni died on the 4th of October 1864 at age 18. He had not yet married. Olive Diantha married Gilbert Lindsay in 1868. She lived to be 67 years of age, passing away on the 13th of October 1915. No offspring of this couple have yet been discovered. (11)

APPENDIX A

WIVES OF WILLIAM CLAYTON

1. Ruth Moon, the wife of William's youth, grew-up in Penwortham, England. She was 3 years younger than William Clayton. They fell in love and were married in St. Mary's church in Penwortham, October 9, 1836. (1, p. 14) William was 22. Ruth was 18. (2, p. 1xix) They were converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1838 and were baptized in the River Ribble. Ruth's entire family joined the Church and immigrated to America. William's family joined as well. Ruth was sealed to William for time and eternity on July 22, 1843. (1, p. 135) On January 26, 1846, Ruth and William were sealed in the Nauvoo Temple. (1, p. 200) This was a second anointing for both of them. (2, p. 197) Ruth bore William ten children. (2, p. 1xix)
2. Margaret Moon, Ruth's sister, became William Clayton's 1st plural wife on April 27, 1843 in Nauvoo. (1, p. 93) William Clayton was 28. Margaret was 23. (2, p. 1xix) Margaret and William were sealed in the Nauvoo Temple on the 26th of January 1846. (1, p. 200) For both it was a second anointing. (2, p. 197) Together they had six children. (1, p. 195)
3. Alice Hardman married William Clayton on Sept. 13, 1844. William was 30. Alice was 28. (2, p. 1xix) The couple eventually had four children, but the marriage did not last, and they were divorced December 13, 1858. (2, p. 1xviii) (1, p. 196)
4. Jane Hardman, Alice's cousin, married William Clayton on November 20, 1844. William was 30, and Jane was 39. (2, pp. 1xv, and 1xix) This marriage lasted a very short time, for Jane was not with the family when they left Nauvoo in 1846. She later married a Thomas Richardson. (1, pp. 196-197)
5. Diantha Farr married William Clayton on January 9, 1845 in Nauvoo. William was 30. Diantha was 16. (2, p. 1xix) Diantha was sealed to William in the Nauvoo Temple on January 26, 1846. (1, p. 200) This was their second anointing. (2, p. 197). Diantha died on September 11, 1850 after delivering their third child. (3, p. 67)
6. Augusta Braddock married William Clayton on October 5, 1850. William was 36. Augusta was 16. Augusta gave birth to eight children. (2, p. 1xix)
7. Sarah Ann Walters married William Clayton on November 30, 1856. William was 42, Sarah Ann was 18. William had eleven children by Sarah Ann. (2, p. 1xix)
8. Maria Louisa Lyman married William Clayton on October 3, 1866. William was 52. Maria was 17. Maria Louisa had only one child by William. Difficulties arose in the marriage over the apostasy of her father, Amasa Lyman, and they were divorced in 1871. (2, p. 1xviii, 1xix)
9. Elizabeth Ainsworth married William Clayton December 19, 1864. William was 55. Elizabeth was 45. (2, p. 1xix)
10. Anna Elizabeth Higgs married William Clayton December 30, 1870. William was 56, and Anna was 17. Anna bore four children by William. (2, p. 1xix)

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