

# PART 3: JAMES REID EARLY LIFE

## CHAPTER 3: MORMON INFLUENCE

### Beginning of Mormonism

Mormonism was a fairly new religion. Having started in the 1820's in America, it is a wonder it made it across the ocean so quickly and converted so many people in Scotland and England.

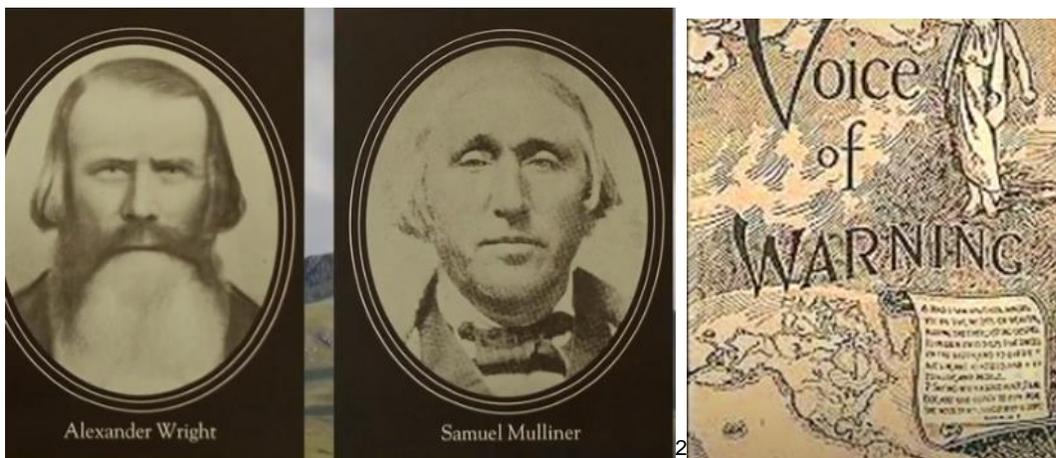
In 1820, the U S. population was ten million. It was an age of fundamental change. It was in the midst of the Second Great Awakening. A general evangelical fervor arose. And many minor religious groups began, some attempting to establish movements of their own. Mormonism was to pose a serious threat to the Protestant American evangelical empire.

In 1827, Joseph Smith announced finding the Gold Plates on a hill near his home in Manchester, New York. In 1830, he founded the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints; his followers numbering 6. In 1831, he moved with his 70 followers to Kirkland, Ohio. They later moved to Missouri and in 1839 they moved to Nauvoo, Illinois.

### Early missionaries

In 1837, the first Mormon missionaries arrived on European shores. Victoria was crowned Queen of Great Britain and Ireland in 1838. The leaders of the Mormons wrote letters to the Queen telling her that her kingdom would vanish, and a new kingdom would emerge. In 1840, Brigham Young traveled to England to preach. Soon there were thousands of Mormon converts in Great Britain, mostly from classes of displaced peoples.

Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner were the first to bring the Mormon theology to Scotland. Both were born in Scotland and both had emigrated to Canada, became Mormon<sup>1</sup> and traveled to the United States. After they met, they decided to become missionaries to Scotland.



First, Alexander wrote to his parents enclosing a pamphlet written by Pratt called “Voice of Warning”. Then they landed in Scotland at the end of 1839.<sup>3</sup>

In June of 1840, the first group of emigrating Mormons sailed from Liverpool and reached New York. In August, a group of 200 emigrants sailed from Liverpool to New York. Brigham Young returned from England in June of 1841.

Back home, Joseph Smith had been killed in 1844 and Brigham Young became the leader in 1847. In 1846, converts flocked to the Mormon city of Nauvoo on the banks of the Mississippi River. More than 4,000 Mormons from England, Ireland and Wales joined.

The early missionaries in Scotland established some 50 branches by 1850. In the early days, the Mormons were persecuted and most left their homes and emigrated to the United States.<sup>4</sup>

It took awhile for Mormonism to reach the southwestern part of Scotland where the Reid family resided.

## The Mormon Trail

The Oregon Trail had been established in 1843 when a wagon train of almost 1,000 people and 120 wagons traveled from Missouri to Oregon. By the time the Transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, about 350,000 emigrants had traveled the Oregon Trail.

Starting in 1847 Mormon Pioneers began trekking to present-day Salt Lake City, Utah via the Mormon Trail. The Mormon Trail is a 1,300-mile (2,100 km) long route from Nauvoo, Illinois to Salt Lake City, Utah. It began to parallel the Oregon Trail near present-day Kearney, Nebraska. Then diverted to Salt Lake City, Utah at Fort Bridger, Wyoming.



Purple = Mormon Trail, Yellow = Oregon Trail

Wagons were able to travel about 12 miles a day. Water and grass had to be available during each travel day. Many of the settlers used a handcart that was designed by Brigham Young to help move the European converts. Others, like the Reid family, used provisional wagons to cross the plains.



Using Handcarts



Using Provisional Wagons<sup>5</sup>

In July of 1847, Brigham Young and his party arrived in Salt Lake to begin their settlement there.

In September of 1849 Mormon church President Brigham Young established the Perpetual Emigration Fund, aka PEF, which was used to financially assist needy families emigrating to the Salt Lake Valley.

In October of 1850, the first group of emigrants under the PEF arrived in Salt Lake City. In 1855 the Mormons emigrated under the PEF, crossing the prairies and Rocky Mountains with hand carts.

From 1846 to 1869, the Mormon Trail carried 60,000-70,000 Latter-day Saints to Salt Lake City. James Reed and his grandparents would be among those Saints. About 6,000 died crossing the plains.

This information is about the early route. The route the Reids took will follow in a later chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> In the early years, Mormon was the term used; later Young changed it to LDS.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ldsliving.com/The-175th-Anniversary-of-Latter-day-Saints-in-Scotland-Video-/s/79220>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/global-histories/scotland/xs-overview?lang=eng>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1978/10/the-saints-around-the-world-strong-saints-in-scotland?lang=eng>

<sup>5</sup> <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/blog/mormon-pioneer-emigration-facts?lang=eng>