



## PRIMARY ASSOCIATION PIONEERS: AN EARLY HISTORY

MANY names could be mentioned in conjunction with the organization of the Primary Association; however, three women—Aurelia Spencer Rogers (1834–1922), Eliza R. Snow<sup>1</sup> (1804–87), and Louie B. Felt<sup>2</sup> (1850–1928)—played key roles in its early establishment. They recognized the problems at hand and dedicated their lives to assure the success of this program. Aurelia addressed the need for an organization. Eliza expanded the organization to branches and wards throughout the Utah Territory and provided a variety of materials to be used in weekly meetings for teaching, reciting, and singing. Louie faced her own challenges in finding a place in the shadow of Eliza. She honed her service in Salt Lake City’s Eleventh Ward and overcame any feelings of shyness to emerge as one who encouraged others and was beloved by her counselors, board members, and the children. All three

---

*RoseAnn Benson is an adjunct professor in ancient scripture and Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University.*



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

of them showed a willingness to step forward, initiate, and contribute. They broke new ground and left a lasting legacy.

Aurelia was forty-four years old when she became president of the first Primary in Farmington, Utah, and held that position for nine years. Later she became president of the Davis Stake Primaries, a member of the general Primary board, and finally an honorary member of the general Primary board.<sup>3</sup>

Eliza was seventy-four years old when she began traveling throughout the territory of Utah organizing Primaries in conjunction with her general Relief Society responsibilities. She remained active in her calling as general Relief Society president and in organizing the Young Ladies and Primary Associations until her death at age eighty-three.

Louie was twenty-eight years old when Eliza selected her to be the president of the second Primary Association in the Eleventh Ward, and she was thirty years old when Eliza chose her to preside over all the Primary Associations in the Utah Territory.<sup>4</sup> Louie served as general Primary president for forty-five years, even during poor health, until age seventy-five.

## BEGINNINGS: AURELIA SPENCER ROGERS

As a young mother, Aurelia met President Heber C. Kimball while she was visiting Salt Lake City. She records that he spoke with her and “seemed to read me like a book, and to understand my inmost thoughts.” He spoke a little of her future. Aurelia remembered, “I did not begin to know what was before me; but [he] told me to continue as faithful as I had been, and all would be well, for there was a great work for me to do.”<sup>5</sup> Many years later, she concluded, “With all the difficulties encountered, I have indeed had joy in my Primary labors; and feel that it was this work that President Heber C. Kimball saw when conversing with me.”<sup>6</sup>

In a brief sketch of the creation of the Primary Association, Aurelia described some of the children in her Farmington community as being “allowed to be out late at night,” some even deserving the designation “hoodlum.” In addition, some children were guilty of “carelessness in the extreme,



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

not only in regard to religion, but also morality.” She identified the causes for parents’ negligence in training their children as exhaustion of people who had been driven out of Illinois and suffered persecution of every kind and the fact that they could barely provide sustenance for their children. Nevertheless, she refused to accept any excuse for a lack of spiritual upbringing in what she considered “the most sacred duty of parentage.”<sup>7</sup>

Similarly concerned, Farmington bishop John W. Hess called a meeting of the mothers in the ward and gave them instructions on training and guiding children. He laid this responsibility on the mothers, but in Aurelia’s mind, without a united effort of all ward members, it appeared not all would embrace his counsel. Aurelia reported that she initially considered speaking to the leaders of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association; however, she did not. Nevertheless, her concern for the youth and especially for young boys did not end. In fact she described her distress about the young boys as “a fire [that] seemed to burn within me.” She continued to ponder the idea of “an organization for little boys wherein they could be taught everything good, and how to behave.”<sup>8</sup>

Shortly thereafter, in March 1877, a Farmington Relief Society conference was held. Sisters Eliza R. Snow and Emmeline B. Wells attended from Salt Lake City.<sup>9</sup> Providentially, these two women and others stopped at Aurelia’s home after the meeting while they awaited the train back to Salt Lake.<sup>10</sup> The conversation turned to the topic of young people and especially “the rough, careless ways [of] many of the young men and boys.”<sup>11</sup> According to Eliza, Aurelia was desirous to do something more to effect the “cultivation and improvement of the children morally and spiritually than was being done through the influence of day and Sunday-Schools.”<sup>12</sup> Now Aurelia had the ear of the most powerful woman in the Church, Eliza R. Snow, the de facto general president of the Relief Society, under whose purview fell the concerns of all women in the Church. Aurelia asked Eliza, “What will our girls do for good husbands, if this state of things continues?” As Eliza contemplated this question, Aurelia pressed on: “Could there not be an organization for little boys, and have them trained to make better



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

men?" In Aurelia's words, Eliza "was silent a few moments, [and] then said there might be such a thing and that she would speak to the First Presidency about it."<sup>13</sup> Before this could be done, however, President Brigham Young died on August 29, 1877.

According to Aurelia's notes, Eliza continued to believe that the idea of an organization for young boys was a good one and in time presented it to the senior Apostle and soon-to-be Church President, John Taylor, and to others of the Quorum of Twelve.<sup>14</sup> After they approved the proposal, Eliza wrote a letter to Bishop Hess of the Farmington Ward explaining the matter to him. Soon afterward, Bishop Hess met with Aurelia and, after they had talked a while on the subject, he asked her if she "would be willing to preside over an organization of the children."<sup>15</sup> Up until this point, Aurelia's focus had been on an organization for the young boys; girls had not been mentioned. Aurelia realized almost immediately, however, that the organization would not be complete without the young girls too. Among other reasons, singing was necessary, and "it needed the voices of little girls as well as boys to make it sound as well as it should."<sup>16</sup>

Aurelia wrote to Eliza to ask "her opinion in regard to the little girls taking part." In a letter dated August 4, 1878, Eliza responded with these encouraging words: "The spirit and contents of your letter pleased me much. I feel assured that the inspiration of heaven is directing you, and that a great and very important movement is being inaugurated for the future of Zion. . . . The importance of the movement and its great necessity is fully acknowledged by all with whom I have conversed on the subject. . . . We think that at present, it will be wisdom to not admit any under six years of age, except in some special instances. You are right—we must have the girls as well as the boys—they must be trained together. . . . The angels and all holy beings, especially the leaders of Israel on the other side [of] the veil will be deeply interested." At a visit to Farmington shortly thereafter, "Sister Snow suggested that the organization be called 'Primary.'"<sup>17</sup>

With no directions from a presiding organization and without personal academic training, Aurelia learned what to do from the Spirit and from



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

her experience as a mother. She described pondering “over what was to be done for the best good of the children. I seemed to be carried away in the spirit . . . which lasted three days and nights. . . . This was a testimony to me that what was being done was from God.”<sup>18</sup> More than a year after Aurelia’s initial inspiration and questions regarding children, the first Primary Association was organized.

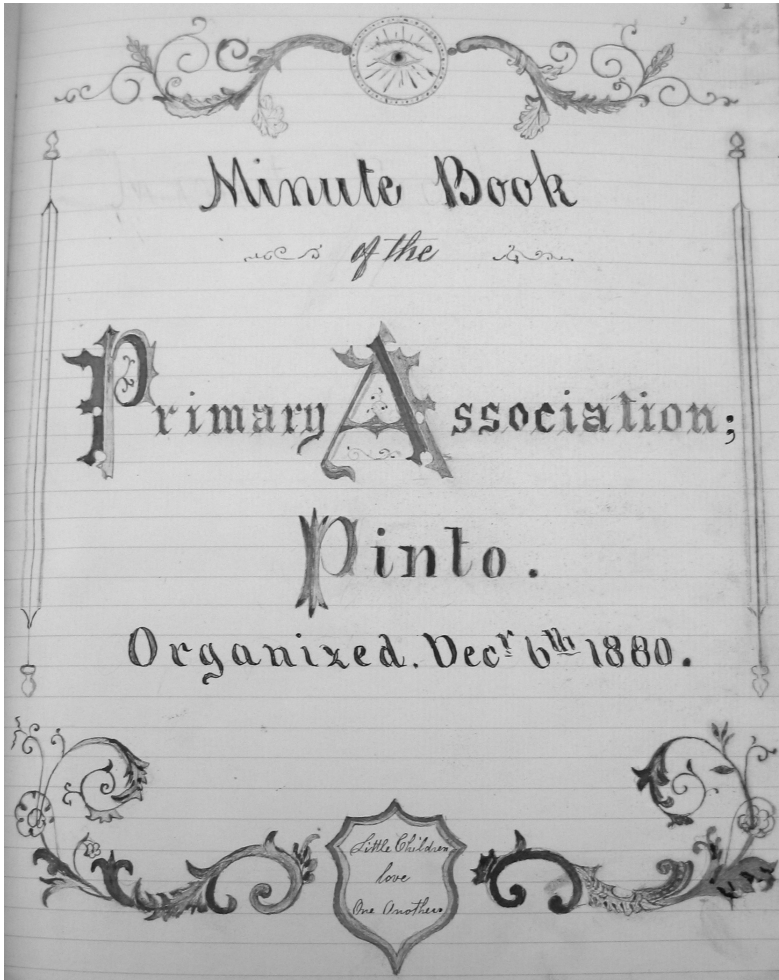
On Sunday, August 11, 1878, at a public meeting, Bishop Hess set apart Aurelia and two counselors to preside over the Primary Association in Farmington. The minutes of the organizational meeting called for the “Primary Mutual Improvement Association to include children of both sexes from six to fourteen years of age.” At the meeting, Bishop Hess charged the parents to “feel the importance of this movement.” In his mind, “if anything in this life should engage the attention of parents it should be the care of their children.” He reminded those present that “elders by hundreds and thousands travel the world over to convert people and thousands of dollars are spent to emigrate them. . . . We have here with the L.D. Saints a host of spirits that we are the parents of, and when we awake to their interest we will wonder what we have been thinking of in neglecting those little ones and letting their untrained minds take their own course.”<sup>19</sup>

The new president spoke next. Aurelia testified, “I believe the Lord is preparing the way and blessed is the name of the Lord. . . . Over one year ago Bishop Hess called the sisters together, feeling that the young people were being led astray, and threw the responsibility upon the sisters to look after their daughters. I felt then if he had called the Brethren together also, to advise together with them it would have been better.” Aurelia’s greatest concern was for the boys and young men, the future “Elders in Israel and who are running in the streets, their mothers hardly able to control them. . . . While they are running loose, the adversary will feel that he can instill into their tender minds such influences that in their youth will make them subject to him. But I feel that in this he will be baffled, but he will not cease his efforts.” Nevertheless, she was certain that “when children are taught in the right way, they will notice the course of their parents more and more.



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

When asked if I would lead out in this movement I felt that I could not refuse. . . . My intentions are to speak and act with the Spirit of the Lord.” She concluded with the desire that all “pray to the Lord to bless those in authority with wisdom to direct aright” the new Primary organization.<sup>20</sup>



*The decorations on the first page of this Primary Association minute book illustrate how important this organization was to its participants. (L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.)*



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

Although Aurelia's initial pondering had brought peace, she wrote, "After the organization I was nearly overcome by the opposite power, and was sunken, as it were, into the very depths of misery; I felt my unworthiness so keenly that I could scarcely attend to my duties; and went to my meetings weeping by the way, being humbled to the very earth. . . . I had been made to feel my entire dependence on God the Eternal Father."<sup>21</sup>

Nine days later, on August 25, the children were called together for the first time and the purpose of the meeting explained to them. Thereafter, beginning September 7, meetings were held on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at the meetinghouse. She described her early thoughts in this new responsibility: "It would be impossible for one who had never experienced anything of the kind, to imagine our feelings as we stood before an audience of children who had come there to receive instructions from us. We were very weak indeed, but felt to lean upon the Lord in all humility."<sup>22</sup> The leaders felt that Primary meetings were a school for them as well as for the children. They depended on the Lord to assist them and enlighten their minds by the Holy Spirit, "that they might be in very deed the teachers of life and salvation unto the children committed to their care."<sup>23</sup>

*Not all supported Primary.* From a number of editorials and letters in the *Woman's Exponent* and Eliza R. Snow's several personal exhortations, it appears that support for the Primary Association was not unanimous even after more than a year of organizing associations throughout the territory.<sup>24</sup> Thomas G. Alexander writes, "Reports from the 1880s indicate that attendance averaged about half the number of children enrolled."<sup>25</sup>

In advocating support for the Primary organization, an editorial in the *Woman's Exponent* counseled:

It is evident that to correct the evils that exist in the world to-day a great reformation is needed, of a kind unlike any other, and many wise people believe it must commence with the children. . . . Everything for the better education of little children in all that is most excellent should be done, and because of the indelible impressions made upon the infant mind in its earliest years, the



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

greatest care should be taken in the development of their moral and spiritual faculties. Many people do not believe that children possess any positive spiritual faculties that can possibly be cultivated so young as under eight, nine, or ten years. . . . There has been too much neglect of these spiritual qualities in the young, yet they are of vital importance in the perfecting and harmonizing of the human soul. . . . But a new movement has been made to put into active exercise the spiritual elements of the children's character. For this purpose the organizations called Primary Associations have been formed, and already much has been accomplished in this direction. But there is not sufficient interest awakened upon the subject; many parents are indifferent in regard to the matter. Some good people think this getting the children together to teach them of the things of God, and help develop in them at a very early period the latent germ of spirituality, is superfluous. . . . To all, or any, who feel any doubt on this subject, we would suggest that they take the trouble to visit one of these same Primary Associations, and listen to the teachings given, note the spirit and manner in which they are imparted; hear the sweet voices of the children singing, and see the eyes sparkle with innocent pleasure and the little faces brighten as they answer their questions; and better still, hear them speak in their childish manner of faith and other principles.<sup>26</sup>

Six months later, another editorial warned parents, "A deep sleep seems to have fallen upon some, and they are indifferent to the evil influences that are fast gaining ground, and perchance creeping stealthily into their own households." The editorial reminded parents that "to aid mothers in the spiritual education of the children, the Primary Associations have been organized among the Saints. They will have an influence to lead them into the channel of a proper education. As a people we cannot be too particular in training the children. . . . The children of Zion have God's work to do and their discipline and education should be administered accordingly."<sup>27</sup>



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

Later that same year, Eliza, in speaking to the Sanpete County Relief Society, asked the women two questions: “Mothers, do you realize the importance of the early training of your children? What can be of so much consequence to parents than that their children shall be so cultivated as to grow up to be men and women of God?” She promised the sisters, “The Primary organizations are designed to assist the mothers in their most responsible duties in this direction, and mothers should not think their work at home more important, than sending their children to the Primary meetings.”<sup>28</sup> The next month, in Kanosh, Eliza declared that Primary “was one of the most important organizations. The youth of Zion were thirsting for knowledge.” She expressed her great concern that “our children have been neglected in the past and many have grown up infidels. Their minds have been charged with knowledge and their mental capacities have been crowded to the exclusion of spiritual life.”<sup>29</sup>

President Taylor lent his support and the weight of his office to the fledgling Primary Association by attending an 1880 Weber Stake sisters conference with Elder Franklin D. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Eliza R. Snow, and Zina D. Young. “Pres. Taylor was specially invited by the children of the Primary Association”<sup>30</sup> and at their request offered the opening prayer. The program included singing by the children, questions posed by Eliza and answered by the children, and a recitation of the Lord’s Prayer in concert. President Taylor directed his remarks mostly to the children: “When the Lord Jesus was upon the earth, the children crowded around him, and when they were told to retreat by His disciples, Jesus said, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.’” By this example, President Taylor taught that Jesus loved little children and that “He loved them still, and when they were good He would hear their prayers, and answer them, though in person He was not with them on the earth.” At this point in the meeting, he asked Elder Richards to read from 3 Nephi, telling the story about Jesus commanding the people to bring their children that he might bless them. President Taylor pointed out the signs—fire and angels descending out of heaven—as evidence of the



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

depth of Jesus' love for little children. He concluded his remarks by urging the children to heed the truths restored by Joseph Smith and taught to them by their parents: "Upon the children would soon rest the responsibility of carrying on the work of their parents; therefore they should be good and kind, and avoid being harsh and of a fighting nature, in order to prepare themselves for the work before them."<sup>31</sup>

The prophet's response to the Primary children was an especially important signal to Church members, as some still resisted the idea of this new organization. He taught about the Savior's love of little children and demonstrated his own love for them by coming at their invitation. The attendance of two members from the presiding quorums of the Church was an unspoken indication of their support for the Primary Association. Nevertheless, not all Church members responded to their example.

In a retrospective look at her first seven years as Primary president, Aurelia lamented how little success she had with getting the boys to attend the weekly meetings. She felt that all her "anxiety and labor to get the boys to attend" had largely failed. Her keen disappointment reflected her thoughts on why the Primary had been instituted in the first place: "for the good of the little boys especially." She thought greater parental support, especially encouragement from fathers, was necessary to get the boys to attend. She chose, however, to put her worries "in the hands of the Lord, and when He saw fit to wake the people up things might be different."<sup>32</sup>

## EXPANSION: ELIZA R. SNOW

Eliza organized the second Primary in the Salt Lake Eleventh Ward on September 14, 1878, only weeks after the organization of the Farmington Primary. She selected Louise B. Felt to be the president, training her for her call two years later as the general president of the Primary. The organization of local Primary Associations began in earnest thereafter, with Eliza traveling throughout the territory of Utah. As the head of the Relief Society, all the women in the Church were her responsibility, and she therefore took the lead in organizing the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

and the Primary Associations, considering them auxiliaries under the responsibility of the Relief Society.<sup>33</sup>

It appears that Eliza often selected the Primary presidents. In fact, she “spoke on the subject of organization,” although she prefaced her remarks by informing the priesthood brethren present that they might “correct us if need be.” She declared that “there were some societies which women had a right to organize, such as the Y. L. and Primary Associations.”<sup>34</sup> Bathsheba Smith, later Relief Society general president, “was present at the [organizing] meeting [of the Relief Society] when the Prophet Joseph Smith told the sisters to adopt parliamentary rules.”<sup>35</sup> Evidently these same procedures were followed in organizing the early Primary Associations. Ward and stake minute books and reports in the *Woman’s Exponent* show that Primary Associations were “organized by” Eliza R. Snow Smith, Emmeline B. Wells, or Zina Huntington Young; that Eliza “called for a show of hands of the children who wished to be organized into a Primary Association”; that women were “nominated” to be Primary presidents; and that these women chose to “resign” after a period of time.<sup>36</sup>

Emmeline B. Wells noted in a biographical sketch of Eliza that as the first secretary of the Relief Society, she was “brought prominently forward as one of the founders of the institution, and [this] helped to prepare her as an organizer.” Her organizational skills were legendary and were called “strong features of her character.” Eliza’s executive ability was a great strength to the Relief Society, “and she has had much to do in this capacity. When one calls to mind the fact that there are three hundred branches of the Relief Society, almost as many Young Ladies’ Associations, and hundreds of Primary Associations for the children, now in working order, and that she has done a large proportion of the organizing, one cannot but acknowledge that she must have possessed extraordinary power and ability in this direction.”<sup>37</sup> Eliza was recognized as the leader of the women’s organizations and stood preeminent among women in organizing.<sup>38</sup> Both men and women of the Church recognized that Eliza was a talented and respected organizer, yet she had a clear understanding of the boundaries between her responsibilities



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

and those of priesthood holders in organizing Relief Societies, Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, and Primary Associations.

Eliza's zeal for the new Primary organization is illustrated by the string of meetings she attended during September and October 1878 in Provo, Spanish Fork, and Pleasant Grove, Utah.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, 1879 and 1880 saw Primaries organized in Nephi, Levan, Morgan, Croyden, and Beaver.<sup>40</sup> In order to maximize her efforts, several Primaries in relatively close proximity would be organized within a few days. In a report to the *Woman's Exponent*, Eliza wrote that in February 1881, she and Zina D. Young traveled from St. George to Kanab, Long Valley, Orderville, Johnson, Glendale, and back to St. George to organize ward and stake Primary Associations.<sup>41</sup> The organization of a Primary was accompanied by instructions to the children, such as these noted in the Parowan minutes: "Sister Eliza than gave some good instructions to the rising generation upon the principles of the gospel and the benefits to be derived by keeping the Word of Wisdom which would enable them to become strong and mighty pillars in Zion."<sup>42</sup> Part of this five-month trip to southern Utah included traveling "one thousand [miles] by team over jolting rocks and through bedded sand"<sup>43</sup> and camping out for three nights.<sup>44</sup> Although both women had made the trek west in 1847 and 1848 respectively and were no strangers to camping, Eliza was seventy-seven years old, Zina was sixty, and it was winter. Nevertheless, Eliza R. Snow traveled the length of the Utah Territory during the snowy winter months.

As soon as Primary Associations were organized they became part of the Relief Society quarterly meetings. These meetings already included the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association. The meetings were held over two days, with the Primary meeting often held on Saturday afternoon. Sometimes visitors from Salt Lake came to address the women, teenagers, and children. Later, when the general presidencies were organized, Primary likely had its own separate conference. The minutes of these meetings with women and Primary children record sacred experiences.

*Utah Stake Primary Association Conference, Provo, Utah, 1881.* In 1881, the first countywide Primary conference held in Provo, Utah, created



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

great interest. Such a conference for children was new, and the house was crowded. Margaret T. Smoot, stake Relief Society president, presided, with Zina D. H. Young as the Salt Lake visitor.

The meeting was described as moving; tears ran down the faces of many of the mothers. Sister Smoot spoke of having “received an answer to a question I have asked many times and received no answer. In the Bible, I have read these words: ‘Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings shall his name be praised.’” She testified, “My heart is full to overflowing. I thank my Heavenly Father that I have lived to see the day when the little children of Zion are praising his name.” She then blessed the sisters of the Primary placed in “charge of the children that they might be filled with the Spirit of the Lord to lead and guide them in this ways.” Sister Young then spoke and said, “The gift of tongues is resting upon some of the sisters here, also the gift of interpretation.” Sister Dwyke, the wife of the bishop, arose and spoke in tongues, and Sister Young gave the interpretation: “It was a blessing and prophecy concerning the children of the primaries, . . . that the children given in their charge were the hope of Israel and the heirs to the kingdom of God.” The secretary closed her minutes with this heartfelt comment: “It was a time to be long remembered.”<sup>45</sup>

*Primary Conference of Cache Stake, Logan Tabernacle, September 2, 1882.* During this conference, Eliza R. Snow and Zina D. H. Young were the Salt Lake visitors. Following the reports given by leaders, Eliza spoke to the children. Sister Snow’s love for the children, as if they were her own, was evident in her delight at their ability to answer gospel questions and at learning that some were paying tithing. She admonished “the children to pray for the sick, for the Lord heard their prayers as soon as any other persons.” Sister Young also spoke briefly to the children encouraging them to come home early at night in order to avoid bad company and to be missionaries by inviting their playmates to attend Primary. She promised that “all who do right will enter Heaven [but] others would be shut out. Never fear to do right and God will bless you.”

Primary president Jane E. Hyde Molen expressed her hope that the children would not be too tired or cold to sit and listen to the instructions



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

from the sisters. She requested all present “to pray for Sister Snow to speak in tongues that they might know the gift of tongues was still with the Church.” Sister Snow desired to have the gift of tongues manifest, but first she would make certain the children would not make light of this gift of the Spirit and would ask them to pray for her. In this meeting,

Sister Snow arose and told of the meetings little children had when the Prophet Joseph was alive. Little children then spoke in tongues and she said the time would come again when children would have the gift of tongues. . . . She then spoke to them in tongues after which Sister Young gave the interpretation. . . . Brothers and Sisters be good, if you could see the angels that are here you would be astonished. God loves you [and] he will bless you if you are faithful. Live humble before the Lord. Oh Father bless these little ones that they may have peace. She then spoke to the mothers and said Oh Father bless the mothers of these little ones. Thou knowest my agony and the tears I have shed on my pillow by night. Mothers extend thy faith that the Spirit of God may rest upon you and them. The meeting was closed with singing and prayer.<sup>46</sup>

*Primary Conference of Cache Stake, July 27, 1885.* During this conference, Sister Eliza R. Snow remarked how she loved the sweet singing of Primary children and requested they sing her favorite hymn, “In Our Lovely Deseret.” Jane E. Molen asked the children if they realized who had just spoken to them. “First think little children, we have the privilege of having the prophet’s wife to teach us.” At the afternoon session, Eliza gave the opening prayer, which was “repeated in concert by the children.” Eliza’s example of having the children repeat in unison her prayer taught them to unite their faith and focus their hearts on the Savior and was sometimes practiced in weekly meetings, especially when the children prayed for those who were ill.<sup>47</sup> In her address to the children, she declared that “Primary meetings are to improve the children and prepare them to go on missions.” Their mission now was “to bring a boy or girl with them to meeting; those



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

who are not in the habit of attending.” She urged each one to have mighty faith and to pray night and morning. In particular she desired the boys to learn to sing and praised those who were “trying to do right,” remarking that she would rather have them administer to her than one of their fathers. Eliza spoke to the Primary presidents and encouraged them to continue with meetings even if but one child attended.

During her many visits, Eliza listened to the singing and recitations of the children. She often expressed her pleasure in seeing so many bright faces and hearing the various exercises and her joy in meeting with the children and hearing them sing.<sup>48</sup> Then she would speak and instruct the children on behavior. For example, on one occasion she advised, “When we come to meeting we should sit very still and look at the speaker and not turn our head around to see who comes in.”<sup>49</sup> She would relate stories such as the story of Samuel the prophet, drawing a comparison between Samuel and the little children.<sup>50</sup> She would ask questions like “Who was the first prophet in this dispensation?”<sup>51</sup> She would tell the children and their leaders what other Primary Associations were doing. Often she blessed the children and promised them, “If we are good and pray and be obedient to our parents we will raise up to be good men and women.”<sup>52</sup>

A clear structure slowly developed as Primaries were incorporated into the existing Relief Society organization and ideas from other Primaries were shared. Nevertheless, regular lessons, division into classes, and a standard weekly program were not implemented for many years.

*Primary materials.* The following passage is from a typewritten copy of the history of the Provo Utah Fourth Ward Primary from October 12, 1878, to 1900. It was written in April 1957 by Beatrice Young Moore, granddaughter of President Brigham Young and a member of that ward’s Primary in the 1890s. She provides insight into a typical weekly Primary meeting:

In all these years there were no regular lesson outlines as we have now. A program was arranged a week in advance, either by officers or a number of children as a program committee. Bible stories were told by the sisters, poems by the children. Sometimes verses from



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

the Sermon on the Mount, some of the Articles of Faith or Ten Commandments were recited in unison or sometimes by one or two children. Also dialogues were quite popular with two, three or four children participating. I joined Primary in the Fourth Ward in 1890. We met in the old chapel on Second North between University Avenue and First East on the north side of the street. . . . We met in the vestry in back. . . . On Sept. 26, 1896 the children were asked to each bring a nickel as a donation to Elias Gee to help him on his mission. . . . On January 30, 1896 a letter was sent to Sister Smoot [Relief Society President] from the matron of the Deseret Hospital thanking them for a box of fruit which was sent by Primary children. In minutes from 1895 on, I wasn't on the program very often but I guess the officers called on volunteers to pray, and of course *I always* offered to do it. Was glad when I was old enough to go to M.I.A. at 14, but I learned much in Primary.<sup>53</sup>

Early on, the “untrodden and obscure way” of running the weekly meeting meant that each Primary presidency had to “catch the Spirit of their calling” and then determine their own program.<sup>54</sup> As one large group, the children sang, were taught, and learned to bear testimony. The Primary presidency and their assistants taught the children on a wide variety of topics, from lessons on honesty, punctuality, and good manners to obedience, faith in God, and prayer.<sup>55</sup> According to the minutes, mainstays of the weekly meeting included a great deal of singing, stories from the Bible or the Restoration, recitations by the children, and occasional outings to a park. Other activities included such things as sewing rags to help make carpet, planting beans and corn, and hosting a yearly concert.<sup>56</sup> Although many good activities were taking place, the Primary associations needed greater organization on many levels. Eliza recognized this need for Primary materials and stepped in to fill it. During a very short period of time, between the years 1880 and 1882, she published two music books, a Bible question-and-answer book, and two Primary speaker books.





*Eliza R. Snow, recognizing the need for music within the Primary organization, put together two books of music for the Primary Association. One of them was the Children's Primary Tune Book pictured above.*

*Children's music books.* On June 17, 1880, Eliza addressed the Relief Societies of Weber County during a quarterly conference held in the Ogden Tabernacle. Among other things she declared that “something greatly needed was a hymn book for the young, and she was occupied in getting up one for this purpose. The books would be sold at 12½ cents per copy, as she did all her own work free in the interest of the kingdom. Thus the books could be sold at cost.” She thought “we should have prophets and prophetesses among the young.”<sup>57</sup> On November 27, 1880, Emmeline B. Wells, speaking at the ninth quarterly meeting of Relief Society in the Provo meetinghouse, promoted “the Primary Hymn Books and Tune Book for the children. [She] thought they were well adapted for the use of the little folks and would be a great blessing to them.”<sup>58</sup> Within one year, Eliza published two books of music for the Primary Association.

In 1880, *Hymns and Songs: Selected from Various Authors for the Primary Associations of the Children of Zion* was published. It was bound in a 3 × 5-inch blue cloth jacket with a gold-embossed title, *Children's Primary Hymn Book*. The book consisted of 124 pages, sixty-five hymns (beginning



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

with “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” and forty-four songs (beginning with “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer”).<sup>59</sup> Neither category included music. Eliza’s contributions to this book of music include “Annie’s Sympathy,” “Angel Whisperings,” “A Precious Jewel,” “Children, Obey Your Parents,” “Gold and Tinsel,” “I’ll Serve the Lord,” “In Our Lovely Deseret,” “Little Betty,” “Looking at the Stars,” “My Father Dear,” “My Own Home,” “Our Heavenly Father, We,” “O My Father, Thou That Dwellst,” “Sing the Sweet and Touching Story,” “To a Star,” “To Santa Claus,” “The Tool and the Gem,” “The World’s Jubilee,” and “Youthful Sonnet.”<sup>60</sup>

Eliza’s other book, the *Tune Book for the Primary Associations of the Children of Zion*, was bound in a 7 × 8¼-inch green cloth jacket with a gold-embossed title, *Children’s Primary Tune Book*. The book consisted of forty pages and ninety-one hymns of one verse each and included music. Some hymns are still popular today; however, most are found only in the adult hymnal. These include “All Things Bright and Beautiful,” “Dearest Children, God Is Near You,” “Do What Is Right,” “Hope of Israel,” “How Firm a Foundation,” “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer,” “Love at Home,” “My Mother Dear,” “Praise to the Man,” “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” “The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning,” “Today [While the Sun Shines],” and “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”<sup>61</sup> Eliza’s “O My Father,” “Our Heavenly Father,” and “I’ll Serve the Lord While I Am Young” became Primary favorites.<sup>62</sup> Eliza’s favorite song, however, was “In Our Lovely Deseret,” which she would often request the children to sing. Given her history with the development of the Primary Association and its early music books, it is surprising that not one of Eliza’s lyrics is found in the current *Children’s Songbook*.

*Children’s catechism.* Eliza published *Bible Questions and Answers for Children* in 1881 as a catechism, or a book of basic principles and beliefs in the form of questions and answers. The book was 119 pages long, bound in black cloth, and divided into forty-four chapters. The book included questions from the Old and New Testaments; however, there were only seven questions on Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi and nearly ninety questions on the



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

last days of Christ's ministry on earth. The following are seven questions and answers from the last chapter:

Q.—What did Isaiah, an ancient prophet, say should speak out of the dust?

A.—Truth.

Q.—What did he say should look down from heaven?

A.—Righteousness.

Q.—What did the Prophet Joel say the Lord will do in the last days?

A.—Pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.

Q.—Who did he say shall prophesy?

A.—The sons and the daughters.

Q.—What did the prophet Malachi say of the last days?

A.—That the day should come that shall burn as an oven.

Q.—Who shall be burnt up?

A.—The proud and all that do wickedly.

Q.—Where will the righteous be?

A.—In the holy city—the New Jerusalem.<sup>63</sup>

In an explanatory note for how the book was to be used, Eliza wrote:

This book is not designed to be placed in the hands of children for them to study, but to assist those who have charge of the children. The president, or one whom she shall appoint, is expected to read a question, and another appointee read the answer, and all the children present repeat the answer in concert. As soon as the children can answer the questions the prompting may be dispensed with. One chapter, or part of a chapter, may be taken for a lesson, and be repeated week after week until it is well committed. In getting up this book, historical order has not been the aim; but to impress the minds of the children with important facts contained in the Old and New Testaments. E. R. Snow Smith.<sup>64</sup>



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

*Recitations.* Eliza compiled two books of poetry, dialogues, and speeches to be used by children as recitations during Primary meetings.<sup>65</sup> The *Primary Speaker Book No. 1* was “adapted to the capacities of members from the age of four to ten years.” The 178 pages included the following seven contributions from Eliza: “Elegy,” “Honesty the Best Policy,” “I Want to Be Good,” “To Santa Claus,” “The Honest Boy,” “The Repentant,” “Well, If We Make It So.” The *Primary Speaker Book No. 2* was also a compilation of poetry, dialogues, and prose. It was to be used for those from age ten to fifteen. In this 196-page volume, Eliza contributed many more pieces of literature to this volume, including “A Precious Jewel,” “Annie’s Sympathy,” “Assassination of Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith,” “A New Year’s Speech,” “Beauty Everywhere,” and “Camp of Israel.”

Eliza wrote an introduction to the two *Speaker* books titled “A Few Hints to Presiding Officers.” In it she laid out the purpose of recitations, the behavior to be expected from the children, the importance of memorization, the need for proper expression, and the connection to learning to read, stating, “The object of recitation is not only to cultivate the heart and intellect, but also to improve the manners.” She encouraged dignity and eschewed “careless, rude, and swaggering motions.” In her opinion, “short recitations, with their meaning explained so as to be fully understood, and recited with proper tone and gesture, are very much more cultivating than lengthy ones committed to memory and recited in a monotonous manner. . . . Instead of encouraging children to exhibit *how much* they can commit to memory, they should be taught *how*, and be inspired with an ambition to manifest *how well* they can recite what they have memorized. This will greatly assist them in acquiring the art of reading, which is very desirable. E.R.S.S.”<sup>66</sup>

## GREATER ORGANIZATION: LOUIE B. FELT

Aurelia Rogers records that at an April 1880 meeting, Eliza thought “it best to have some one appointed to preside over all the Primary Associations in the Territory. She suggested that the person should reside in Salt Lake City, as that was the center; and asked me whom I would propose to fill the



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

office." Upon a few moments' reflection, "the name of Sister Louie B. Felt came to [Aurelia's] mind." Eliza confirmed that that was also her feeling. The first time Louie and Aurelia met, they had "an unusually warm feeling of sympathetic friendship." When others suggested that it was Aurelia's rightful place to preside, she declared that she "never had a moment's jealousy over anyone holding office; for no person will ever take my honors from me; I shall have all that I deserve."<sup>67</sup> Louie recorded Eliza's words in calling her to this position: "Sister Felt, we have chosen you for this place." Louie's surprise was evident in her response: "I am not worthy and I am so ignorant. I could not fill that position. I'm sure I could not." Eliza reassured her with this comment: "If you thought you could we would not want you." Louie was finally comforted when the sisters gathered around her and Eliza gave her a "grand blessing."<sup>68</sup>

During the time Louie worked in the Salt Lake City Eleventh Ward Primary and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, Eliza R. Snow, Zina D. Young, Mary I. Horn, and other stake members took note of her "great ability and charm as a leader and speaker in the Stake MIA, and as the ward primary president."<sup>69</sup> Lillie Tuckett Freeze, who was to become Louie's general Primary secretary, wrote, "Louie had a most wonderful influence over the little children of the Eleventh Ward. They were fascinated by her gracious manner. Every child was willing and anxious to do whatever she suggested."<sup>70</sup> Louisa White, Louie's Eleventh Ward Primary counselor, also wrote that "President Felt was beloved by officers and children alike. She was continually studying up something that would be of benefit or interest to the children. Many times I have been summoned to her home to discuss some plan pertaining to their welfare or entertainment."<sup>71</sup>

Louie was originally from Connecticut and was sent with her husband to settle the Muddy River (in Nevada), so she was a relative newcomer to Salt Lake City.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, her two years of training as ward Primary president combined with natural talent caused Eliza to decide that Louie would make an excellent general Primary president.<sup>73</sup>



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

Several important responsibilities became official callings on June 18 and 19, 1880, at a conference of the Sisters Associations of the Salt Lake Stake. On the morning of June 19, "the middle seats of the Tabernacle were filled with the children of the Primary Associations of the city." As part of the business, "'Sister Eliza,' then nominated Mrs. Louie Felt as General Superintendent to preside over all the Primary Associations of all the Stakes of Zion, which was unanimously carried."<sup>74</sup> President John Taylor lauded the ladies of the Relief Society, especially the Primary presidents, for teaching the children correct principles. At the afternoon session, President Taylor spoke and closed his remarks by blessing the children and the sisters "with Sister Snow at their head. Mrs. M. I. Horne moved, and Mrs. S. M. Kimball seconded the motion that President Taylor publicly appoint 'Sister Eliza' as president of all the Relief Societies. . . . P. Taylor then nominated her and she was sustained as president."<sup>75</sup> Eliza, who had long been recognized as the leading lady in the Church and was referred to as the "president of the entire Female Relief Societies,"<sup>76</sup> had never previously had been sustained as general president.

Louie learned how to lead from Eliza, Aurelia, Emmeline, Zina, and other prominent sisters.<sup>77</sup> From the reports recorded in the *Woman's Exponent*, it does not appear that she traveled to organize any of the early Primary Associations, apparently lacking authority to do so.<sup>78</sup> In fact, for a time, she seems to have concentrated on her responsibilities as the Eleventh Ward Primary president, as a counselor to Mary Ann Freeze on the Salt Lake Board for the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, and as ward treasurer.<sup>79</sup> Further, early in her presidency, in response to the 1882 Edmunds-Tucker Act, Lillie Tuckett Freeze recorded that "the raid began and we all scattered for nearly four years. . . . Nothing much could be done; only as the stakes and wards kept the work going." During this time approximately fifteen hundred men were imprisoned, and Louie's husband, Joseph (who had two wives), went "underground." Louie traveled east twice to avoid testifying against her husband.<sup>80</sup>

Nevertheless, "from 1880 to 1890 Louie visited a number of stakes. Some of them a number of times in company with the leading sisters for



### *Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

all went together in those days and helped each other.”<sup>81</sup> In October 1880, Louie, in company with Mary Ann Freeze and Clara Conrad, took the train from Salt Lake to Provo to visit, “by invitation, the Primary Mutual Improvement Associations of Spanish Fork.” She remarked on the quiet and attentive order of the children in the meeting, on their ability to answer gospel questions, and particularly on the singing of the small children.<sup>82</sup> The minutes of the meeting report, “Mrs. Louie Felt addressed the meeting, praising and encouraging the little ones; engaging their attention by her pleasing and lovable manner.”<sup>83</sup> It appears that she traveled only when invited and without her counselors, perhaps because there were no general Church operating funds to pay for travel. Louie’s husband was willing to pay her expenses.<sup>84</sup>

Louie’s friend and secretary, Lillie Tuckett Freeze, confirmed the sentiments of the Spanish Fork Primary: “Louie, because of her charming magnetic personality, her sweet winning ways, her peculiar adaptability in handling and appealing to children made her the idol of the day—she was sought after by women and children, feted, praised, honored, and adored—no woman in the church has been more beloved, no woman has received such manifestations of loving admiration from co-workers—especially her own board—no woman filled her positions better—no one is entitled to more honor. With Louie, as with all persons in active public life—there is always much unwritten history.”<sup>85</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Aurelia Rogers was honored throughout her lifetime by her own Farmington Primary children, her Primary coworkers, and the general Primary presidency.<sup>86</sup> A tribute to her attested: “[She] heeded the inspirations of her heart and there came into existence the Primary Association, an organization we love so much. Had she not trusted in God, how much she never could have known or realized. . . . Who can measure the joy and satisfaction of Sister Rogers’ heart today when she understands that by one of her important obediences to the inspirations of her Maker, she can again serve His purposes. . . . She is so great, and yet so humble; so worthy, and yet so



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

modest, we are happy to honor her. And for all us Primarians, God bless our own Aurelia S. Rogers. May she live her days in continued service and joy.”<sup>87</sup>

For fifty years, Eliza R. Snow was honored among Latter-day Saints as “The Elect Lady.”<sup>88</sup> As part of a birthday tribute to Eliza on her seventy-seventh year, Susa Young Gates praised Eliza, declaring, “Her monument will be upreared in woman’s heart, and children will look back to her as she who, by the grace of God first gave them their dear Primaries. We love thee—E. R. Snow! The magic name—I hear it whispered by the wind, and children’s voices catch the sound and sing it high and free. The hearts of thousands stir and murmur out a prayer. Old hands are held to Heaven to call down years upon her life, and little babies coo the song of love they cannot speak. All join our anthem as we pray—God bless thee, E. R. Snow.”<sup>89</sup>

In honor of Louie B. Felt, Ruth May Fox wrote:

“Suffer the children to come unto me.”

Through the years of my life I have striv’n  
To teach them the words Thou gavest, dear Lord,  
“For of such is the kingdom of heav’n.”

She added, “Although she has no children of her own, thousands, yes, tens of thousands, love to look upon her beautiful face and call her ‘Mother’ because she has loved them and she has reared them in the work of the Lord.”<sup>90</sup> For her Primary officers and children, Louie had “lived, worked, wept, and prayed for nearly half a century. She has grown old and young again doing for others.”<sup>91</sup>

Aurelia, Eliza, and Louie were strong and capable women, yet there is no evidence of jealousy or vying for power or position. Each woman played her own unique and integral role in the organization of the Primary Association. Each had spiritual impressions, gifts, and talents that helped develop and further the organization. Eliza freely credited Aurelia with the initial idea of a children’s organization. Aurelia leaned on Eliza for guidance in making sure she did not overstep her bounds. Eliza asked Aurelia’s opinion before selecting the first general Primary president, and Aurelia was delighted that



## *Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

Louie was chosen. Louie willingly sought advice and counsel from Eliza, Aurelia, and others on how to fulfill her responsibilities as the General president and felt a keen loss of “good support and council” when Eliza passed away.<sup>92</sup> Each woman wore out her mortal life in service to the Primary children and to others. They organized, encouraged, exhorted, and sought for gifts of the Spirit to bless the lives of the future leaders of the Church, and their legacy lives on today. The president of the Huntsville Relief Society wrote to the *Woman’s Exponent*, summarizing what many felt: “We are very thankful to have a Primary Association; we can already see the benefit of that spiritual education which all need to make good fathers and mothers. Truly it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Primary organization.”<sup>93</sup>

## NOTES

For a more complete history of the Primary Association, see Carol Cornwell Madsen and Susan Staker Oman, *Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Primary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979); and Conrad A. Harward, “A History of the Growth and Development of the Primary Association of the LDS Church from 1878 to 1928” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1976).

1. Eliza Roxcy Snow often was referred to as “Aunt Eliza” or “Sister Eliza” or “Miss Eliza R. Snow” until May 1880. At this time she took Joseph Smith’s name and was called Eliza R. Snow Smith. See Jill Mulvay Derr, *Mrs. Smith Goes to Washington: Eliza R. Snow Smith’s Visit to Southern Utah* (St. George, UT: Dixie State College, 2004), 4.
2. Although everyone called her Louie, her full name is Sarah Louise Bouton Felt.
3. See “Lesson Department: Aurelia Rogers,” *Children’s Friend*, September 1919, 287.
4. See Emmeline B. Wells, “Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Conference,” *Woman’s Exponent*, July 1, 1880, 21–22.
5. Aurelia Spencer Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others, and History of Primary Work* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons, 1898), 165.
6. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 233.
7. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 205–6.



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

8. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 207.
9. See Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 207.
10. See *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1995), 36–37.
11. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 208.
12. *Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, 36–37.
13. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 208.
14. See Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 208–9. Eliza remembers asking “Mrs. R. if she was willing to take the responsibility and labor on herself of presiding over the children of that settlement, provided the Bishop of the Ward sanctioned the movement.” Before this could be done, however, the train arrived and Bishop Hess could not be consulted. Eliza omits presenting the idea to members of the Quorum of Twelve. Instead, she states, “Directly after arriving home, I wrote the Bishop, and by return Mail received from him a very satisfactory response, in which he, (Bishop Hess) not only gave his permission but hearty approval accompanied with his blessing. I then informed Mrs. Rogers that she might consider herself authorized to proceed, and organize in Farmington, which she did.” *Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, 37. Another account records that it was at dinner following a July 1878 Relief Society conference in Farmington that Aurelia “talked to us about an Association for little boys. We all spoke to Bishop Hess and he approved & on the way home on the train we decided to go to [President John] Taylor and take the matter before him.” Emmeline B. Wells, *Diaries*, July 10, 1878. See also Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 118.
15. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 209.
16. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 209.
17. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 209, 210–12.
18. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 212.
19. Farmington Ward, Davis Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, August 11, 1878, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; emphasis in original.



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

20. Farmington Ward, Primary Association minutes and records, August 11, 1878; emphasis in original.
21. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 214.
22. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 215.
23. Provo Fourth Ward, Utah Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, September 1878, Church History Library.
24. See Homespun, "Talk," *Woman's Exponent*, December 15, 1880, 106; and M.J.C., "Education and Occupation," *Woman's Exponent*, December 15, 1880, 106.
25. Jill Mulvay Derr, "Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Mormon Primaries," in *The Mormon People: Their Character and Traditions*, ed. Thomas G. Alexander (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1980), 80.
26. "The Children," *Woman's Exponent*, November 15, 1879, 92.
27. "Education of the Young," *Woman's Exponent*, May 1, 1880, 180.
28. Eliza also warned, "The 'civilization' of the world, which is a spirit of corruption creeping in among us, and it will require all the protection that can be imparted by filling their minds with good, so there will be no place for evil—not only should the children understand the principles of the Gospel, but they must have its spirit in their hearts." "R.S., Y.L.M.I.A., Primary Associations," *Woman's Exponent*, October 1, 1880, 110.
29. "R.S., Y.L.M.I.A., Primary Associations," *Woman's Exponent*, December 1, 1880, 102.
30. "Home Affairs," *Woman's Exponent*, April 1, 1880, 164.
31. "Primary Associations' Quarterly Conference at Ogden," *Woman's Exponent*, May 1, 1880, 8:23.
32. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 230.
33. See "Lesson Department: Eliza R. Snow," *Children's Friend*, April 1919, 72.
34. Eliza, however, maintained that the women "had no right [to organize a] Relief Society; but they could assist the priesthood in doing so. If we were living up to our duties we were helpmeets to the priesthood." Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928, Church History Library. Later Eliza "explained that she had been given a mission to *assist* the priesthood in organizing the Relief Societies; hence, some had conceived the idea that she organized." "R.S., Y.L.M.I.A. and Primary



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

- Reports,” *Woman’s Exponent*, November 15, 1880, 94; emphasis in original. For further comment on the unique role Eliza played at this time, see Derr, *Mrs. Smith Goes to Washington*, 11.
35. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.
  36. For an interesting example of resigning, see Derr, *Sisters and Little Saints*, 80.
  37. Emmeline B. Wells, “Pen Sketch of an Illustrious Woman,” *Woman’s Exponent*, October 15, 1880, 73.
  38. Wells, “Pen Sketch of an Illustrious Woman,” 73.
  39. See Provo Fourth Ward, Primary Association minutes and records, September 1878; and Spanish Fork Ward, Utah Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, October 17, 1878, Church History Library; and Pleasant Grove Branch, Utah Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, October 19, 1878, Church History Library.
  40. See Morgan Utah Stake Primary Association minutes and records, manuscript, October 28, 1879, Church History Library; see also Harriet Welch, “Relief Society Reports,” *Woman’s Exponent*, June 1, 1880, 6.
  41. Although Eliza’s report only includes six settlements, the trip included thirty-two settlements “organizing at least thirty-five [Primaries] during their trip south, and perhaps as many as thirty-eight.” Derr, *Mrs. Smith Goes to Washington*, 14.
  42. Parowan Utah Stake Primary Association minutes and records, March 27, 1881, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
  43. *Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, 37.
  44. Eliza R. Snow Smith, “Trip to Kanab,” *Woman’s Exponent*, March 15, 1881, 157; see also “R.S., Y.L.M.I.A.,” *Woman’s Exponent*, June 1, 1881, 1. Although Southern Utah often enjoys a relatively mild winter, at an elevation of 3,200 feet, Hurricane, Utah, can also have snow. Susa Gates Young recorded that they were not prepared for cold weather. See Susa Gates Young to Lucy Bigelow Young, December 6, 1880, Susa Young Gates Collection, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, in Derr, *Mrs. Smith Goes to Washington*, 15.
  45. Provo Fourth Ward Minutes, 1881.
  46. Logan Utah Cache Stake Primary Association minutes and records, September 2, 1882, Church History Library.



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

47. See also Pleasant Grove Ward Minutes, Church History Library; Nephi Ward Minutes, Church History Library; Pinto Ward Records, 1880–1889, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University; and Scipio Ward, Millard Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, November 9, 1889, Church History Library.
48. See Provo Fourth Ward, Primary Association minutes and records, November 4, 1881.
49. Spanish Fork Ward, Primary Association minutes and records, November 1881, Church History Library.
50. See Provo Fourth Ward, Primary Association minutes and records, November 4, 1881.
51. Spanish Fork, Utah Stake, Primary Association minutes and records, November 1881, Church History Library.
52. Spanish Fork, Primary Association minutes and records, November 1881.
53. Provo Fourth Ward, Primary Association minutes and records; emphasis in original.
54. Louisa Morris White, “Recalling the Past,” manuscript, Church History Library.
55. See Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 215–16.
56. See Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 220–21.
57. “Relief Society Reports,” *Woman’s Exponent*, July 1, 1880, 22.
58. “R.S., Y.L.M.I.A.,” *Woman’s Exponent*, January 15, 1881, 127.
59. Eliza R. Snow, *The Children’s Primary Hymn Book* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1880).
60. Eliza wrote some of these songs when the Sunday School’s *Juvenile Instructor* began publication in 1866.
61. Eliza R. Snow Smith, *Tune Book for the Primary Associations of the Children of Zion* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1880).
62. “Lesson Department: Eliza R. Snow,” *Children’s Friend*, April 1919, 73.
63. Eliza R. Snow Smith, in *Bible Questions and Answers for Children* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1881), 119.



## A FIRM FOUNDATION

64. Eliza R. Snow Smith, "Explanatory Note," in *Bible Questions and Answers for Children*, 120. At this time in Church history there was little emphasis on the "facts" of the Book of Mormon although the story of the Restoration was often taught.
65. Eliza wrote some of the poems when the Sunday School's *Juvenile Instructor* began publication in 1866.
66. Eliza R. Snow, *Recitations for the Primary Associations in Poetry, Dialogues and Prose* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1882), 1; emphasis in original. (The title page of book one has a publication date of 1891, an apparent typographical error.)
67. Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 222–23.
68. L. B. Felt's History, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. Part of the grand blessing was given by the gift of tongues.
69. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928; see also Susan Staker Oman, "Nurturing LDS Primaries: Felt and May Anderson, 1880–1940," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 49, no. 3 (1981): 265.
70. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928; see also "Lesson Department: Louie B. Felt," *Children's Friend*, December 1919, 413.
71. White, "Recalling the Past."
72. See "Lesson Department: Louie B. Felt," 409.
73. See Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.
74. "Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Conference," *Woman's Exponent*, July 1, 1880, 21. Lillie Tuckett Freeze recorded that "Joseph F. Smith blessed Louie." Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.
75. "Salt Lake Stake Relief Society Conference," 21.
76. "Woman's Exponent," *Woman's Exponent*, June 15, 1872, 16; see also Jill Mulvey Derr, "Strength in Our Union," in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 172.
77. See Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.
78. See Derr, *Sisters and Little Saints*, 30.
79. See "R.S., Y.L.M.I.A.," 7; see also Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928, and White, "Recalling the Past."
80. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.



*Primary Association Pioneers: An Early History*

81. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928.
82. L. B., “A Pleasant Visit to Spanish Fork,” *Woman’s Exponent*, November 15, 1880, 91.
83. Hannah Cornaby, “Meeting at Spanish Fork,” *Woman’s Exponent*, November 15, 1880, 95.
84. See Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928; see also *Children’s Friend*, December 1919, 414; Janet Peterson and LaRene Gaunt, *The Children’s Friends: Primary Presidents and Their Lives of Service* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), 13.
85. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928; emphasis in original.
86. Aurelia records one such “crowning evidence of love” in Rogers, *Life Sketches*, 322–24.
87. Adelaide U. Hardy, “Librarians’ Department,” *Children’s Friend*, September 1919, 358–59.
88. “Lesson Department: Eliza R. Snow,” 73.
89. Susa Young Gates, “Address to Eliza R. Snow Smith,” *Woman’s Exponent*, February 15, 1881, 141.
90. “Lesson Department: Louie B. Felt,” 404.
91. “Lesson Department: Louie B. Felt,” 415.
92. Papers of Lillie Tuckett Freeze, 1886–1928; see also Oman, “Nurturing LDS Primaries,” 266.
93. “R.S., Y.L.M.I.A.,” 127.