

NAUVOO AND MONTROSE -- During the raids by the mob, Father Tanner had lost heavily, as quite a number of his stock were stolen or shot. As soon as they had been released by the mob, he and his sons and their families had begun to gather up what they had left and leave the state in obedience to the governor's order for all Mormons to leave Missouri by spring, and Father Tanner had started with his family and his sons' families for Illinois in late fall of 1838. Myron reports that "on account of poor equipment and inclemency of the weather, it took us until March, 1839 to reach Illinois; and when we camped on the Mississippi bottom, I was barefooted, and during the journey I suffered much through lack of food and clothing." Nathan describes the confused conditions as his brother John Joshua hurried to get his wife to a place of safety in Illinois, for she was expecting their second baby any day.

Says Nathan, "The people were very much crowded for room in the wagons. John J. brought his family and old Father Baker, and his (John J.'s) wife and my wife and child, and all their goods in one wagon, and John Joshua's wife was liable to be sick (go into labor) on the road." The baby, William Smith Tanner (who went by the name "Smith"), was born safely in New Liberty, Illinois, on March 28, 1839, only a few days after their arrival.

All of the Tanners by about the first of April had been able to find their way across the Mississippi, and they arrived in New Liberty, Illinois, where like other Saints they were helped by sympathetic citizens of that state. The Tanners decided to stay for one year in New Liberty, where they rented a farm and raised a good crop, while many of the Saints spent that spring and summer camping along the river and in the swamplands which were later to become Nauvoo. While the Tanners were in New Liberty, three more grandchildren were born that winter and spring; Nathan Tanner's daughter Helen Elcy in Dec. 1839; Maria Tanner Lyman's son Francis Marion Lyman (who later became an apostle) in Jan. 1840, and Sidney Tanner's daughter Elsie Elizabeth Tanner in March 1840. In the spring of 1840 when their contract expired on the farm they had rented, the Tanners moved on upriver to Montrose, Iowa, across the river from Nauvoo, and started a large farm about four miles out from the town. Here they enjoyed six years of comparative peace, and here John Tanner's last two children, Sariah and Francis, were born as well as nine more grandchildren. The Tanners' continuing generosity and readiness to help their neighbors is often mentioned. One example was recorded in the diary of William Clayton, Sept. 11, 1841; when all of his family were very sick with the ague, he wrote, "Brother Tanner brought us some beef..." There are many other such incidents where the Tanners administered timely help, some of which are recorded, but most known only to God. At the April conference in 1844, John Tanner was called on another mission to the Eastern States, along with about 250 others including his sons Nathan (29), Martin Henry (22), and son-in-law Amasa M. Lyman (30) (who had been ordained an apostle in 1842 and had also been called to enter plural marriage in 1843. He married another wife, Dionitia Walker, in 1843, and six more after the death of the prophet, including three of the daughters of presiding bishop Edward Partridge, and others who had been previously sealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in eternal marriage). On their mission in 1844, in addition to preaching the gospel, the missionaries were to campaign for the Prophet Joseph Smith's bid for the presidency of the United States. Father John Tanner and his son Martin Henry were both assigned to New York, while Amasa Lyman and Nathan Tanner were among those assigned to Indiana. (Also Daniel Shearer and his son Norman served as missionary companions, to the state of Massachusetts). Before starting on his mission, Father Tanner went to Nauvoo where he saw the Prophet Joseph. Meeting him on the street, Elder Tanner gave back to the Prophet his note of hand for the \$2,000 loaned him in Kirtland in January 1835 for the purpose of redeeming the temple land. The Prophet asked him what he wanted done with the note. Elder Tanner replied, "Brother Joseph, you are welcome to it." The Prophet then laid his right hand heavily upon Elder Tanner's shoulder, saying, "God bless you, Father Tanner; you and your children shall never beg for bread." (The story of this blessing has been handed down and remembered by all of the Tanner posterity, and is often quoted as being the reason for the financial prosperity and success of many of them). Father Tanner's companion on his mission was Elder Pettegrew. His companion reported to the "Times and Seasons" newspaper that while they were on board a boat for Troy, New York, they held a meeting since "there were many passengers on board who desired to hear preaching," and among those who were converted by their preaching was a Methodist minister.

Nathan Tanner says that "I had charge of the Seventies on (the Iowa) side of the river, but often met with the Saints in Nauvoo. I was in hearing of their drums (of the Nauvoo Legion), and I have run four miles and crossed the river to be in the ranks with my brethren ... I was favored by opportunities in the Temple to my great joy and satisfaction." He was chosen by the Prophet Joseph as one of the explorers to accompany him to the Rocky Mountains. "When or just before Joseph Smith was taken to Carthage, he was expected to cross the river and go west." With his brother John J., Amasa M. Lyman, and (others), Nathan was among those awaiting the Prophet on the night of June 22, 1844, when they were to cross the Mississippi River preparatory to proceeding westward. Nathan wrote, "Amasa M. Lyman, myself and others saddled horses and stayed on the bank of the Mississippi River waiting for him to cross, to see him on his way towards the mountains. But by the persuasion of cowardly brethren he went and gave himself up and went as a sheep to the slaughter, and died an untimely death."

After he returned from his mission to New York, John Tanner further aided financially in the building of the Nauvoo temple, and received his second anointing (full endowment) there. He is listed as a high priest on the Nauvoo temple endowment register, where he and wife "Eliza Boswick Tanner" were endowed 24 Dec 1845, and sealed 18 Jan 1846. Amasa and Maria (Tanner) Lyman had been among the 28 persons, including many Church leaders, who received their endowments on Dec. 10, 1845; the first day endowments were administered in the Nauvoo Temple. Interestingly, "John (Joshua) and Nancy Ferguson Tanner" and "Rebecca Smith Tanner, wife of John (Joshua) Tanner," also Sidney and Louisa Conlee Tanner, and Nathan and Rachel Smith Tanner, were all on the list of those endowed in the Nauvoo Temple on 30 Dec 1845. This indicates that John Joshua Tanner had already entered into plural marriage during the Nauvoo period; he was married to Nancy Ferguson by 1845. She was certainly a different individual than the Nancy Augusta Ferguson (1843-1925), whom John Joshua married on 13 Mar 1857 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, when she was around 15 years old and he was 46 (Nancy Augusta Ferguson and John Joshua Tanner had 10 children, born from 1860-1887, and she died in 1925 at age 81). The Nancy Ferguson who was endowed with John Joshua in the Nauvoo Temple in 1845 must have been much closer to his own age, but nothing is known about her. Perhaps she was an aunt of the Nancy Augusta Ferguson whom he later married. The family histories don't mention anything about the first Nancy. At any rate, it appears that John Joshua Tanner was one of the few who were invited or commanded to enter into plural marriage during the Nauvoo period; most who did so were apostles and other leaders. When the Saints began leaving Nauvoo in February 1846, John Tanner and his sons aided in ferrying people and livestock across the river, and shared hay, vegetables and other produce from their farm with those in need who were camping on the Iowa side of the river. They brought wagon loads of produce to the camp at Sugar Creek. In the spring of 1846, John sold his farm at a nominal price, as most of the saints were forced to do, preparing to go west with the Church to the Rocky Mountains. Nathan hadn't planned to go that season, since he hadn't sold his farm yet, and he had taken a contract to "break prairie" that summer to raise some money. But, he said, "While we were hauling food and supplies to furnish the suffering camp on Sugar Creek, Brother Heber C. Kimball asked me where my family was, supposing they were there. I said no, I have not sold and did not think of going this season ... Heber said, if you can be ready in 2 weeks you can go with us. He slapped his hand on my shoulder and said 'don't let the grass grow under your feet.'" Nathan quickly sold his farm, re-let his contract for breaking prairie, got his wagons and supplies, and was ready in time.

Eliza Partridge Lyman wrote that on Feb. 9th, 1846, she and her husband Amasa M. Lyman, together with her mother and sisters Caroline and Lydia and brother Edward, (also Dionitia W. Lyman, another of her husband's wives), Daniel P. Clark and wife Sarah, and Henry Rollins, crossed the Mississippi River on a flatboat with their horses and wagons. "The ice was coming down the river in large pieces and threatened to sink our boat, and hindered us about an hour, but at this time, as at many others, we were preserved by the power of God." They "went to Brother Sidney Tanner's

where part of us stayed all night and the rest stayed at Nathan Tanner's. Dionitia, Caroline and I slept in one bed, and as I was very tired, I did not sleep much." The next day, Feb. 10, she wrote that "Brother Lyman is going back over the river to visit his wife Maria (who was expecting a baby soon). I cut and made a dress for Sister Tanner." evening: "Brother Lyman has just returned, bringing his Maria with him. I was heartily glad to see her. I went (by invitation) with them to see her father (Father Tanner). Father Huntington (William Huntington, who had married Eliza's mother Lydia after the death of Bishop Edward Partridge in Nauvoo) and brother Edward also came there and stayed all night. Mother Tanner prepared an excellent supper for the company." Feb. 11: "Brother Lyman went back to Nauvoo to see how the children were getting along, as his wife left them while she visited us. The rest of us remained at Father Tanner's during the day, and Brother Lyman came back in the evening, reporting all well." Feb. 12: "Brother Lyman took his wife to the river, and saw her land safely on the other side, and then returned to us feeling very well. Mother Tanner gave us the privilege of making some mince pies and assisted us to do so." Feb. 13: "Brother Lyman went to the camp (on Sugar Creek) and took me with him as far as Sidney Tanner's where I stayed all day till he came back and we went to Father Tanner's." Feb. 15: I went to the river with Brother Lyman to see my sister Emily (one of Brigham Young's plural wives). Found her in a tent surrounded with mud. Came home in the afternoon. Wrote to Sister Maria Lyman in the evening." Feb 16: "Took breakfast with Aunt Polly Cook. Twisted some thread for Mother. Came back and finished a dress for Mother Tanner." Also on this day, according to another source, "William Huntington went into the Sugar Creek camp with Amasa Lyman. Brother Huntington was counseled that it was now time to move his family from Father Tanner's home, where they had been staying, and come to Sugar Creek." Eliza had written "the weather was very cold, and we were not in a hurry to camp out till we were obliged to." Feb. 17: "Mother Tanner gave brother (Edward Partridge Jr.) twelve yards of factory (cloth) with which to line his wagon cover, which I made in the morning. About two o'clock we started for the camp where we arrived about sundown, prepared our tents, took some refreshments and retired for the night, but did not sleep much on account of the horses, we not being accustomed to their noise. When we left Father Tanner's he gave us a few pounds of butter and some pork and some mince pies, and to Father Huntington a fine calf which he killed for veal." Feb. 18: "Father Tanner and family came to camp and made a short visit. Albert Tanner brought a load of hay and some potatoes from his father's." Feb. 20: "The weather is somewhat more pleasant than it was yesterday, but is very cold. Our family consists of seven persons, namely, Amasa Lyman and his wife Dionitia, Daniel P. Clark and wife, also Henry Rollins, Albert Tanner, and myself." Feb. 22: "Received another load of hay from Father Tanner's." Feb. 23: Received word from Nauvoo that Sister Maria (Tanner) Lyman was very sick (i.e: in labor). I started about two o'clock with Brother Lyman to go and see her. When we had gone about three miles our buggy broke down, and left us in the mud. Fortunately a wagon came along and took us to Montrose. Found the ice running in the river so that it was impossible to cross that night, except in a skiff, which Brother Lyman succeeded in doing with great difficulty, leaving me on this side with Sister Daniels to stay all night." Feb. 24: "Brother Lyman came back this morning, said he found his wife more comfortable than he expected; had a fine son which they call Amasa ... I stayed at Sister Daniels' till nearly night, when Albert Tanner came and took me back to camp." Feb. 26: "Brother Lyman went over to Father Tanner's and stayed all night." Feb. 27: "As we are yet in camp, I have concluded to go to Nauvoo and visit Sister Maria Lyman. Went with Henry Rollins and Dionitia Lyman; we crossed the river on the ice (by then the river had frozen solid) and found Sister Lyman quite well, but her son Marion sick with the measles. Stayed with them all night." Feb. 28: "Stayed with Sister Lyman all day ... About three o'clock, Henry Rollins came and said the camp had orders to move tomorrow. Consequently, Brother Lyman could not come over, but had sent him to bring us back, which was a great disappointment to Sister Lyman. I then bade my friends good-bye and went back to camp, where we arrived about seven o'clock in the evening ... We found the brass band assembled around our fire, making some very good music." Mar. 2: "Left camp at 15 minutes to ten ... (with)

Brother R. Dana and family, Wm. Huntington, Sr. and family, A. Lyman and family, D.P. Clark and wife, H. Rollins, Albert M. Tanner, H.B. Jacobs, S. Jacobs and J. Butler. Traveled on the Farmington road, camped at five o'clock. Our ox team arrived at sundown."

Their journey to the west had begun.