

# Lucius Nelson Scoville

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This came as a great shock to all the Saints and caused much sorrow. The Prophet's life had been spared so many times it was felt that it would be during this time of mob action.

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The charter of the City of Nauvoo had proved a great protection to the Saints and guaranteed safety against the plotting of the mobs. The first attempt of the conspirators to have it repealed had failed, but in January, 1845, on the second attempt it was repealed by the state legislature. This, the inhabitants of the City of Nauvoo knew would practically be a signal for mob activity.

This violence began in September of the same year and kept up until the exodus of the Saints from Nauvoo. The first of Saints crossed the Mississippi River; leaving for the West on February 4, 1846. Scoville was not able to leave at this time, his wife having died on the 27th of January of that year leaving four children; Loretta, Sarah, Eliza Rebecca and Henrietts. This, as was natural, made everyone in the home very sorrowful and it was hard for him to take care of the children, carry on his work in the Church and still try to make arrangements to leave Nauvoo for the West.

He later in the same year married Alice Hearst.

On May 6th, he received an appointment, by order of the Council of the Twelve in the Western Camp of Israel, of which following is a copy of his credentials;

"To the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints in England; Greetings; Brother Hadiock and Ward.

The bearer of this is our much esteemed brother, Elder Lucius N. Scoville, who is also of the High Priesthood. We have been directed by the president, and the Council of the Twelve in the Western Camp of Israel, to send him unto you as a true and faithful worker in dispensing the word of life to the people in your country. He is instructed to labor under your direction and presidency. The private seal of the Twelve having gone West we are unable to affix it to this letter. We beseech you to receive this, our brother, and render unto him every necessary facility that you may be able to, in order that he may be a blessing to you, to the cause and to himself. And that he may answer the expectations of his brethren who send him unto you. In the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Orson Hyde,  
President of the Council of Nauvoo.  
May 6, 1846  
Wilford Woodruff, Clerk.

I do hereby certify, that the fore going letter is true and faithful.  
Joseph Young, president over Seventies."

This was his second call to fill a mission. The first having been in the Southern States, and this appointment to be filled in England. He was at this time making plans to follow with his family and many others who had already left for the West. On May 8th, he began sending his ox teams and cattle across the river. Arthur Meeks, who had for some time been living with the Scoville family, sent his stock over at the same time as he planned to make the trip West with them. On May 14th the family crossed the river, but an accident was to delay their trip even longer. One of the oxen while crossing got a chain hook in its foot, which made it necessary to remain on the other bank of the river and care for the injured hoof. While waiting, he made numerous trips to Nauvoo attending to many things he had been unable to before.

May 20th saw the party again on their way and three days later they arrived at the Des Moines River, following it to the town of Bonaparte where the ferry crossing was located. But at this point, lack of food for the cattle, and the bad rainy weather forced them back on the prairie where they planned to camp for the night and return next day to cross the river. The next morning a wagon which was going to Nauvoo stopped at the camp. After talking the matter

over with his family he decided to accompany the wagon back to Nauvoo, and from there to continue his way East and on to England where he was to labor in the mission fields.

Making arrangements for the care of his family, and after writing to Brigham Young asking him to watch for them, or to appoint someone to do so, he left. Arrived back in Nauvoo two days later, where he remained for ten days during which time the mobs were very active.

With his mother, who had been visiting them from Ohio, he left on June 10th by boat for St. Louis, where they arrived two days later. He immediately booked passage on the "Felix Grundy" to continue east by the canal and river route.

Soon after sailing from St. Louis he heard of five or six on board who claimed to have been members of the mobs in Missouri. Two of these were doing all the talking and much boasting, claiming that they had killed twenty Mormons. One in particular, an old man, who with his family were ordered out of their home, being given twenty minutes before the house was burned, the barn and stacks of grain had already been set on fire. With his family the "old man" started to run. One of the men who was doing this talking, George Sharret, by name, declared that the man had annoyed him, and so taking careful aim, shot the man in the back. This could readily be believed as a great many other cold-blooded murders of this type had been committed. The following extract were Scoville's own words, taken from his diary.

"And one of these Missourians, by the name of Hyra Myers, said in a boasting manner, that he had from that time forward concluded that he would kill every Mormon he had a chance to, and especially on the steam boats, he swore that he would throw them overboard, saying that he thought it perfectly right to do so. I said to myself, "Good God, I can I endure of this" for I had heard them boast of many things which I knew were true, and my blood boiled in me (it was not known who I was) and I decreed in my heart that I would not endure this, for I thought that I would rather die on the spot than to think of enduring these anathemas for four or five days, it taking that time to reach Pittsburg, and I arose in the strength of Israel's God and told them that I was a Mormon and one of the old school, for I have heard your boasting and torture of the Saints, now, says I, if you wish to carry out these measures which you

have threatened to do, you have a candidate, for I am the boy that is ready for you, for you are all of you, a band of murderers, and I care no more for you than I do for the crackling of thorns under the pot. Therefore, I said to them, repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

Then at this instant, Hyra Myers made a spring in the fury of a demon, swearing that he would have my hearts blood, and endeavored to obtain a pistol to shoot me with, but the passengers became alarmed and seized him, holding him by main strength, I ranked them all to-gether, telling them that it was just as bad to be accessory after the act as before.

The Captain, on learning the particulars, placed a guard to protect me from those who had threatened to take my life and seemed determined to do so, but God over-ruled it and they said no more about Mormons.

The passengers from the deck above sought my company and I got along quite well."

He arrived in New York City, July 4th almost a month from the time he had left Nauvoo. It took two weeks in which to find a boat that he could afford to travel on, as he was traveling without "purse or script" but on the 16th of July he sailed on the packet ship "Fidelia". The trip was rather uneventful until the 29th, when fire broke out in the galley of the ship, and it looked for a while as though all on board would perish. The fire was making much headway and to make matters worse the greater part of the cargo was cotton with two hundred barrels of tar piled upon the deck, and these on both sides of the galley. After putting up a desperate fight the crew managed to put the fire out before it reached the tar barrels. After the excitement had died down it was found that the only damage done had been to the galley.

He writes frequently in his diary of the fights on board the ship, and the brutality of the officers towards the passengers and crew alike. The coast of Ireland was sighted at 8 A.M., Saturday, August 8th the first land he had seen since leaving New York. That same day he wrote in his diary as follows---

'We have had but two fights on board today and they were Irish

women, they fought cruel, but this is a common thing for them, it happened a great many times during the voyage."

The following morning, August 9th, 1846, they sighted the coast of Wales. At noon the following day, after laying outside the harbor at Liverpool all night, a tug boat towed them into the harbor and the long tedious sea trip was at an end, after having been on the water almost a month.

After spending most of the day at the custom house, he found lodging for the night and there marveled at the journey he had just completed, for when he left his family on the prairie, some miles west of Nauvoo, he had not a cent of money but had been fortunate in finding ways and means in which to make his trip. And now, having traveled 5,747 miles, he again found himself with no funds, in a strange land and a mission to be performed, which must be done without purse or script.

During the next six weeks he spent his time working in this branch office of the Church, establishing himself in this new country, and at the same time doing a missionary's work.

On Thursday, September 24th he heard at the Church office in London that Brother Henry B. Jacobs and Oliver B. Huntington had just arrived at Liverpool from America. He was delegated to meet them at Waterloo Station in order to help them find lodging, also to see that they were made welcome and comfortable. Jacobs had seen Scoville's family about one hundred and twenty-five miles west of Nauvoo, and that they were in good spirits and enjoying the best of health, also that the wagon train was making fair progress. Each day getting nearer to the place where the Prophet Joseph Smith had predicted they would find peace and happiness.

There are always new and interesting things to be seen in a foreign land, things that if seen in one's own country are soon forgotten, at least the memory of these events become dim after a few years. He writes in his diary of one event with which he was particularly impressed. It was a celebration held on September 28th, 1846, at the Zoological Gardens in honor of Queen Victoria.

These gardens covering twenty-five or thirty acres, were so beautiful that they could almost be thought a thing of imagination,

flowers and shrubs from all parts of the world, hot houses banked with ferns and flowers of the tropics. The walks and buildings were objects of splendor. Truly a sight never to be forgotten.

Word was received October 3rd. that a packet ship from America had just docked. Brothers Orson Hyde and John Taylor, we expected in England, but it was not known just when they were to arrive. Scoville and Cain went to the docks and found that they had arrived on this ship. There was much rejoicing at the news that two brothers had just come from America, bringing good tidings from the Camp of Israel, and telling of the situation of the Church in the wilderness, also the necessity of going there to carry out the measures of the murdered Prophet.

A meeting was called on October 4th, where Orson Hyde as one of the Twelve, spoke. Scoville, writing in his diary of this meeting, speaks of Hyde as talking with the "eloquence of a Cicero". Affairs of the Church and the conditions the missionaries were working under in England at that time were discussed. The meetings was attended by most of the Brothers who were in England, as well as many people who came to hear the sermons.

He remained there working in the fields, until April of the year 1847, when word was received from Brigham Young that he and a number of others were needed at home, there was much work to be done, and it was requested that these men be released from their work in the mission field. The Saints were even planning a new move, one that would take them even farther west, and which would eventually bring them to the land where the Prophet had predicted that they would settle. The request for the release of these men was received in the form of a letter to Orson Spencer, President of the English Mission.

Scoville's family, after his departure for England, had traveled with the wagon train to Far West, but remained there for only a short time. Their next move was to the town of Garden Grove. It was here that he joined his family upon his return from England. They remained there until February 10, 1848, when he was appointed agent of emigration at New Orleans.

He returned to Winter Quarters to make final arrangements, and on February 10th, accompanied by his wife and Wm. Clayton, set out

over the overland route for St. Louis. Clayton was going only as far as St. Louis where he was to edit and publish the Latter-Day Saints emigrant guide.

They stopped one night with Brother Richard Thorn who made them very welcome. The Scoville family, after the settlement in Utah a few years later, lived in the same town as the Thorn family and knew them well.

Much bad weather was encountered as it was the rainy season of the year. Some days they traveled in regular cloud bursts, the rain coming down in sheets for hours at a time. At this particular part of the journey, he writes in his diary of the ill health of the people in the countries through which they were traveling. The following is an extract from his journals of February 15, 1848;

"During the evening, a man came in and gave me a description of that section of the country. He said that when they first settled there about fifteen years before that it was a very healthy country, and everything seemed promising, but now it was quite the reverse. Everything seemed to be flourishing until the Mormons were driven out of the State, and since that time real estate property had decreased in value by more than half. He remarked that now instead of seeing health blooming on every countenance there were marks of pain, sorrow and death.

He said that within six miles of the place there were twenty-six widows whose husbands had died since the Mormons were driven out, and he said further that he had made up his mind to sell his farm for whatever he could get for it and leave the State, "for", said he, "whenever any of us are taken sick, we send for a physician and he cannot tell us what the trouble is, and it is mere chance if we get well. A large number of the inhabitants have the same feelings as myself about leaving the State. They would take almost anything for their property, if they could get away."

On February 26th they met Philo Dibble and Daniel Davis who had left St. Louis a short time previously and were at the time bound for Winter Quarters. Scoville wrote a letter to his children who were at home being taken care of by an older sister. These men promised to deliver the letter when they arrived at Winter Quarters.

On Tuesday, February 29th, they traveled the sixteen remaining miles to St. Louis, arriving there safely after having covered the four-hundred and twenty-eight miles from Winter Quarters in just twenty days. Most of the distance had been through country where the mobs were in the habit of rising at almost the mention of Mormon's; country in which the Saints had so lately been driven from their homes and in many other ways were persecuted.

Four days were spent in St. Louis, during which time he sold his wagon and mule which would be no further use until their return from New Orleans. He also arranged many matters which President Nathaniel H. Felt, who had been appointed to cooperate with him in emigration.

On Sunday, March 5, 1848, Scoville with his wife, and Mary McKinsied and Wm. Jones went on board the steam boat "15t. Louis" bound for New Orleans. The boat for some reason was detained and did not leave until the following day. He writes of the river's lowness which caused the running aground six or seven times, of six or seven river boats. The beauty of the peach and cherry trees along the river bank were in full bloom, the green, fresh looking fields, the numerous sugar cane and cotton plantations, and as they sailed further south, the large orange groves with large numbers of slaves working in them. They continued their trip down river until March 14th when the boat stopped at Lafayette to unload horses, cattle and hogs. From this place he walked with Brother Jones to the city of New Orleans.

Upon his arrival March 14th, he immediately took charge of the emigration station. His duties consisted of meeting all ships arriving in that port from foreign countries. Taking care of all Mormon emigrants, seeing that they received their baggage and starting them on their way to Utah. For some he would have to find ways and means for them to reach their destination, as they would arrive in this country with no funds, having spent all that they had, in order to come here.

He remained there working until July 13, 1849, when he was released as emigration agent. He left New Orleans, bound for St. Louis, in charge of a company of Scotch and Welsh emigrants, numbering one hundred and thirty. During this trip up the river and epidemic of cholera broke out among the Saints. Elder Scoville was kept very busy administering to the sick and helping care for

them. Members of the company who were not stricken were kept busy day and night caring for the sick. However, by the time the boat arrived at St. Louis most all on board were well and able to start almost at once on the long overland route to Utah and the Salt Lake Valley, the land for which they had sacrificed so much and traveled half way around the world to reach.

Scoville did not leave until June 1850, when with his family he started for the west and Utah. One daughter, Loretta, was already in the West, she had come Out in 1847 with Brigham Young's second company of pioneers. After their arrival, the family remained in Salt Lake little more than a year, for in October, 1850, they moved south to Provo.

The first year of the family's arrival in Provo was spent in the usual manner of any family arriving in a new community. Scoville as usual making plans for his future, seeing about a home for his family, making himself known around the city and doing the things that nay new-comer does in a new location. His family, too, were making themselves at home. The children getting acquainted, and the Mother joining different Church Organizations.

During the first three months of his residence, three new adobe houses were built. The activities in the community were numerous and conditions as a whole were very good. Provo showed every prospect of being a prosperous town. Soon after his arrival Scoville asked that George Albert Smith be appointed to conduct the municipal affairs of Provo.

They had lived in Provo just a year when Lucious Scoville, who had always been interested in public affairs, and being very public spirited man who had the affairs of the community at heart, was asked to take over a public office. On October 3, 1852, at General Conference held in Salt Lake City, he was asked if he would accept a nomination, which he said he would. The vote carried and he was made Superintendent of Public Works.

At the Same conference he was chosen as a member of the Central Prayer Circle, which was quite an important organization and had as its members some of the most important leaders of Church and Civic Affairs. In addition to the appointment to office he was asked to take the position as Clerk of the Conference to be

held in Salt Lake City. This position was also accepted by him.

As Superintendent of Public Works he was in charge of a great deal of construction, for it was during this period of time that a large portion of the City of Provo was being built. The streets and general plan of the city were mapped out at that time, and it was from a great many plans made at that time that the present thriving, industrial and farming city of Provo developed.

The Indians during this time were still a menace to be reckoned with, and so on February 26, 1854, Lucius Scoville wrote a letter to the Deseret New in Salt Lake City, regarding the building of a wall around the city. Conditions for the settlers were so bad that this form of protection was necessary. President Brigham Young at this time called all of the settlers within a radius of the town to come in, bringing all they could with them. This would give everyone added protection until things quieted down so that it would be safe to once more carry on their work of farming and building without danger of an uprising at any time of day or night. This wall was to be built of mud and surrounded the whole town, after the wall was built and had dried it would be as solid as bricks, the mud was of the same ingredients as adobe.

[Life of Lucius Nelson Scoville cont...](#)

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