

IOWA PAST TO PRESENT TEACHERS GUIDE
Revised 3rd Edition

Chapter 11: Keeping the Faith on the Frontier

CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Following the completion of the readings and activities for this chapter, students will have acquired the following understandings:

- a. Many of Iowa's early religious groups were closely tied to cultural or nationality groups that settled in Iowa.
- b. Catholic and Protestant Christians were the dominant religious groups on the Iowa frontier.
- c. Latter Day Saints, often called Mormons, crossed southern and central Iowa on their way to the West. Some stayed to become the first white settlers in southwest Iowa.
- d. Activities of religious groups provided cohesiveness for Iowa's early communities.
- e. Iowa's religious groups have been active in many social causes.

VOCABULARY TO KNOW

American Missionary Society	Lutheran
Amish	Methodist
Catholic	Mormon
circuit riders	Mormon Trail
Congregationalist	Nauvoo, Illinois
denomination	Presbyterian
diocese	Quaker
Iowa Band	Reformed Church
Jewish	religion

PEOPLE TO IDENTIFY

Father Samuel Mazzuchelli

Joseph Smith

Mathias Loras

Rev. Asa Turner

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Most religious groups in Iowa are Protestant or Catholic. Plan a field trip highlighting a lesser-known religious group. Iowa's larger communities will often have a Jewish synagogue, a Greek Orthodox church, or a Mormon church. Contact the church to arrange a tour and invite a speaker.

2. Invite a African American gospel singer to perform and interpret several spirituals for the class. Most traditional spirituals originated in slave days and contained an immediate as well as a spiritual message.

Activity 11-1: JOURNAL OF ARCHER WALTERS

Skills. Interpreting primary source materials

Materials. Student copies of handout 11-1

Procedure

1. Introduced the lesson by reviewing the section in the textbook on the Mormons.
2. Read and discuss the introduction as a class.
3. Distribute copies of handout 11-1. Provide time for students to complete the questions.
4. Conclude the lesson by discussing the difficulties faced by the Mormons as they sought to establish a community on the frontier.

CROSSING IOWA WITH ARCHER WALTERS

Directions. The answers to the questions about Archer Walters's journey across Iowa are found in his journal or the introduction to it.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Where was Archer Walters's home? _____

2. What was Archer Walters's destination? _____

3. Who was accompanying Walters on his journey? _____

4. Why was Walters making this trip? _____

5. Who planned the Handcart Expedition? _____

TRAVEL CONDITIONS IN 1856

1. What type of vehicle was used by Walters and the other Mormon migrants? _____

2. What was the average number of miles traveled by Walters each day? (Add the miles shown in journal entries. Divide by number of days with mileage entries only.) _____

3. How many times did Walters report repairing handcarts? _____

4. How many times did Walters report illnesses? _____

5. How many died as listed in Walters's journal? _____

6. What references were there to the weather in Walters's entries? _____

Activity 11-2: COMMUNITY PROFILE

Skills. Creating a chart

Materials. Chart paper

Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by listing on the blackboard the various community Religious groups as the students identify them.

2. Have students help to plan a strategy to create a religious profile for the community. Specific items might include:

- a. Names of religious groups in the community
- b. Membership
- c. Activities
- d. Clergy
- e. Social services (rest homes, charities, hospitals, etc.)

Representatives from various groups might be consulted by class members in order to obtain specific information.

3. A chart for display in the classroom could be created by the students to summarize their findings.

Activity 11-3: HISTORY OF LOCAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Skills. Conducting a personal interview, using local resources

Materials. None

Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing the traditional role which religious groups played in the development of Iowa's early communities. Both the school and the church offered opportunities for community cohesiveness.

2. Have students suggest community resources that might be helpful in identifying the early religious groups in the community and the role they played in the past. Older citizens, the local library, and the historical society will all be helpful in uncovering this information. In addition, many churches will have written a church history as part of a centennial celebration.

3. After specific religious groups have been identified and students have been grouped for work, allow time for students to research and identify the major characteristics of their community groups. The relationship between ethnic groups and religious groups should be investigated. For instance, Danish settlers were almost always Lutheran, and many Danish Lutheran churches maintained Danish services into the 1940s. This concept should not be overemphasized, however. Church groups such as the Methodists were not as specifically ethnic because of their traditional emphasis on evangelism and outreach.

4. When students have completed their research, provide time for group reports.

PRIMARY MATERIAL: Excerpts from the Journal Of Archer Walters from Iowa City to the Missouri River (unabridged)

The Mormon migrations to Utah form some of the more colorful chapters of the history of the American frontier. In their search for a safe place to practice their religion, the followers of Joseph Smith moved from settlement to settlement in the Midwest. Finally, in 1846 and 1847, Brigham Young led the Mormons to their new home in the Salt Lake Valley.

Eight years later (1855), Brigham Young planned the migration of 1300 Mormon converts through Iowa. He suggested that they travel between New York City and Iowa City by rail. From Iowa City to Salt Lake City they could travel on foot, moving their families and their goods by pulling handcarts. Archer Walters, a 47-year-old carpenter from Sheffield, England, joined the Handcart Expedition at Iowa City.

June 11, 1856 -Journeyed 7 miles. Very dusty. All tried and smothered with dust and camped in the dust or where the dust blowed. Was captain over my tent of 18 in number but they were a family of Welsh and our spirits were not united. Had a tent but Bro. Ellsworth would not let me use it and had to leave my tent poles behind.

June 12 -Journeyed 12 miles. Went very fast with our hand carts. Harriet still very ill...

June 15 -Got up about 4 o'clock to make a coffin for my brother John Lee's son named William Lee, aged 12 years. Meetings Sunday as usual and at the same time had to make another coffin for Sister Prator's child. Was tired with repairing handcarts the last week. Went and buried them by moonlight at Bear Creek.

June 16 -Harriet very ill. Traveled 19 miles and after pitching tent mended carts.

June 17 -Traveled about 17 miles; pitched tent. Made a little coffin for Bro. Job Welling's son and mended a handcart wheel....

June 21 -Traveled about 13 miles. Camped at Indian Creek. Bro. Bowers died about 6 o'clock; from Birmingham Conference. Went to buy some wood to make the coffin but the kind farmer gave me the wood and nails. It had been a very hot day and I was never more tired, but God has said as my day my strength shall be.

June 22 -Got up at break of day and made the coffin for Bro. James Bowers by 9 o'clock and he was buried at 11 o'clock. Aged 44 years 5 months 2 days. His relatives cried very much after I lifted him in the coffin and waited to screw him down. 11 o'clock washed in the creek and felt very much refreshed. Meeting Sunday 2 o'clock until 7.

- June 24- Traveled about 18 miles. Very hot. Bro. Ellsworth being always with a family from Birmingham named Brown and always that tent going first and walking so fast and some fainted by the way. ...
- June 26 -Traveled about 1 mile. Very faint from lack of food. We are only allowed about 3/4 lb. of flour a head each day and about 3 oz. of sugar each week. About 1/2 of a lb. of bacon each a week; which makes those that have no money very weak. Made a child's coffin for Sister Sheen--Emma Sheen Aged 2 1/2 years.
- June 27 -Got up before sunrise. Cut a tombstone on wood and bury the child before starting from camp.
- June 28 Rose soon after 4 o'clock. Started with high wind. Short of water and I was never more tired. Rested a bit after we camped then came on a thunder storm, and rain, blowed our tent down. Split the canvas and wet our clothes and we had to lay on the wet clothes and ground. ...
- June 29- Rather stiff in joints when we rose. ...Busy all day. My wife and Sarah mending. Short of provisions. Children crying for their dinner .
- June 30 -Rose in good health, except Harriet, and started without handcarts with but little breakfast. ..but never traveled 17 miles more easily. ...Sleep very well after prayers in tent.
- July 1, 1856- Rose soon. It looked very cloudy and began to rain. Traveled about 15 miles. Walked very fast--nearly 4 miles an hour. Bro. Brown's family and some young sisters with Bro. Ellsworth always going first which causes many of the brothers to have hard feelings. ..my children cry with hunger and it grieves me and makes me cross. I can live upon green herbs or anything and do go nearly an day without any and am strengthened with a morsel. Repaired handcarts.
- July 3 -Ever to be remembered Bro. Card gave me 1/2 dollar for making his daughter's coffin. Start with my cart before the camp as others had done but was told not to and had to suffer for it. Went the wrong way; about 30 of the brothers and sisters, and went 10 1/2 miles the wrong way. We put our three handcarts together and made beds with an the clothes we had and laid down about 1/2 past 10 o'clock. 11 o'clock Brother Butler who had charge of the mule teams came with the mules and wagon to fetch us. Got to camp when they were getting up. Laid down about an hour and started with the camp.
- July 5 -A deer or elk served out to camp. Brother Parker brings into camp his little boy (age 6) that had been lost (3 days). Great joy right through the camp. The mother's joy I can not describe. Expect we are going to rest. Washing, etc., today. Jordan Creek. Made a pair of sashes for the old farmer. Indian meal; no flour. Slept well.

July 6 -Made 2 doors for. ..3 dollars and boarded with farmer. July 7 -Harriet better. Lydia poorly. Traveled about 20 miles.

July 8- Traveled a round about road about 20 miles. Crossed the river Missouri and camped at the city of Florence. Very tired; glad to rest. Slept well. Lydia better and Harriet. All in good spirits. Expect to stop some time. ...

FROM: The *Journal of Archer Waiters*. Explorations in Iowa History Project.
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