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Date: **01/01/2009**

These letters elaborate on how Eliza Avery Clark, daughter of Hyrum Don Carlos Clark, married into the Wilford Woodruff family. Note Wilford was a dear friend to Ezra T. Clark. Avery married Abraham Woodruff, Wilford's son and apostle, as Abraham's second wife. Avery only had one child through Abraham, after Abraham's death from smallpox. Abraham's first wife Helen also died from small pox, both in 1904.

12 Post-Manifesto Polygamy

October 31, 1899, after a very difficult labor. Owen noted later that day:

Fordie — 10 2 lbs — 5:25 pm Prest. Richards made a promise about 10 months ago regarding my son and therefore we regard him as a child of promise.

Busy with a new baby, Helen remained at home while her husband continued with his church business travels in Wyoming, Mexico, and Utah. Owen recorded an example of the extensive travel requirements of his apostleship in a December 31, 1900, journal entry:

In the year just closed I have attended 317 Meetings Travelled 3555 Miles by team Travelled 10570 Miles by R. R.

The bulk of Helen's letters correspond to the frequent and lengthy periods of time during which Owen was away from home. Initially, Owen's absence and Helen's increasing familial responsibilities troubled her. Two early references in Helen's letters demonstrate her love for, dependence on, and need for Owen:

The way I feel sometimes I am afraid I will not hold out until you come but hope I will. . . .(Letter 7)

Only two more weeks. I can scarcely wait that long to see you. (Letter 15)

However, as she gained confidence and experience, Helen became a more independent woman.

The Woodruffs moved in an elite social circle. Owen's position as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, albeit the youngest, aligned him with the prestigious and powerful of Salt Lake City. Owen's letters, for example, include his correspondence with Senator Thomas Kearns, Senator-elect Reed Smoot, and various leaders of the LDS Church. Within this influential group, Owen associated most closely with apostles Mathias F. Cowley and John W. Taylor, both strong advocates of polygamy, even after the 1890 Manifesto. Because of his relationship with these two men, which grew closer as the three traveled together to Wyoming's Bighorn Basin, he must have been aware that secret, officially sanctioned plural marriages were still taking place. Eventually, apparently after much