

LORIN WHITING BABBITT (1806-)
 ALMIRA CASTLE (1810-1845)

William Bradford Browne, the author, whose record (1912) furnished much of the Babbitt history from the immigrant, Edward Babbitt (7-1), to and including William Babbitt of Lanesboro, Mass. (7-5), listed only three of William's children, David, Ira and Sally (Sarah).¹ To obtain a verification of Lorin Whiting Babbitt as the fourth child in the family of William and Lydia (Bishop) Babbitt, the record of Patriarchal Blessings, Vol 12, pp. 117-118, Salt Lake City, Utah, was consulted. Lorin Whiting gave his parentage, his date of birth - New Marlboro, Berkshire County, Mass., at the time of his receiving his blessing (1836) by Patriarch Joseph Smith, Sr. at Nauvoo, Ill.

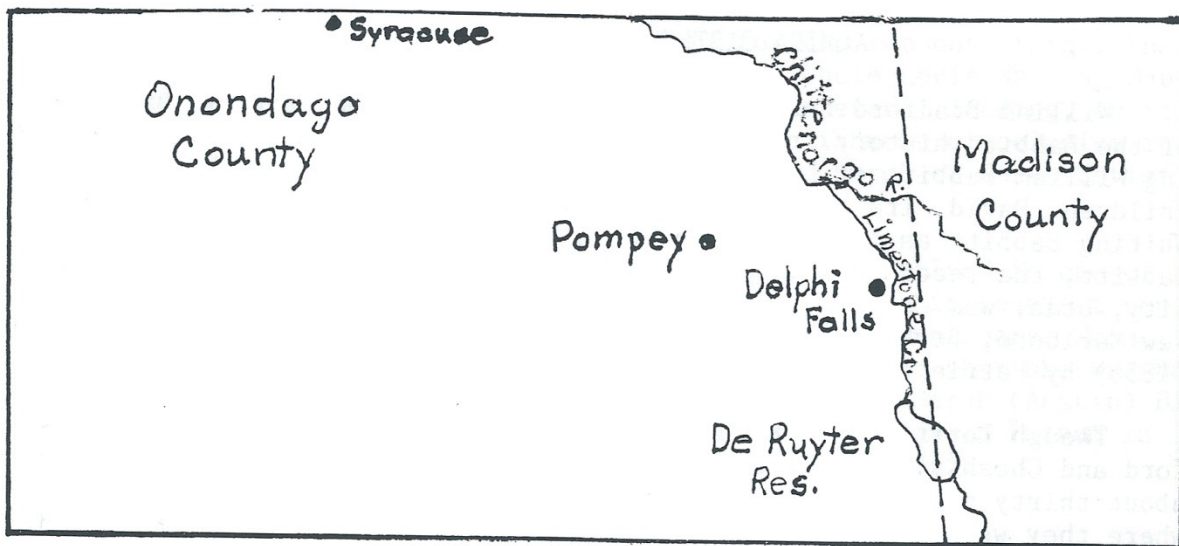
Though Lorin's parents (7-5) resided in the area of Lanesboro, New Ashford and Cheshire, they must have been in New Marlboro, a settlement to the south about thirty miles, when Lorin was born. They returned to Lanesboro, however, where they were living when William, the father, died in 1814, at the age of 48. Lorin was eight years old at the time. His mother Lydia, married (2nd), 1815, becoming Mrs. Benjamin Farnum.² By 1820, when Lorin was 14 years of age, his two married brothers, David and Ira, and their families moved west to Ohio.

David had married Eunice Curtis of Lanesborough, Mass., Feb. 1, 1808. They had five children when they moved in 1820. Two more children were born to them in Austinburg, Ashtabula County, Ohio. Their next move took them into Illinois where David died at Crystal Lake.

Ira had married in 1810, Nancy Crosier of Peru, Mass., and they too, with their children, moved to Ohio. They settled in Kirtland, then moved to Nauvoo, Ill., and finally to Booneville, Mo., where both he and Nancy, his wife, died.³ It is thought that their children continued with the Saints to Utah, at least we know that the oldest one, Almon Whiting, reached Utah and made many journeys across the plains to assist other immigrants to join with the Saints in Utah. (See 7-5)

The Erie Canal was not completed for transportation until 1825 so we can be sure that the Babbitts traveled over the rough terrain of the Appalations and the lake country of New York state with its many rivers and streams that would require a variety of travel modes. They would not have traveled alone but in a customary caravan for the protection that is provided by groups of families staying together. Their covered wagon trains and intermittent raft or boat conveyance made it possible to cross over the country to their destinations.

It seems somewhat reasonable that Lorin Whiting could have left Berkshire County with one or another of his brother's families as they moved across New York. The research provided does not make it clear in this matter. He may have come later with relatives who settled in the area of Syracuse, New York. If he came with his brothers as a boy of 14 in 1820, he may have been left at Syracuse or Delphi Falls, N.Y., where other Babbitt families, relatives, were living. This we do know, that it was here in the land grant area of Pompey, New York, that he met and married Almira Castle, about 1828. The specific area where the Castles lived was at Delphi Falls. Delphi Falls was an early settlement in the area of Pompey which included a large land grant allotted for colonies to the south of Syracuse, New York. (see Castle story 7-84)



REGION EAST OF FINGER LAKES—SOUTH OF ONEIDA LAKE, N.Y.

Lorin and Almira must have left the Pompey area soon after their marriage. Their first child, Elizabeth Almira, the writers great grandmother, was born May 18, 1830, in Painesville, Lake County, Ohio, near the town of Kirtland where Lorin's brother, Ira, had settled. From the combined research of Eva (Rice) Howell and Loretta C. Rice (both now deceased), comes the recorded writings that give us the following:

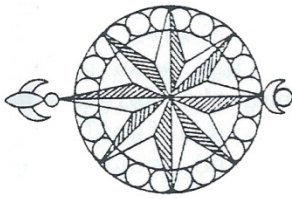
"It was here in Painesville that the Prophet Joseph Smith was tried in court proceedings that were based on trumped-up charges against him. It is highly possible that Lorin and Almira heard of these trials. However, this couple and baby moved to Amherst, Loraine County, Ohio in time to welcome a second daughter, April 17, 1832. She was named Martha Lydia. (The town of Amherst is to the west of Cleveland several miles.) (see map next page)

"A branch of the Church of Jesus Christ was established during 1831 at Amherst, where Parley P. Pratt had lived. John Murdock and Simeon Carter were members of the church in Amherst and were each a dynamo of spiritual power, acting as ambassadors of Christ. They converted many honest hearted people. Could Lorin and Almira have been among them? We do not know, but like many converts they moved to the Church headquarters in Kirtland. They lived near the home of Joseph Smith Jr. and family, and Lorin became a faithful worker on the building of the Kirtland Temple. While living here, Lorin and Almira had Patriarchal Blessings under the hands of Patriarch Joseph Smith Sr. in 1836, ref. J. H. Vol. 2 pp. 187, 188. This is proof of the fact that they had become members of the church.

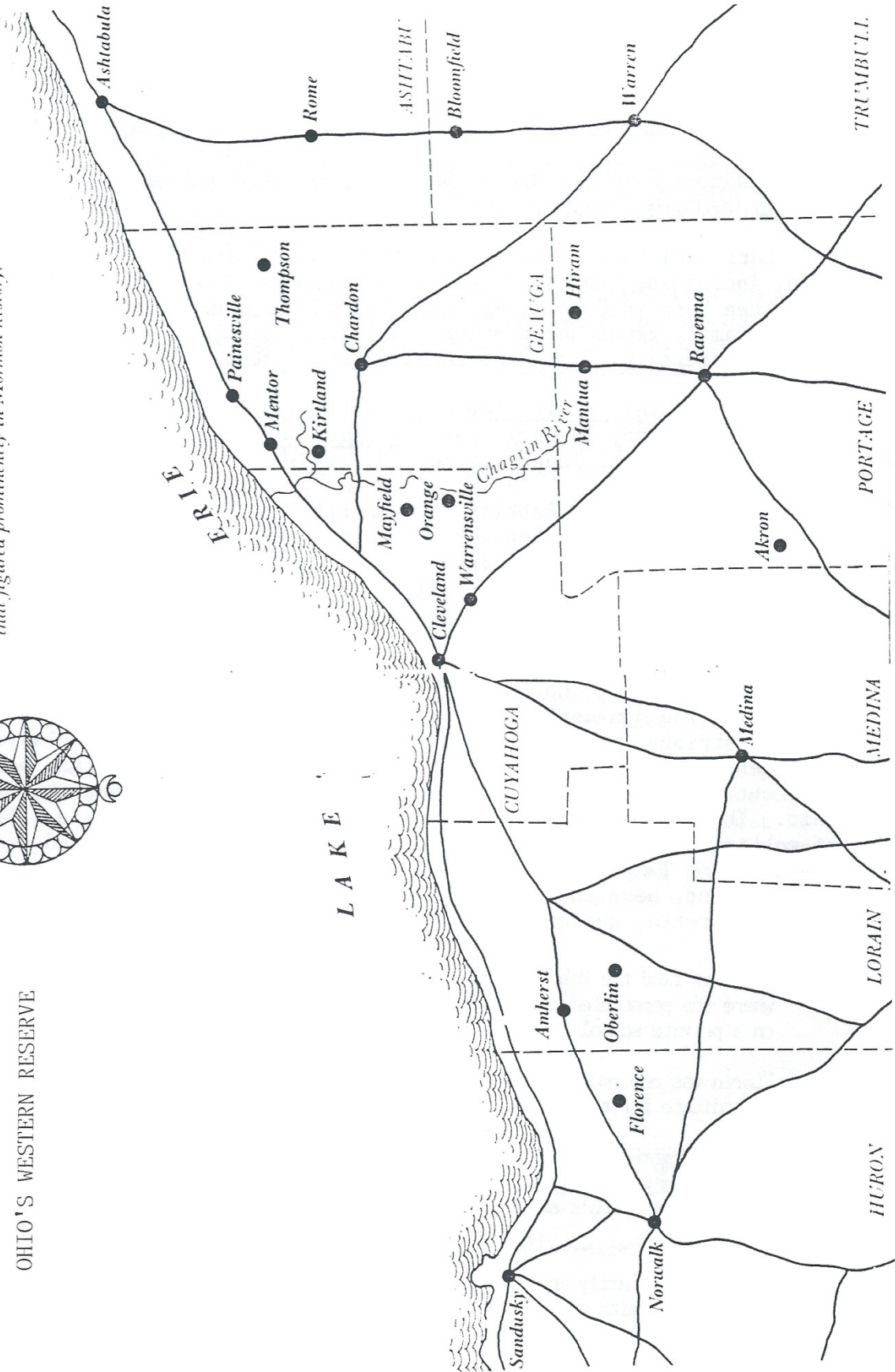
"Joseph Smith called a meeting of all Temple builders who had remained faithfully to the finish of the building and Lorin was among them. They were promised great blessings in eternity.

"With discarded scraps of lumber Lorin built a small chest for his daughter, Elizabeth, similar to a foot-locker, which she brought across the plains in 1849. Lorin was ordained to the office of a Seventy on 6 April 1830, by the Prophet Joseph Smith and was given a special blessing for his faithfulness. He was called to visit branches of the Church in that area to solicit contributions to help finance the building of the Kirtland Temple. His wife, Almira, with other women of the Church, contributed her china and glass ware to be used in the exterior finish of the Temple.

Until 1800 this strip of land was claimed by Connecticut as a Western Reserve. The national government then sold large tracts to land speculators, among them Furber Kirtland, who left his name on a town that figured prominently in Mormon history.



OHIO'S WESTERN RESERVE



"Lorin and Almira attended the dedication of the Kirtland Temple and their daughter, Elizabeth, often retold the spiritual manifestations that were heard and seen at that time. Although just a child, Elizabeth told of hearing the singing of Heavenly voices.

"Lorin was a member of the Kirtland Safety Society, a Banking company which was promoted by the Prophet Joseph Smith.: ⁴

Lorin and Almira had two children, Jerome and Lamoni, born in Kirtland, Ohio, increasing the family to four children. Their fifth child, Mary, may have been born in Ohio or Missouri before the church settled in Nauvoo, Ill. From a family group sheet submitted to the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City by Loretta C. Rice, the children are listed thus:

1. ELizabeth Almira Babbitt, b. 18 May, 1830 at Painesville, Lake County, Ohio; md. 18 Mar. 1849 - Leonard Gurley Rice; died 27 June 1907 at Blackfoot, Idaho, buried 29 June 1907 at Parker, Fremont, Idaho. (1-7)
2. Martha Lydia Babbitt, b. 7 April 1832 at Amherst, Lorain County, Idaho; md. 22 Feb. 1853 - John Snider. She died, 27 April 1858, mother of two children.
3. Jerome Horace Babbitt, b. 6 Jan. 1834, Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio
4. Lamoni Lorin Babbitt, b. 25 Sept. 1836, Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio
5. Mary Babbitt, b. about 1839. ⁵

It seemed that the church became instrumental in causing great excitement among the non-members of any area where ever they attempted to settle. The industrious enterprise of the Mormon settlements seemed always to result in severe persecutions of the members of the Church. They had been pushed out of Palmyra, N.Y. and a repeat was soon heaped upon the Saints in Ohio. Their expulsion from the Mormon areas of that state is a familiar story of mobbings, plundersings and burnings and the desecration and destruction of the Kirtland Temple. We find the body of the Church trying to settle in Missouri but, here too, the persecutions became intolerable and merciless. Eva and Loretta, quoted earlier, continue their discourse as follows:

"We next find the Babbitt family numbered among the Saints in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Ill., where the persecuted, driven Saints had located. The four Babbitt children are found recorded on a private school record of Brother M. Patterson in 1844.

"Lorin was one among the 300 Elders assigned to campaign for the Prophet Joseph Smith as a candidate for the President of the United States.

"Soon after the Saints were settled in Nauvoo they were instructed to build a temple. Lorin Babbitt was one of the brave men who worked on the Nauvoo temple in double shifts - one shift with carpenter tools and the other shift with guns to guard and protect the workmen (Journal History).

"The Babbitt family mourned with other Church members over the death of their beloved Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum, in June, 1844. They witnessed the transfiguration of Brigham Young as he addressed the distraught Saints in Nauvoo a few weeks later.

"The family had to stand helplessly by while their home in Nauvoo was burned by a mob. Lorin was away at the time. Almira, who was seriously ill, was dragged into the yard in her bedclothes to lay and watch the burning. She died shortly after, Sept. 8, 1845. She never denied her testimony of the gospel and the divine mission of Joseph Smith the Prophet.

"Elizabeth Almira, told of how she and the other children scattered into the fields to hide, for fear of ill treatment by the mobs, and how she put her little sister under the big brass kettle so she would not be found. She brought that brass kettle across the plains and it remained in the family for many years.

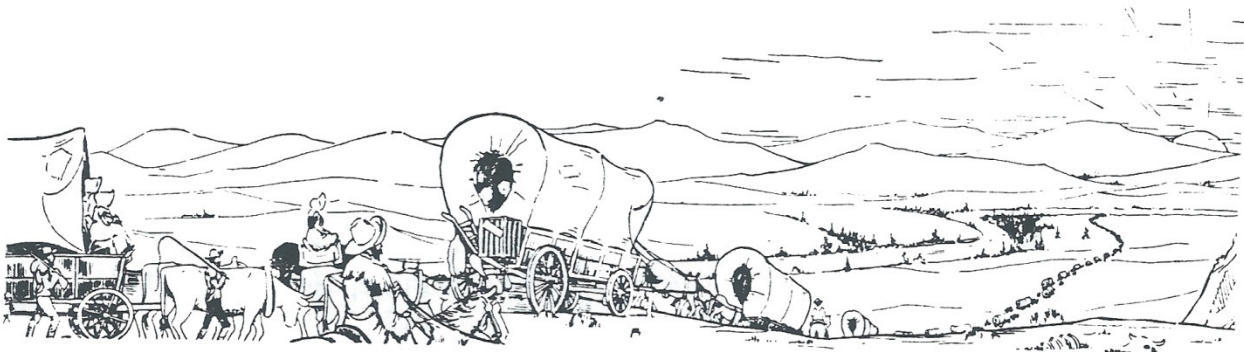
"Lorin was among the 5,000 Saints who met at the Temple when the first floor was dedicated—'Temples of the Most High.' He entered the Temple the last day it was open for ordinance work and received his endowments and was sealed to his angel wife, Almira, and also sealed to his second wife, Mary Aray, Feb. 6, 1846. Mary died later but we have no record of death date nor place.

"The Babbitts departed from Nauvoo in 1846 along with others of the persecuted Saints. They settled for a time at Winter Quarters but we do not have the date nor the company with whom they traveled across the plains." ⁶

Lorin's daughter, Elizabeth Almira, who had helped in caring for the younger children of her family, since her mother's death, was married to Leonard Gurley Rice, Mar. 18, 1849. The marriage took place at the home of Orson Hyde who performed the marriage ceremony.

Leonard Gurley had returned from Salt Lake City, Utah, as a Captain of a wagon train, to assist groups of migrants in their move to Utah and to get much needed supplies back to the Saints in the great Salt Lake Valley.

Leonard made several trips back and forth from Utah but on this particular trip he was blessed to be taking back a lovely bride. Their honeymoon was shared with the many who traveled with them across the plains west to Utah. They were traveling under the guidance of a young man of respect and trust. The church leaders trusted in his ability as a captain and the immigrants of his train loved him for his patience and kindly understanding of problems.



Elizabeth walked a good deal of the way but on occasions, when she was able to ride in one or another of the wagons, she handled the teams of horses or oxen to relieve Leonard so that he was free to help other pioneers of less experience or adaptability. The thousand mile trek, to the Valley of Salt Lake, became a timely honeymoon for Leonard Gurley and Elizabeth Almira (Babbit) Rice (see 1-7).

The family group listing, submitted by Eva and Loretta gives the added information that Lorin married (3) Mary Bunning, 2 April 1853; sealed 3 April 1853; (pre EH).⁷ Church records give no further information on this wife and she is not mentioned later when Lorin went to Beaver, Utah. However, this marriage date does assure us that Lorin and his family came across the plains some time between 1849, when his daughter Elizabeth Almira left Winter Quarters with her husband to make the journey to Utah, and the date of his third marriage. (between 1849 and 1853)

Lorin had been one of the custodians of the Nauvoo Temple and as such had held the key to it which he carried with him to Utah. This key he later gave to his daughter, Elizabeth Almira Rice, wife of Leonard Gurley Rice of Farmington, Davis, Utah. During her later years as a widow, Elizabeth lived with her children who opened their homes to her for alternate periods of time. Her grandchildren were permitted to see her treasured keep sake, the key, on special occasions. Loretta, above mentioned, remembers it as "a rather large key resembling a skeleton key and was a bit bent; a thrill to hold."⁸ Loretta goes on to state:

" . . .It finally fell into the possession of Mrs. David Leonard Rice of Farmington, Utah, who kept it until 1956. She thought it had no business in her treasure chest so she gave it to one of Lorin Whiting's great grandsons, Larn R. Rice of Maywood California. It was Larn who decided that the key's rightful place was in the Church Museum in Salt Lake City where it can now be seen by many."

"In 1856 Lorin Whiting Babbitt was called by Brigham Young to the new settlement of Beaver in Beaver County, Utah where he was to act as the Probate Judge and also as the Bishop of the Beaver Ward. His two sons, Jerome and Lamoni, accompanied him to this mission.

"From then on we have no further record of him or his sons and no mention is made of his third marriage."⁹

In "Journal History" Lorin is recorded as the President of the 18th Quorum of Seventies in Utah; Feb. 1865. This tells us that he was still living and remaining in the Stakes of Zion in Utah at that time. As of now (1984) we have no further information on the destinations and activities of the family other than the extensive amount of written material available for Elizabeth Almira, who married Leonard Gurley Rice (1-7).

1. #38 p. 162
2. ibid
3. ibid p. 283
4. #194, p. 3
5. #170 p. (7-6)

6. #194, pp. 3-5
7. #170 p. (7-6)
8. #194, p.5
9. ibid