
Vienna Jaques

1787–1884

D&C 90:28–31

Being religiously inclined, Vienna attended the Methodist Church on Bromfield Street in Boston but was often disappointed with their worship services. Wanting more than the preaching of Christlike living, she wrote to Kirtland, Ohio, requesting a copy of the Book of Mormon. When the book arrived, she laid it aside until “a vision” convinced her to read the contents. As she read, her mind became “illuminated.”¹ Convinced of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, Vienna left her nursing post and journeyed from Boston to Kirtland to learn more about the Restoration.

According to the *Boston Courier*, Vienna—

satisfied herself that the Mormon bible was a revelation from God, and the leaders true prophets. ... She believed that the Mormonites could perform miracles. When asked if she had seen any miraculous operations, she replied that she had seen a person who was very sick suddenly restored to health.²

Vienna was baptized on July 12, 1831, by Emer Harris.

On March 8, 1833, the Prophet Joseph Smith advised Vienna to give her monies to the Church. Without hesitation, she offered her all—\$1,400. For her unselfish gift, the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph—

It is my will that my handmaid Vienna Jaques should receive money to bear her expenses, and go up unto the land of Zion. And the residue of

¹ George Hamlin, “In Memoriam,” *Woman’s Exponent* 12, no. 19 (March 1, 1884), 152.

² “Mormonites,” *Boston Courier*, October 10, 1831. FamilySearch.

the money may be consecrated unto me, and she be rewarded in mine own due time. Verily I say unto you, that it is meet in mine eyes that she should go up unto the land of Zion, and receive an inheritance from the hand of the bishop; That she may settle down in peace inasmuch as she is faithful, and not be idle in her days from thenceforth. (D&C 90:28–31)

Vienna journeyed to Missouri and, as promised, was given an inheritance in Zion. Life in Zion was not all that she expected. She wrote to the Prophet Joseph of her struggles. He replied to her on September 4, 1833:

I have often felt a whispering since I received your letter, like this: “Joseph, thou art indebted to thy God for the offering of thy sister Vienna, which proved a savor of life as pertaining to thy pecuniary concerns. Therefore she should not be forgotten of thee, for the Lord hath done this, and thou shouldst remember her in all thy prayers and also by letter, for she often times calleth on the Lord, saying, O Lord, inspire thy servant Joseph to communicate by letter some word to thine unworthy handmaiden.”³

Vienna was residing near Fishing River in 1834 when Joseph Smith and members of Zion’s Camp reached that waterway. She was among the first to offer assistance to the sick. Heber C. Kimball recalled, “I received great kindness ... from sister Vienna Jaques, who administered to my wants and also to my brethren—may the Lord reward [her] for [her] kindness.”⁴

In 1847, at age sixty, Vienna drove a wagon across the plains with the Charles C. Rich Company, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley on October 2, 1847. She lived in her wagon for a year before writing to Brigham Young on October 16, 1848—

You told me to hold on respecting my lot, but you did not say how long I must wait. Now if you think I am worthy to have a lot or part of a lot if you will let me know where to live so I can have my adobes hauled on to the same place I will endeavor to build as neat a house as others do so as not to disgrace your city. All the choice I have is to have my place of residence so that I can walk to the place of worship.⁵

³ Joseph Smith letter to Vienna Jaques, September 4, 1833. Joseph Smith Papers.

⁴ Heber C. Kimball, “Extract from Journal,” *Times and Seasons* 6 (March 15, 1845), 839–840.

⁵ Vienna Jaques letter to Brigham Young, October 16, 1848. FamilySearch.

Vienna was given a city lot in the Salt Lake 12th Ward. She viewed the lot as her new inheritance. Vienna died on February 7, 1884, at age ninety-six, in her home built on that lot. Her obituary stated, "She was true to her covenants and esteemed the restoration of the gospel as a priceless treasure."⁶

⁶ Hamlin, "In Memoriam," 152.