



DEVELOP DISCIPLES TO SERVE

Marietta Hodges Walker: An Example of Helping All Ages Deepen Discipleship

No person has done more for the development of the work of the Reorganization than has Marietta Walker.

- Frederick M. Smith

MARIETTA HODGES WALKER

Marietta's life began in 1834 when church members, including her parents, were giving generously toward the building of the Kirtland Temple. Marietta did not have the opportunity to enjoy the newly built temple for long as the family left the security of a familiar life in Ohio to answer the call to gather to northern Missouri and eventually Nauvoo, Illinois.

Throughout her young adult years, Marietta lived in several states while pursuing a higher education. She attended the Austin School for Girls and later Oxford College for Women in Oxford, Ohio in 1859. In 1860, she served as the principal of the San Antonio Female College in San Antonio, Texas. Following her husband's death, Marietta settled in Sandwich, Illinois, to be close to family. She also reconnected with an old childhood friend, Joseph Smith III, and learned of his involvement in the Reorganization.

Over the next sixty years, Marietta was immersed in the life of the church. She was a relentless believer in education for youth and adults, often promoting her ideas

while editing and writing for several church publications. Marietta's educational background allowed her a unique opportunity to serve others as a writer and educator.

In 1869, Marietta worked as an assistant editor of *Zion's Hope*, our church's first paper for children. *Zion's Hope* was filled with stories, poems, puzzles, and lesson material that emphasized moral and spiritual lessons for children. By 1887, she was managing editor of *Zion's Hope* and starting a new publication for older youth known as *Autumn Leaves*. Marietta's goal for *Autumn Leaves* was to prepare the church's youth for adult life and responsibility. The publication was later renamed *Vision* and continued educating young persons until 1929.

In addition to her work with youth, Marietta founded the "Mother's Home Column" a popular column in the *Saints' Herald*. Although originally intended for females, Marietta's column soon became a popular column for both genders. "Mother's Home Column" provided counsel, encouraged healthy diets, clean homes, and invited discussion on all issues related to the church.

In 1895, Marietta's vision of higher education for all became a reality with her generous donation of Iowa farmland for the establishment of Graceland College.



Today, Marietta Walker is affectionately honored as the "Mother of Graceland University"