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HISTORY OF WILFORD WOODRUFF. (FROM HIS OWN PEN.)

[CONTINUED.]

March 2.—We cut down a large cotton wood tree, and in two days dug out a canoe four feet wide and twelve long, put on a pair of oars and then rowed down the Arkansas river, 125 miles, to Little Rock, begging our food by the way, a meal at a time, as we had opportunity. After visiting Little Rock we traveled down the river ten miles, and tied up our canoe on the east bank and stopped with Mr. Jones. I preached next day at his house. On the 16th we left our canoe with Mr. Jones and walked back up the river ten miles, opposite Little Rock, and took the old military road, and started to wade the Mississippi swamp, which was mostly covered with water from Little Rock, Arkansas, to Memphis, Tennessee, a distance of about 175 miles. We waded through mud and water knee deep, day after day, and in some instances forty miles per day, before we could get a stopping place.

On the 24th, while in the swamps, I had an attack of the rheumatism and could not travel fast. My companion, br. Brown, had got in a hurry, and wished to return to his family in Kirtland, and as I could not travel as fast as he wished, we parted. He left me sitting on a log in the mud and water; I was lame and unable to walk, without food, and twelve miles from the nearest house on the road; he went out of sight in great haste. I then knelt down in the water and prayed to the Lord to heal me. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I was healed; the pain left me; I arose and went my way. Whenever I met with one or more families, I preached and bore testimony to them.

I crossed the Mississippi river in the evening of the 27th of March, and staid at a public house kept by Mr. Josiah Jackson. I was suspected of being an impostor. Mr. Jackson believed I was one of Murrill's clan, who were then murdering and stealing negroes, and to test me, he gathered together a large house full of the most wicked and corrupt people in the city, and set me to preaching, to see whether I could preach or not.

I do not think that Mr. Jackson or the same company of men and women will ever meet together again for the same purpose, for they would not like again to have their sins and abominations revealed to each other as pointedly as I told them that night, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; they were glad to get rid of me upon almost any terms.

I traveled from Memphis to Middle Tennessee.

April 4.—I met with Elder Warren Parrish in Benton county. He and David W. Patten had labored together through the winter in Tennessee, and baptized twenty persons. Elder Patten had returned to Kirtland. I joined Elder Parrish and we labored together over three months, traveling and preaching daily, baptizing such as would receive our testimony, extending our labors in Tennessee and Kentucky.

June 23.—We received a letter from Oliver Cowdery, requesting Elder Parrish to come to Kirtland, and for me to remain and take charge of the southern churches, and the Lord would bless me in so doing.

June 23.—Warren Parrish ordained me an Elder. We baptized some forty persons while laboring together.

July 23.—Elder Parrish left. I traveled alone through the year, and extended my labors both in Kentucky and Tennessee. I baptized forty-three persons during this season, thirty-one after br. Parrish left.

Nov. 15.—While traveling in the night with br. Benjamin L. Clapp and others, a tremendous storm of wind and rain overtook us. We came to a creek which had swollen to such an extent by the rain that we could not cross without swimming our horses; several of the company were females. We undertook to head

the stream, to ford it, but in the attempt, in the midst of the darkness and the raging of the wind and rain, we were lost in the thick woods, amidst the rain, wind, creeks and fallen tree tops; we crossed streams nearly twenty times. I was reminded of Paul's perils by water; but the Lord was merciful unto us in the midst of our troubles, for while we were groping in the dark, running the risk of killing both ourselves and animals by riding off precipitous bluffs, a bright light suddenly shone round about us, and revealed our perilous situation as we were upon the edge of a deep gulf. The light continued with us until we found a house and learned the right road; then the light disappeared, and we were enabled to reach the house of br. Henry Thomas at nine o'clock, all safe, having rode twenty miles, five hours in the storm, and we felt to thank the Lord for our preservation.

During the winter and spring I continued to labor mostly alone, through Kentucky and Tennessee, opening new places, preaching daily, baptizing, confirming and organizing new branches.

Feb. 26, 1836.—At a conference held at br. B. L. Clapp's, in Callaway county, Kentucky, I ordained A. O. Smoot and Benjamin Boydston Elders, and B. L. Clapp and Daniel Thomas Priests.

Brs. Smoot and Clapp both entered into the labors of the ministry. Elder Smoot frequently accompanied me on my mission. Elder D. W. Patten returned to Tennessee in April, and joined us in our labors, accompanied by his wife. It was a happy meeting. He related to me the blessings he had received in Kirtland during the endowments. We traveled and labored together; persecution raged against us. Elder Patten bore a strong and forcible testimony of the work of God, and when we were opposed by mobs he would rebuke them in great plainness; we were threatened, but not injured. The sick were healed under our ministrations.

May 27.—Elder Warren Parrish arrived from Kirtland. We held a conference on the 28th, at br. Seth Utley's. Seven branches were represented containing 116 members. Abel Wilson and Jesse Turpin were ordained Priests and Albert Petty a Teacher.

—31.—I was ordained by David W. Patten a member of the second quorum of Seventies.

We labored over a circuit of several hundred miles; br. Smoot labored with us, and br. Clapp frequently. We traveled two by two, and all met together to hold conferences.

June 19.—A States warrant was issued against D. W. Patten, Warren Parrish and Wilford Woodruff, sworn out by Matthew Williams, a Methodist priest, and served by the sheriff, Robert C. Petty. Elders Patten and Parrish were taken by an armed mob of about fifty, under pretence of law, led by the sheriff, a colonel, first and second major, with other officers, and a Methodist priest with a gun upon his shoulder. I was in another county and therefore not taken. We were accused of prophesying falsely, by saying that four persons who were baptized should receive the Holy Ghost in twenty-four hours, and that Christ should come the second time before this generation passed away. The whole concern was a mob mock trial, contrary to law, justice, judgment or truth.

On the 29th, I went to a Baptist meeting house, on Thompson's creek, to preach; the house was crowded. As I rose to speak, a Baptist priest, Mr. Browning, arrived at the door on horseback, and stepped in greatly agitated, and told the deacon to forbid my preaching in the house; at the same time commenced a tirade of abuse against the Mormons, telling several lies, which I corrected before the people, which increased his rage. As I was forbidden to preach in the house, and had been invited, and traveled many miles to fulfil my appointment, I told the people I would like to preach and was willing to stand on a wood pile, a fence, a cart, or any place they would appoint. A man rose and said he owned the land in front of the meeting house, and I might

stand and preach on that, and welcome. All the congregation, with the exception of the minister and one deacon, arose and left the house, walked across the street and formed seats of a worm fence, and gave good attention while I preached for an hour and a half on the principles of the gospel.

When I closed, Mr. Randolph Alexander, who had never heard a Mormon Elder speak before, said, the people of the present day made him think of a pen of hogs; the keeper would make a trough, and pour into it hot or cold water, dish water or anything else, and they would drink it; but let a stranger come along and pour over a basket of corn on the back side of the pen, and the hogs would be frightened and run and snort all over the pen. He said it was so with the people; the priests would feed them with any kind of doctrine, no matter how false, the people will swallow it down, but let a stranger come and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, which will save the people, as Mr. Woodruff has done, and the people are afraid of him.

Mr. Alexander invited me home, bought a Book of Mormon, and was soon baptized, and several others followed his example.

July 14.—I wrote a letter to Oliver Cowdery, and sent him a list of subscribers for the *Messenger and Advocate*, and a detail of my mission in the South.

—18.—I rode in company with A. O. Smoot to a ferry on the Tennessee River. The ferryman was absent. We were offered the use of the boat, and ferried ourselves; but not being much used to the business, and losing one oar in the river, and having to row with a broken oar, we landed a great distance below the usual place with a high circulation of blood and blistered hands; but our horses leapt the bank, and we went on our way to the Sandy, which we swam, and spent the night at Thomas Frazer's.

—30.—We preached at Mr. David Crider's, also on Sunday, the 31st, where we were threatened by a mob. I baptized Mr. Crider and the scoffs of the rabble, who went in the night and poisoned both of our horses; the one which I rode, belonging to br. Samuel West, died in two days afterwards; brother Smoot's recovered; the swine that eat of the horse flesh also died.

Aug. 11.—I met with D. W. Patten and wife; he and br. Parrish had been driven out of Benton into Henry Co., and Elder Parrish had left for Kirtland.

—29.—We were visited by Elders T. B. Marsh and E. H. Groves, from Caldwell Co., Mo.

Sept. 2.—We held a conference at Damon's Creek, Callaway Co., Kentucky; several branches were represented, containing 119 members; Johnson F. Lane, Benj. L. Clapp and Randolph Alexander were ordained elders, and Lindsey Bradey a priest by D. W. Patten, who baptized five at the close of the conference.

I was released from my labors in the South, and counselled to go to Kirtland and receive my endowments, as was also A. O. Smoot.

Sept. 19.—Elders Marsh and D. W. Patten and wife, and E. H. Groves, started for Far West. I organized the first company of Saints, who emigrated from the Southern States, which numbered twenty-two souls. I appointed Elder Boydston president of the company, and counselled them to be united, and to remember their prayers night and day before the Lord.

—20.—The camp started. I spent a few days visiting the branches; baptized and confirmed eight, and obtained thirty subscribers for the *Messenger and Advocate*.

Oct. 20.—In company with A. O. Smoot and Jesse Turpin, I started for Kirtland; this was the first time I had ever travelled on a steamboat. We left the steamer at Louisville on the 28th, and spent nineteen days visiting Elder Smoot's relations and preaching among the people; we visited the Big Bone Lick. We arrived in Cincinnati Nov. 17, where we saw thirteen persons dead and wounded taken from the steamer Flora, which had burst her pipes

while running a race; arrived in Kirtland on the 25th, and had the happy privilege of meeting the Prophet Joseph, and many elders, with whom I was acquainted in the camp of Zion. 29th, I heard Joseph preach in the Temple. In the afternoon I was called to speak and read the 56th chap. of Isaiah, and made some remarks, and gave an account of my mission in the South; Elder Smoot also addressed the Saints.

I was counselled by the Presidency to attend the school in the Temple, taught by Prof. Haws. I studied the Latin language and English Grammar, and boarded with bro. Ira Bond.

I attended meetings with the Seventies and other quorums during the winter of 1836-7, and received much valuable instruction.

Dec. 20, 1836.—I was present at the organization of the third quorum of Seventies; there were twenty-seven ordained.

Jan. 3, 1837.—I was set apart to be a member of the first quorum of Seventies.

—25.—At early candle light, a cloud began to arise in the north east and reached to the north west, having the appearance of fire, and it soon spread over the whole horizon. The reflection of the clouds upon the earth, which was covered with snow, had a blood red appearance. It commenced at about 6 o'clock, and lasted till past 10 p.m.

—29.—Pres. Joseph Smith and O. Cowdery addressed the Saints in the Temple. Joseph blessed the people in the name of the Lord, and said, if we would be faithful, we should arise above our embarrassments and be delivered from the hands of our enemies.

—30.—I wrote an article on faith, which was published in the *Messenger and Advocate*.

Feb. 19.—I attended meeting at the Temple. Pres. Joseph Smith had been absent on business for the church, but not half as long as Moses was in the mount away from Israel; yet many of the people in Kirtland, if they did not make a calf to worship as did the Israelites, turned their hearts away from the Lord and from his servant Joseph, and had engaged in speculation and given away to false spirits, until they were darkened in their minds; and many were opposed to Joseph Smith, and some wished to appoint David Whitmer to lead the church in his stead. In the midst of this cloud of dark spirits, Joseph returned to Kirtland, and this morning arose in the stand. He appeared much depressed; but soon the Spirit of God rested upon him, and he addressed the assembly in great plainness for about three hours, and put his enemies to silence. When he arose he said, "I am still the President, Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Leader of the church of Jesus Christ. God, and not man, has appointed and placed me in this position, and no man or set of men have power to remove me or appoint another in my stead, and those who undertake this, if they do not speedily repent, will burn their fingers and go to hell. He reproved the people sharply for their sins, darkness and unbelief; the power of God rested upon him, and bore testimony that his sayings were true.

March 23rd, was spent in the Temple by the Saints in Kirtland in fasting and prayer. Patriarch Joseph Smith, sen., presided. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon the people; a contribution was taken up for the poor.

April 4.—I received my washings and anointings in the house of the Lord. I spent the whole night in the Temple, with others of the Seventies, in prayer and fasting, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us. After twenty-four hours I partook of food.

—6.—The Presidency of the Church, the Twelve Apostles, and other quorums, met in solemn assembly, and sealed upon our heads, our washings, anointings and blessings with a loud shout of hosannah to God and the Lamb; the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us. After spending three hours in the upper room, the quorums repaired to the lower court; the vails were lowered, and the ordinance of washing of feet was administered. Elder H. C. Kim-