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HISTORY

OF
LUKE JOHNSON.

(BY HIMSELF.)

[Continued].

My father moved to Kirtland, and was ordained to the office of high priest, and was a member of the first High Council organized in the church. He died in Kirtland in 1843.

I was born in Pomfret, Windsor Co., Vermont, November 3rd, 1807. In early life I assisted my father in farming, and remained with him until I received the gospel, and was baptized by Joseph Smith, May 10, 1831. Soon thereafter I was ordained a priest by Christian Whitmer, and performed a mission to the southern part of Ohio, in company with Robert Rathburn, where we baptized several and organized a branch in Chippewa.

In company with Sidney Rigdon, I went on a mission to New Portage, where we baptized about fifty or sixty, and organized a branch; from thence we journeyed to Pittsburgh (in the vicinity where Sidney was born and raised) where we preached the gospel to his relatives, and I baptized his mother and his oldest brother, also several others in that neighborhood, and we organized a branch.

At a conference in Orange, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, I was ordained a high priest by Joseph Smith. At this conference the eleven witnesses to the Book of Mormon, with uplifted hands, bore their solemn testimony to the truth of that book, as did also the Prophet Joseph.

In January, 1832, I was appointed by revelation, in company with W. E. Mc Lellin, to go on a mission south. We preached several times, and, arriving at Middlebury, Portage Co., bro. Mc Lellin got a situation behind a counter to sell tapes, &c., and I, preferring not to proceed alone, returned to the town of Hiram, and the Prophet appointed Seymour Brunson in his stead, with whom I traveled through Ohio, Virginia and Kentucky. We baptized over one hundred persons, and organized a branch in Lawrence Co., Ohio, and another in Cabal Co., Virginia, and returned to Hiram.

Dec. 28, 1832, in company with Hazen Aldrich I started and resumed my mission to the south country. On the 31st, at Worcester, we baptized two.

January 19, 1833, preached in Charleston, Jackson Co., where I baptized several of the Skoker family. On the 27th, met bro. Zerubabel Snow, and baptized one. We visited the branches, preached and set the churches in order as we journeyed along. Feb. 24, returned to Hiram, and assisted my father on his farm during the summer.

In the fall of 1833, I visited the branches raised up in Lawrence Co., Ohio, and preached and baptized in that vicinity.

November 1st, I married Susan Harmina Poteet, in Cabal Co., Virginia.

Feb. 17, 1834, at the organization of the first High Council, which was in Kirtland, I was chosen a member.

In May I started with Zion's camp for Missouri, on which journey I acted as pioneer, and went before the camp,—marked the signs of the times, and the situation of our enemies. Having made a declaration before I started, that I would go into Jackson Co., or die in the attempt, in company with my brother Lyman and others I procured a boat, and rowed over the Mo. River and landed in Jackson Co., where we discharged three rounds of our small arms, and immediately got into the boat, and with all our energies rowed back. Meanwhile the mob in Jackson Co. lined the shore, and commenced firing upon us, their balls skimming the waters near us; after landing, I returned fire and shot across the Mo. River.

I returned to Kirtland, in Captain Heber C. Kimball's company, and received my blessing in common with the members of Zion's camp.

Feb. 14, 1835, I was chosen, and on the 15th ordained one of the Twelve Apostles, at the organization of that quorum; and with them

traveled during the summer, through the Eastern States, holding conferences, preaching the gospel and regulating the churches, returning to Kirtland in September.

I attended Hebrew school during the winter, and received my blessings in the house of the Lord in the spring of 1836; after which I started on a mission to Canada, preaching through the state of New York on the way. I baptized many, and organized a branch in Canada, and returned to Kirtland in the fall.

A Baptist clergyman from the state of New York, who had been acquainted with the Prophet Joseph in his early life, called upon him and stayed all night. Joseph made the minister welcome, and treated him hospitably and respectfully; but, when breakfast was over next morning, he called Joseph a hypocrite, a liar, an imposter and a false prophet, and called upon him to repent. Joseph boxed his ears with both hands, and, turning his face towards the door, kicked him into the street. He immediately went before a magistrate, and swore out a writ against Joseph for assault and battery. I saw the operation, and followed the minister into the Squire's office, and demanded a writ for his apprehension, for provoking an assault; the clerk filling up the writ I called for first—the minister, fearing trouble, paid for his writ and withdrew without it, and made his way post haste for Cuyahoga Co.; I followed him on horseback, making him travel pretty lively until he got a few rods over the line when I overtook him, and said, "Sir, you are lucky to have got over the line, and out of my jurisdiction, or I should have arrested you."

Jan. 12, 1838, I learned that Sheriff Kimball was about to arrest Joseph Smith, on a charge of illegal banking, and knowing that it would cost him an expensive lawsuit, and perhaps end, in imprisonment, I went to the French farm, where he then resided, and arrested him on an execution for his person, in the absence of property to pay a judgment of \$50, which I had in my possession at the time, which prevented Kimball from arresting him. Joseph settled the execution, and thanked me for my interference, and started that evening for Missouri; this was the last time I ever saw the Prophet.

Soon after, I was in Kirtland, and hearing that a vexatious writ had been sworn out by John C. White against Joseph Smith, sen., it being supposed he was liable to a prosecution in consequence of his manner of solemnizing marriages, I begged the privilege of serving the writ, and arrested the old gentleman, and took him to the magistrate's office. The court not being ready to attend to the case, I put him in a small room adjoining the entrance from the office. I also allowed his son Hyrum to accompany him. I took a nail out from over the window sash, left the room and locked the door, and commenced telling stories in the court room, to raise a laugh, for I was afraid they would hear Father Smith getting out of the window; when the court called for the prisoner, I stepped into the room in the dark and slipped the nail into its place in the window, and went back and told the court that the prisoner had made his escape. White and others rushed into the room, and examined the fastenings and found them all secure, which created much surprise how the prisoner had got out. I had previously told John F. Boynton, to go and assist Father Smith out of the window. Hyrum got out first, then he and Boynton assisted the old man out, he thereby escaped bonds or imprisonment, and an expensive and vexatious law-suit.

Having partaken of the spirit of speculation, which at that time was possessed by many of the Saints and elders, my mind became darkened, and I was left to pursue my own course. I lost the Spirit of God, and neglected my duty; the consequence was, that at a conference held in Kirtland, Sept. 3rd, 1837, in company with my bro. Lyman and John F. Boynton, I was cut off from the church, privileged with confessing and making satisfaction.

In the spring of 1838, Dr. Frederick G. Williams was arrested at Willoughby, as he was on his way to Missouri, on a frivolous and vexatious process; he sent to Kirtland for me to help him. On receipt of his message, I repaired forthwith to Willoughby, and learned that he was in the hands of an officer named Cranston, and that he was to have his trial before Esqr. Bates at early candle light. I immediately removed his horse and buggy out of the county, and went to him; he asked me if I could render him any assistance, as this was a vexatious suit. I told him I could, and that I had sent his horse and buggy out of the county, and I would furnish him a horse which should be held in the street opposite the office, by Bradford W. Elliot, at the lighting of the candles. I sat at the door of the court-room, the key being on the outside; Cranston and Dr. Williams were walking the room, and Cranston was observing that a prisoner never made his escape from him. Just as the candles were lighting, I opened the door, the Dr. walked out, unobserved by Cranston; I immediately followed him, and, locking the door, tossed the key a few rods from the office; the court hearing the door locked, jumped up, upsetting the table and candles, and mixed up in great confusion; the cry was, "Open the door, open the door;" a shoemaker at work, being the only person within hearing, replied several times, "Open the door yourself." At length Cranston succeeded in getting out by a hatch-way through a hatter's shop below, and overtaking me (as I was quietly walking down the street towards Kirtland) slapped me on the shoulder, asking where Dr. Williams had gone to. I replied, I am not his keeper; whereupon he gave me the second and third slap on the shoulder, and in a loud tone, demanded of me to inform him: I had been shooting squirrels that day, and had my powder flask in my pocket, which I took out and told him, I would let him know where the Dr. was, and snapping the spring of my flask at him several times, he ran off, and looking over his shoulder, he fell down, but kept running several rods upon his hands and feet: when he got back to court, he reported that he had narrowly escaped with his life.

From this time up to the death of Joseph Smith, I spent my time in teaching school in Cabal Co., Virginia, for about a year, devoting my leisure time in reading works on medicine. I returned to Kirtland and continued the study of medicine, and attended a course of lectures in the botanical college at Cincinnati, receiving a certificate from Professor Curtis; afterwards practised in Kirtland, and engaged in various occupations to enable me to obtain a living; but did not officiate in any religious duties.

HISTORY

OF

WILLIAM SMITH.

WILLIAM SMITH was the fifth son of Joseph Smith, sen., and Lucy Smith; born in Royalton, Windsor county, Vermont, March 13, 1811. He was baptized at an early period. He was a teacher in the church in 1831. He took a mission to Erie county, Pennsylvania, in December, 1832, to preach the gospel and call the Elders to Kirtland to attend a school of the Prophets. He was ordained to the office of High Priest under the hands of Sidney Rigdon in council on the 21st day of June, 1833. During the winter of 1833 he worked on a farm and chopped cord wood near Kirtland.

He was married to Caroline Grant, daughter of Joshua and Thalia Grant, February 14, 1833, by whom he had two daughters—Mary Jane and Caroline L. He went to Missouri in Zion's camp in 1834, and returned to Kirtland the same fall. He was appointed one of the Twelve Apostles at the organization of that quorum. He accompanied the Twelve on their first mission through the Eastern States and returned with them to Kirtland, Oct. 29, 1835. While Joseph Smith was presiding in a high council, William rebelled against him in a very headstrong manner.

December 16, 1835.—At a debating school held in the house of Father Joseph Smith, the Prophet Joseph told the brethren he feared it would not result in good, whereupon William in a rage, commanded Joseph to leave the house; but Joseph replied he was in his father's house, and should go when he got ready; William then attacked Joseph, and attempted to put him out and inflicted upon him personal injury, the effects of which he occasionally felt until his death. Hyrum Smith called upon Joseph in relation to this difficulty, and said that although he felt the tender feelings of a brother towards William, yet he could but look upon such conduct as an abomination in the sight of God. After Hyrum and the Twelve had labored with William for several days, he made confession and was forgiven.

He removed to Far West with his family in the spring of 1838. After Joseph was taken prisoner and the mob began to drive out the Saints, William expressed himself in such a vindictive manner against Joseph that the church suspended him from fellowship, May 4, 1839, at a general conference near Quincy.

He went to Illinois and settled in Plymouth, Hancock county, keeping a tavern. William was restored to the fellowship of the church through the intercession of Joseph and Hyrum; but when the Twelve went to England, instead of accompanying them according to the commandment of the Lord, he remained on his farm at Plymouth.

Dec. 1, 1840.—He published a letter in the *Times and Seasons* making an apology for neglecting to go on his mission upon the ground of poverty, but it came with an ill grace as he was better situated to leave his family than any of the members of the quorum who went.

William's general character and course of conduct towards his father's family resembles that of Laman's towards his brethren.

In the spring of 1841 he visited the branches of the church in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and collected means for his own benefit, returning to Nauvoo the same season.

His name appears as the Editor of the *Wasp*, published in Nauvoo, Illinois, April, 1842, but a very small part of the labor was performed by him. He was elected a member of the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Illinois in the winter session of 1842-3. His acts as a member of the Legislature were highly approved by the people; he displayed considerable energy in defending the Nauvoo charters and the rights of his constituents.

He took a journey to the East on business in the spring of 1843, and spent his time among the churches. He attended a wood's meeting at the square near Bordentown, N. J., where, in a conversation with br. Geo. A. Smith, he said he should not pay over one dollar for the Nauvoo House or Temple, and if his brother Joseph did not do more for him, he should come out against him; he considered he was putting means into the hands of Joseph to educate his children, while his own children were remaining ignorant. Br. Geo. A. replied, I shall do all I can to build up the Nauvoo House and Temple, and I think that Joseph has done all he could for his relatives, and I wonder that he has done as much as he has, considering the circumstances he has been under.

William returned to Nauvoo on the 22nd day of April, 1844, with about forty or fifty Saints from New Jersey. After staying a short time in Nauvoo, he had his last interview with his brother Joseph under the following circumstances:—

He asked Joseph to give him a city lot near the Temple. Joseph told him he would do so with great pleasure, if he would build a house and live upon it; but he would not give him a lot to sell. William replied he wanted it to build and live upon. The lot was well worth \$1000. In a few hours afterwards, an application was made by Mr. Ivins to the recorder to know if that lot was clear and belonged to Wm. Smith, for William had sold it to him for \$500. Joseph hearing of this, directed the