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TWO BOUNTIFULS.

BOUNTIFUL, Davis County,
Utah, June 25, 1893.

In Elder George Reynolds's Dictionary of the Book of Mormon the ancient city called Bountiful is described as the chief city of the Nephites situated in the northern part of South America, not far from the shore of the great eastern sea, and but a short distance south of the Isthmus of Panama. "It was the key to the northern continent, and previous to the birth of the Savior none of the invading armies of the Lamanites appear to have been able to pass by it. It was strongly fortified by Moroni and his associate commanders and successors * * * until the city was encircled with a deep ditch and a high wall of earth and timbers."

The modern Bountiful, which I am now visiting, is situated in Davis county, Utah, and consists of an incorporated city surrounded by one of the most fertile and productive agricultural districts in the Territory. Westward it extends to the river Jordan and the great Salt Lake, north to Centerville, and east and south to the mountains which separate Davis county from Morgan and Salt Lake counties. The inhabited part of Bountiful embraces about twenty-five square miles which sustains a population of about 2500. Of these 2228 are members of the Church, organized into three Bishop's wards, named respectively, East, West and South Bountiful.

East Bountiful is the largest ward in the Davis Stake of Zion, containing 230 families of Latter-day Saints, or 1392 souls. Chester Call is the Bishop, and his counselors are David Stoker (a son of the late Bishop John Stoker) and Henry Rampton. East Bountiful has the largest and best finished meeting house in the Davis Stake, and for several years after it was first built, it possessed the distinction of being the finest meeting house in all Utah. It is in the main an adobe structure, though the basement is built of rock, the main building is 80 feet long by 40 wide. There is a two-story vestry attached to the east end; and the west end is beautified by a lofty tower, terminating in five spires, of which the center one is considerably larger than each of the four corner ones. In all the settlements of the Saints there is no other tower like it. The erection of the building was commenced in 1857, but it was not finished till 1862.

West Bountiful ward, presided over by Bishop Lewis M. Grant, an adopted son of the late Jedediah M. Grant, contains 252 souls reported on Church statistics, or 49 families, who truly possess one of the garden spots of our Territory. The fertility and richness of some of the soil here is not surpassed by any in the Rocky Mountains.

South Bountiful, lying south of West Bountiful embraces the extreme southwest corner of Davis county. One hundred families, or 579 souls, belonging to the Church constitutes the bulk of the population, as there are but a few non-Mormons in this locality. Richard O. Egan, a son of the late Major Howard Egan, presides here as Bishop, with Joseph Hogan (a son of the late Erick G. M. Hogan, one of the first Utah Elders sent to Scandinavia) and John Perry Benson, (a son of the late Apostle Ezra T. Benson) as counselors.

The three Bountifuls may properly be termed the vegetable garden of Salt Lake City, as a very large proportion of the fruits and vegetables and also dairy products, consumed by the inhabitants of Utah's metropolis, are raised here. That the people are doing well financially is proven by their beautiful residences, comfortable out-houses, ornamental fences, etc, which the traveler beholds on every hand as he passes through.

Bountiful, originally known as Sessions' settlement, also Stoker's settlement, and subsequently North Canyon ward, was first settled in the fall of 1847 by Perrigree Sessions and a few others, who had crossed the plains and mountains that year in the wake of the pioneers led directly by President Brigham Young. In 1853 the population had increased to 574 souls. In 1854, according to the advice of President Young, the people, following the example of ancient Bountiful, commenced to wall in their city, as a means of protection against the Lamanites, or Indians—the very same race or people which made it necessary for the inhabitants of the Nephite Bountiful to encircle their city with a deep ditch and a high wall of earth and timbers. The wall commenced by the builders of modern Bountiful was twelve feet high and six feet thick at the bottom; it inclosed a tract of land 216 rods long by 197 rods wide. Most of it was completed, but the proposed gates were never hung, as the Laman-

ite neighbor promised good behavior; and so far as Bountiful is concerned he kept his pledge ever after. Remnants of this city wall is still seen, and the old settlers can easily trace it all around where it was built nearly forty years ago.

When the Mormon pioneers of 1847 first planted their feet in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, President Brigham Young, the leader of that illustrious body (which has become so famous in the history of Utah, and which by and by will become renowned throughout the world) told his fellow travelers that they had arrived in the spot where the chief city of the Saints in the Rocky mountains should stand. Some of the pioneers, who were unfavorably impressed with the utter desolate and barren appearance of the valley, suggested to the President that perhaps after exploring in different directions, a more desirable locality might be found in which to make the headquarters of the Church. It was then that the Prophet Brigham remarked to his brethren that they might go exploring in all directions as much as they pleased, but that they would return convinced that the site where Salt Lake City now stands was the best place in the mountains in which to build a large city, and that its geographical features also made it the natural center for all the surrounding country. That the President was correct is now conceded by all who know anything about Utah Territory, and having also myself visited nearly every nook and corner in Utah where settlements have been founded, I can add my testimony to the truthfulness of the prophetic utterance of that man, who, at the time he made this assertion, was personally unacquainted with the different mountain valleys, where his great genius subsequently led him to direct the founding of prosperous settlements. But none of these have ever been able to outgrow or outshine Salt Lake City and vicinity; nor are there any valleys in the Rocky Mountains which possess more natural advantages than the one bordering on the east shore of the great lake—the dead sea of the west—parched and barren as it looked to the Pioneers of 1847 many of whom had possessed good homes in the fertile and beautiful tracts of country with which the great states of Illinois, Missouri and Ohio abounded.

The transformation is complete.