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DEATH OF BISHOP JOHN SHARP.

THE host of friends of Bishop John Sharp will be pained to learn that he died at his residence in the Twentieth Ward, this city, at twenty minutes past 4 December 23rd. The cause of death was intestinal trouble. His demise removes from the community a man of mark, who was possessed of unusual will-power and great force of character, traits which were exhibited throughout his long and useful career.

John Sharp was born in Clackmannanshire, Scotland, November 9th, 1820, and was consequently in his seventy-second year at the time of his death. On the last anniversary of his birthday he was in unusually good spirits, and said to members of his family that he had felt splendidly during the last previous six months. He remarked: "The Lord has given me one year over the allotted span, and has started to give me a second. I shall be thankful for as many more as He may be pleased to give, and when He signifies it is enough I shall be grateful for that also."

His parents moved in a humble sphere, and at an early age he began to sustain himself by working in the coal mines. In 1846, being then twenty-four years old, he first heard the Gospel, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. He received it gladly, being inducted into the Church by baptism and confirmation, under the ministrations of the late Elder William Gibson, who was noted as an earnest and eloquent preacher of the latter-day message. Soon after his baptism Brother Sharp was ordained an Elder and was appointed to preside over the branch of Saints then existing in his native town. But he was soon imbued with the idea of gathering with the main body of the community with which he had identified himself. While he remained in his native land, however, he showed great devotion and zeal for his religion, and was the means of convincing quite a number of people of its truth.

Not being able to accumulate sufficient means to enable him and his

family to reach Utah at that time, they came as far as the States, in 1848, and located near St. Louis, where he worked in what are known as the Gravois coal mines. He there continued his labors as an Elder, and presided over a branch of the Church organized in that locality. He was at St. Louis while the cholera plague made fearful ravages in that city. Many of the members of the Church were stricken with the dreadful malady and at that time Brother Sharp exhibited a religious faith and personal courage that produced remarkable effects. He, with other brethren, went among the cholera patients, administering to them, and the cases of miraculous healing, by the power of God, that occurred under his personal administration were marvellous. His experiences at that time were in after years a frequent subject of conversation with him.

So soon as Brother Sharp accumulated enough money for the purpose, he and his family came on to this city, where they arrived in September 1850. Almost immediately after he reached here he was taken hold of by President Brigham Young,—whose confidence he enjoyed to an almost unlimited extent—by whom he was engaged in the labor of quarrying and hauling rock for the building of the Temple and other public structures. He was in those early times also made superintendent of church public works, a position he held for many years. In the time of what is designated as the "move," when the population of Northern Utah, on the approach of Buchanan's army, proceeded southward, the subject of this sketch had charge of the removal of all the church effects, and when a pacific settlement of the questions existing at that time was reached, brought them back again to the places from which they were conveyed. This was a task of no small proportions at that time, but being a man of not only great vigor and energy, but of wide mental resource of a practical nature, he accomplished it to the satisfaction of all concerned. In 1855 he was ordained a Bishop, and in that capacity presided over the Twentieth ward, which position he occupied for thirty years.

He was a natural engineer, and a man whose judgment on any practical subject was of great value. He was sub-contractor under Brigham Young in the construction of the most difficult part of the Union Pacific railway, being that portion of the line that runs through the canyon gorges which form the entrance into Salt Lake Valley. He also did contract work of the same

nature on the Central Pacific road at the Promontory. From that time he has been connected with the former company, and nearly the whole of the period until his death a director of it. He was, in an official capacity, associated with the old Utah Central line from the time it was completed, also with the old Utah Southern, and finally was president of the consolidation formed by a combination of the two companies, being in that position at the time the latter was merged into the U. P. system.

The deceased was a director of Z. C. M. I. almost from the initial organization of that mammoth establishment, and was active in supporting it in its earlier struggles when financial times were perilous on account of the scarcity of money. He held that position at the time of his demise. He was one of the original incorporators of the Deseret National Bank, of which he was one of the most useful, far-seeing and sagacious directors. The solidity of that institution is doubtless owing in no small proportionate degree, to his influence, financial standing and sturdy support.

John Sharp was, in the late fifties and early sixties, chief of police of Salt Lake City, a position he filled with ability and courage. He was for many years Major of the Third Regiment of Infantry, of the Nauvoo Legion, and subsequently its Colonel.

In 1872, when the question of the advisability of organizing a Mutual Improvement Association in this ward was being agitated by residents in the locality, he gave the movement his hearty support and encouragement. He directed its organization, which was given the title of the Twentieth Ward Institute, early in January of the year named, and he was unanimously elected its honorary president. This association had a great influence upon the inauguration of the system subsequently established throughout the Church.

Bishop Sharp and his family lived under a species of communism on a small scale. He and his two eldest sons, John, jun., and James, formed a partnership, with their families interested, and virtually they had all things in common. James has been the agent of the association, which has worked with the greatest harmony. As a matter of course the death of the senior member of the firm dissolves it. The union of his family was a leading consideration with Brother Sharp. They have lost by his death a kind, loving and indulgent husband and parent, and the community sympathize with them in their bereavement.

Brother Sharp was a man of splendid