

# THE DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

No. 20.

FILLMORE CITY, WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1858.

VOL. VIII.

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

[CONTINUED.]

MAY 31.—I left my wife and friends in Kirtland, and walked to Fairport with bro. Hale; we were joined by Milton Holmes, and took the steamer Sandusky and arrived in Buffalo June 1st, and Syracuse on the 4th; walked 36 miles to Richland, Oswego Co., N.Y., and called upon my two brothers, Azmon and Thompson, whom I had not seen for several years. We visited the churches as far as Sackett's Harbor, called upon Archibald Paten, and delivered to him some letters from Warren Parrish, in which were enclosed many one hundred dollar bills, which he had taken from the Kirtland Bank.

We crossed Lake Ontario, visited Upper Canada, and attended a conference, May 10th, with Elders John E. Page and James Blakesly, in the township of Bastard, Leeds Co. There were eight branches represented, containing 300 members, 13 elders, 5 priests, 8 teachers and 6 deacons. Elder Wm. Draper and myself ordained 7 elders, 9 priests, 11 teachers and 5 deacons: five were baptized by Elder Page at the close of the conference.

A woman was possessed of the devil and greatly afflicted, much of the time was dumb; four of us laid hands upon her, and cast the devil out in the name of Jesus Christ, and she was made whole, and gave thanks unto God, and went on her way rejoicing.

We visited several other branches and preached the word of God, and several of the sick were healed.

We returned to Kingston, took steamer for Oswego, and canal for Albany; bro. John Goodson, Isaac Russell and John Snider accompanied us from Canada, and left us at Schenectady, to join Elders Kimball, Hyde and Richards at New York, to go to England.

We walked from Albany to Farmington, Conn.; attended a conference of the Saints in Canaan; arrived at my father's house July 6th. This was the first time I had seen my father or relatives in Conn., since I joined the church; they received me kindly. On the 10th, I preached in the City Hall in Colinsville, and a mob gathered and attempted to break up the meeting, with sife and drum, hollowing and yelling; they were urged on by a Presbyterian priest. At the close of the meeting the priest came to me with his rabble, and asked many questions; he said I had no right to my opinion, and no man had a right to preach the gospel unless he had a collegiate education. I told him I would admit that point when he would tell me at what college Jesus Christ and his apostles obtained their education: the priest and rabble then left.

—12.—I preached in a school house in West Avon to an attentive congregation; after meeting I baptized my uncle, Osem Woodruff, his wife and son, John, in fulfillment of a dream which I had at ten years of age.

I visited most of my relatives in Conn., and preached the gospel to them.

—16.—I preached at Adna Hart's in Avon, where I was met by my step-mother and sister, also by my wife, who had travelled alone from Kirtland, and was on her way to visit her father in Maine.

—19.—Elder Hale went to New Rowley, Mass., to visit his friends. I had been solicited to preach to the citizens of Farmington by many prominent men, but every room which was offered me, including the town hall, was closed against me by the Rev. Noah Porter, pastor of the Presbyterian church, until the Methodist church was offered me, which he had not influence to close. Two hours after I gave out the appointment, the house was filled, and I preached to a very attentive congregation, including my father and his household, for an hour and a half, upon the first principles of the gospel; I gave liberty to the assembly to ask any questions, or find any fault with what I had said, but I met with no opposition.

—20.—I left my father's house, and, with my wife, rode by stage to Hartford.

—21.—Not having money to pay the fare for us both, I paid her fare in the stage to New Rowley, Mass., and I walked through a hot sultry day fifteen hours, averaging three and a half miles per hour, making 52 miles.

—22.—I walked 48 miles.

—23.—I walked 36 miles, and arrived at Elder Nathaniel Holmes', in New Rowley, at 2 o'clock, p.m., making 136 miles in a little over two days and a half. I met with my wife and Elder Milton Holmes, at his father's house: I spent several days in preaching to the Saints in that region.

Aug. 1.—We left New Rowley, and was joined by Elder Hale, who accompanied us to Saco, Maine.

—7.—I accompanied my wife to her father's, in Scarborough, Maine. We were kindly received; it was the first time I had seen any of her relations. We found mother Carter very sick. I spent several days visiting the Saints in that region.

—10.—I accompanied Ezra and Fabien Carter, my brothers-in-law, on a fishing excursion; we caught with hooks 250 cod fish, haddock, and hake, and saw four whales; it being the first time I had ever seen that class of fish that swallowed Jonah.

—18.—With Elder Hale, I started to fill my mission on Fox Islands; we walked to Portland, and spent the night at Mr. Samuel Hale's.

—19.—We took the steamer Bangor 85 miles to Owl's Head, where we arrived at sunset, without means to prosecute our journey further. We retired to a high hill, and bowed before the Lord, and prayed that he would open our way; the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us, and testified unto us that our prayers would be answered. As we arose from our knees, a sloop came into the harbor; we went to the captain, and enquired where he was going; he replied, through the channel of Vinal Haven; he took us on board and landed us on North Fox Islands, at 2 a.m., on the 20th. We wandered in the dark about an hour, rambling over rocks and bushes, found the house of Mr. Nathaniel Dyer, and were entertained. It being Sunday morning, Mr. Benj. Kent piloted us to the Baptist meeting-house, occupied by Elder Gideon J. Newton, pastor of the only religious denomination upon the island. At the door, I sent for the deacon, and told him I wished him to inform the minister that we were servants of God, and wished to deliver a message to that people. The minister sent word for us to come into the pulpit; accordingly, with valize in hand, we walked up into the pulpit, and took a seat on each side of him. When he closed his discourse, he asked me what hour we would like to speak; I told him at five; he gave out our appointment, and invited us to his house. I asked him how many school houses were on the island; he said four, and gave me their names. I asked him if they were free for any one to preach in; he answered in the affirmative. I took out my Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants, and laid them all upon his stand; he promised to read them. The hour of meeting arrived, and I preached to a full house upon the first principles of the gospel, and bore testimony that the Lord had raised up a prophet, and had commenced to establish his church and kingdom again upon the earth, in fulfillment of his word, as spoken through the ancient prophets and apostles. This was the first discourse ever delivered by any Latter-day Saint upon this chain of islands; Elder Hale bore testimony. I gave out appointments for preaching in the four school houses. The people came out en masse to investigate the principles which we taught. In fourteen days we preached nineteen discourses. Capt. Justice Ames and wife were baptized by Elder Hale. Elder Newton, the Baptist minister, with his family, attended twelve of our meetings, read the books, and was convinced by the Spirit of the Lord that our doctrine was true, and he had a hard struggle in

his mind to know which to do, receive or reject it; he finally resolved to reject it, and commenced preaching against us. He sent for Mr. Douglass, Methodist minister, on the South Island, to come and help him; he had been long at variance with Mr. Douglass, but they became very friendly and united in a war against us. We continued preaching daily until we baptized most of the members of Mr. Newton's church, and those who owned the meeting house.

I followed Mr. Douglass to his own island, and commenced preaching to his church, and baptized a good share of his members, among whom were several sea captains. Ministers from the main land were sent for, who came over and tried to put a stop to the work by preaching and lying about us; but the work continued to roll on. They wished me to work a miracle to convince them that my doctrine was true. I told them they had rejected the truth, and they would see signs, but not unto salvation.

Vinal Haven, which includes both north and south Fox Island, is in lat. 44°, long. 69° 10'. The inhabitants are generally healthy and industrious, and hospitable to strangers. The people obtain most of their wealth by fishing, and fit out annually over one hundred licensed vessels, beside many smaller crafts. The north island is nine miles long and two wide; population 800, and contains a post office, a store, a grist mill, four school houses, and a Baptist church. The land is rocky and rough, yet there are farms which produce good wheat, barley, oats, potatoes and grass; the principal timber is fir, spruce, hemlock and birch. The rasp and gooseberry grow in great abundance. Sheep are the principal stock.

South Fox island is about ten miles long and five wide, and is a mass of rocks, principally granite, formed into shelves, hills, hollows, and cut up into nooks, points and ravines by coves and harbors; population, 1000. There are some small patches under cultivation, at the expense of great labor and toil. Many resident fishermen fish at Newfoundland, and bring them home, and dry them upon flakes; they annually supply the market with a great amount of cod fish, mackerel and boxed herring. The latter island contains two stores, three tide saw mills, six school houses, a small branch of the Methodist church and a priest. The timber is pine, fir, spruce, hemlock and birch, also gooseberries, raspberries, whortleberries and upland cranberries; bushes and timber grow out of the crevices of the rocks.

There is a great amount and variety of fish in the waters around these islands, viz.: whale, black fish, shark, ground shark, pilot fish, horse mackerel, sturgeon, salmon, halibut, cod, pollock, tom cod, hake, haddock, mackerel, shad, bass, alewives, herring, pohagen, dolphin, whiting, frost fish, flounders, smelt, skate, shrimp, shad, cusk, bluebacks, scollop, dogfish, muttonfish, lumpfish, squid, five fingers, monkfish, nursefish, sunfish, swordfish, thrasher, cat, scoppog, twotog, eyefish, cunner, ling eels, lobsters, clams, mussels, winkles, porpoises, seals, &c. &c.

Sept. 6.—The harbor was filled with a school of mackerel, which were caught in great numbers by the people standing upon the wharf.

While standing upon the farm of Eleazar Carver on the north island I counted fifty five islands, many of which were inhabited.

Oct. 2.—I left the island with Elder Hale; Capt. Ames took us to Thomastown in a sloop.

—3.—We walked forty six miles to Bath.

—4.—We attended a Baptist convention, and preached to a large congregation in the evening in Pierce's hall; the people listened attentively.

—5.—We walked thirty six miles to Portland.

—6.—Walked ten miles to father Carter's in Scarborough, where I found my wife and friends well.

—9.—I parted with Elder Hale, who returned to Kirtland. I continued preaching through various towns on the main land until

Nov. 2, when I again returned to Fox Islands, accompanied by my wife.

—15.—I visited the Isle of Holt, twelve miles east, and preached to an attentive congregation, leaving them the Book of Mormon, which they promised to read. I returned on the 16th.

I continued my labors during the winter of 1837-8, and nearly every person had attended my meetings, and taken sides for or against. Our enemies made attempts to break up our meetings.

Jan. 15, 1838.—A company of sailors belonging to the United States revenue cutter, brought on shore a swivel and joined the mob, parading near the house where I was preaching, and discharged it several times, accompanied with small arms, with the intention of breaking up the meeting. Some of the mob gathered around to see what effect this would have. I warned them in the name of the Lord, and proclaimed the judgments of God that awaited the wicked, and shook my garments in the presence of the people, and told them I was clear of their blood; but they only heard my voice intermingled with the roar of cannon and musketry. Before I closed speaking, the sailors went back on board the revenue cutter. At the close of the meeting I baptised two, also one next day, and while baptizing, the mob again commenced firing guns. The Baptists and Methodists got up the mob. Mr. Douglas, the Methodist priest, when argument failed him, applied to all the magistrates for warrants against me; they refused to grant them as he had no cause of complaint.

Feb. 13.—I crossed in the mail boat to Hampden, and ordained James Townsend; we walked together through deep snows, and visited and preached in the towns of Sears-mont, Belfast, Northport, Frankfort, Hampden, and twice in the city hall in Bangor; to large assemblies, and returned to Fox Islands via Casteem and the Isle of Holt. Arrived in Vinal Haven March 8. Elder Townsend returned home.

March 22.—I accompanied br. Stirrat, at low tide, on to a bar some forty rods from shore, to dig some clams. We were soon joined by Mrs. Woodruff and sister Stone, who had a curiosity to see how clams were dug. The ground for about twelve rods nearer shore was several feet lower than the point we were on, but we were so busily engaged we did not observe the flowing tide, until we were surrounded by water, and having no boat, our only alternative was to wade ashore and carry the women, which we safely accomplished amid the reflection that tide nor time waited for no man.

April 4.—Mr. Kent, the postmaster, showed me a letter containing two sheets of foolscap signed by Warren Parrish and several of the Twelve, who had apostatized and been cut off from the church. The communication was full of slander and falsehoods against Joseph Smith and all that stood by him. It was sent with the intention of breaking up the work upon these islands.

—11.—I was visited by Elders Townsend and Milton Holmes, who attended conferences with me upon both islands, and bore their testimony to the people, but the spirit of opposition increased to a great height. I was warned by the Spirit of the Lord to leave for a season and take a western mission. After visiting the Saints from house to house, and praying with and encouraging them, I left on the 28th and went to the main land with Elders Townsend and Holmes. Mrs. Woodruff returned to her father's. We walked to Scarborough. I left May 7th, and walked to Bradford, where I left Elder Holmes, and proceeded to Boston.

May 11.—I gave out an appointment to preach at sister Vose's room, and I went to Cambridgeport to visit Elder A. P. Rockwood, who had been imprisoned in jail on pretence of debt, but in reality out of religious persecution. The jailer locked me in until ten p.m.; but while it disappointed a congregation of people, it gave me a happy visit with Elder Rockwood,