

THE HAUN'S MILL MASSACRE.

AN INCIDENT OF THE "MORMON WAR" IN MISSOURI.

BRECKINRIDGE, Mo., September, 27, 1887.—In the afternoon of Tuesday October 30, 1838, during the Mormon war in Missouri, there occurred in Caldwell County a dreadful incident, generally termed "The Haun's Mill Massacre." From official documents and other records, from affidavits of witnesses, and from statements made by actual participants, I have prepared the following account. If any newspaper publication of the affair has ever before been made, I am not aware of the fact.

The Mormons made their first settlement in Missouri, in Jackson County, in the year 1832, under the leadership of their "Prophet," Joseph Smith. I have not the space here to describe their experiences in that county, their expulsion therefrom, their sojourn in Clay and Ray, the "treaty" by which they were given Caldwell County as a sort of reservation, the founding of the city of Far West, nor can I narrate the circumstances leading to the Mormon war (so called), and finally to the banishment of these unhappy people from the State. All these incidents may form the subject of a future paper. I may state, however, that the massacre was perpetrated on the very day that the militia, under Gens. Lucas and Doniphan, arrived at Far West, with orders from Gov. Boggs to "expel the Mormons from the State or exterminate them."

At Jacob Haun's mill, on Shoal Creek, in the eastern part of Caldwell County, about eight miles south of Breckinridge, there had collected about twenty Mormon families. Haun himself was a Mormon and had come to the site from Wisconsin a few years before. He had a very good mill, and clustered around it were a blacksmith shop and half a dozen small houses. The alarm that the troops were moving against them had driven nearly all the Mormon families in the county to Far West for safety. A dozen or more living in the vicinity repaired to Haun's mill, which was twenty miles to the eastward of Far West. As there were not enough houses to accommodate all of the fugitives, a number were living in tents and temporary shelters. A few families, perhaps four, had come in on the evening of the 29th, from Ohio, and were occupying their emigrant wagons. Not one member of the little community had ever been in arms against the "Gentiles," or taken any part whatever in the preceding disturbances.

Word that the militia of the State had been ordered to expel them from the country had reached the Mormons of the Haun's mill settlement, and following this intelligence came a report that a considerable number of men in Livingston County, together with some from Daviess, had organized in the Forks of Grand River, near Spring Hill, in Livingston, and were preparing to attack them. Whereupon a company of about twenty-five men and boys, indifferently armed with shotguns and squirrel rifles, was organized at the mill, and David Evans was chosen captain. It was resolved to defend the place against the threatened assault. Some of the older men urged that no resistance should be made, but that all should retreat to Far West. The day after the skirmish on Crooked River (October 25) Haun himself went to Far West to take counsel of Joe Smith. "Move here, by all means, if you wish to save your lives," said the prophet. Haun replied that if the settlers should abandon their homes, the Gentiles would burn their houses and other buildings and destroy all of the property left behind. "Better lose your property than your lives," rejoined Smith. Haun represented that he and his neighbors were willing to defend themselves against what he called "the mob," and Smith finally gave them permission to remain. Others at the mill opposed a retreat, and when an old man named Myers reminded them how few they were, and how many the "Gentiles" numbered, they declared that the Almighty would send His angels to their help when the day of battle should come. Some of the women, too, urged the men to stand firm, and offered to mold bullets and prepare patching for the rifles if necessary.

North of the mill was a body of timber about a mile in width, skirting Shoal Creek; beyond was a stretch of prairie. For a day or two Captain Evans kept a picket post in the northern border of the timber, but on the 28th he entered into a sort of truce with Captain Nehemiah Comstock, commanding a company of Livingston "Gentiles" from the settlements near Moosville and Utica, and the post was withdrawn. By the terms of this truce, which was effected by a messenger who rode, between Evans and Comstock, the Gentiles were to let the Mormons alone as long as the latter were peaceable, and vice versa. Each party, too, was to disband its military organization. But on the morning of the 29th the Mormons learned that a company of Livingston militia, a few miles to the eastward, were menacing them, and so they maintained their organization and that night set watches. The latter company was commanded by Capt. Wm. Mann, and for some days had been operating at and in the vicinity of Whitney's mill, on Lower Shoal Creek (where the village of Dawn now stands); stopping Mormon emigrants

on their way from the East to Caldwell County, turning them back in some instances, taking their arms from them in others, etc.

On the 29th at Woolsey's, northeast of Breckinridge, an agreement was reached by the Gentiles for an attack upon Haun's mill. Three companies, numbering in the aggregate about 200 men, were organized. They were commanded by Capt. Nehemiah Comstock, Wm. O. Jennings, and Wm. Gee. The command of the battalion was given to Col. Thomas Jennings, an old militia officer, then living in the Forks. Nearly all of the men were citizens of Livingston County. Perhaps twenty were from Daviess, from whence they had been driven by the Mormons during the troubles in that county a few weeks previous. The Daviess County men were very bitter against the Mormons, and vowed the direst vengeance on the entire sect. It did not matter whether or not the Mormons at the mill had taken any part in the disturbances which had occurred; it was enough that they were Mormons. The Livingston men became thoroughly imbued with the same spirit, and all were eager for the raid. The Livingston men had no wrongs to complain of themselves, for the Mormons had never invaded their county, or injured them in any way; but they seemed to feel an extraordinary sympathy for the outrages suffered by their neighbors.

Setting out from Woolsey's, after noon, on the 29th, Col. Jennings marched swiftly out of the timber northwest of the present village of Moosville, and out on the prairie stretching down southwards toward the doomed hamlet at Haun's mill. The word was passed along the column, "Shoot at everything wearing breeches, and shoot to kill."

All of the Gentiles were mounted, and they had with them a wagon and two Mormon prisoners. Within two miles of the mill the wagon and prisoners were left, in charge of a squad, and the remainder of the force pressed rapidly on. Entering the timber north of the mill, Col. Jennings passed through it, unobserved, right up to the borders of the settlement, and speedily formed his line for the attack. Capt. W. O. Jennings' company had the center, Capt. Comstock's the left, and Capt. Gee's the right.

The Mormon leader had somehow become apprehensive of trouble. He communicated his fears to some of the men, and was about sending out scouts and pickets. It had been previously agreed that in case of attack the men should repair to the blacksmith shop and occupy it as a fort or block house. This structure was built of logs, with wide cracks between them, was about 18 feet square, and had a large, wide door. The greater portion of the Mormons were, however, unsuspicious of any imminent peril. Children were playing on the banks of the creek, women were engaged in their ordinary domestic duties, the newly arrived immigrants were resting under the trees, which were clad in the scarlet, crimson and golden leaves of autumn. The scene was peaceful and Acadian. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun hung low and red in a beautiful Indian summer sky.

Suddenly, from out of the timber north and west of the mill the Gentiles burst upon the hamlet. The air was filled with shouts and shots, and the fight was on. It can not fairly be called a fight. Taken wholly by surprise, the Mormons were thrown into extreme confusion. The women and children cried and screamed in excitement and terror, and the greater number, directed by some of the men, ran across the mill dam to the south bank of the creek and sought shelter in the woods. Perhaps twenty men, Captain Evans among them, ran with their guns to the blacksmith shop and began to return the fire. Some were shot down in the attempts to reach the shop.

The fire of the Mormons was wild and ineffective; that of the militia was accurate and deadly. The cracks between the logs of the shop were so large that it was easy to shoot through them, and so thickly were the Mormons huddled together on the inside that nearly every bullet which entered the shop killed or wounded a man. Firing was kept up all the while on the fleeing fugitives, and many were shot down as they ran.

Realizing very soon that he was placed at a decided disadvantage, Capt. Evans gave orders to retreat, directing every man to take care of himself. The door of the shop was thrown open, and all of the able-bodied survivors ran out, endeavoring to reach the woods. Some were shot before reaching shelter. Capt. Evans was much excited, and ran all the way to Mud Creek, seven miles south, with his gun loaded, not having discharged it during the night. The Gentiles advanced and began to use their rough, homemade swords, or corn-knives, with which some of them were armed. The fugitives were fired on until they were out of range but not pursued, as the few who escaped scattered in almost every direction.

Coming upon the field after it had been abandoned, the Gentiles perpetrated some terrible deeds. At least three of the wounded were hacked to death with the "corn knives" or finished with a rifle bullet. Wm. Reynolds, a Livingston County man, entered the blacksmith shop and found a little boy, only 10 years of age, named Sardius Smith, hiding under the billows. Without even demanding his surrender, the cruel wretch drew up his rifle and shot the little fellow as he lay cowering and trembling. Reynolds

afterward boasted of his exploit to persons yet living. He described, with morbid glee, how the poor child "kicked and squealed" in his dying agonies, and justified his inhuman act by the old Indian aphorism, "Nitts make lice." Charley Merrick, another little boy only 9 years old, had hid under the bellows. He ran out, but did not get far until he received a load of buckshot and a rifle ball, in all three wounds. He did not die, however, for nearly five weeks. Esquire Thos. McBride was 78 years of age, and had been a soldier under Gates and Washington in the Revolution. He had started for a blacksmith shop; but was shot down on the way, and lay wounded and helpless, but still alive. A Daviess County man named Rogers, who kept a ferry across Grand River, near Galatin, came upon him and demanded his gun. "Take it," said Mr. McBride. Rogers picked up the weapon and feeling that it was loaded deliberately discharged it into the old veteran's breast. He then cut and hacked the body with his "corn-knife" until it was frightfully gashed and mangled.

After the Mormons had all been either killed, wounded or driven away, the Gentiles began to loot the place. Considerable property was taken, much of the spoil consisting of household articles and personal effects. At least three wagons and ten horses were taken. Two emigrant wagons were driven off with all their contents. The Mormons claim that there was a general pillage, and that even the bodies of the slain were robbed. The Gentiles deny this, and say that the wagons were needed to haul on their three wounded men and the bedding was taken to make them comfortable while the other articles taken did not amount to much. Two of the survivors have stated to me that the place was "pretty well cleaned out."

Col. Jennings did not remain at the mill more than two hours. Twilight approaching, he set out on his return to his former encampment. He feared a rally and return of the Mormons with a large re-enforcement, and doubtless he desired to reflect leisurely on his course of future operations. Reaching Woolsey's he halted his battalion, and prepared to pass the night. But a few hours later he imagined he heard cannon and great tumult in the direction of Haun's mill, betokening, as he thought, the advance of a large Mormon force upon him. Rousing his men from their sweet dreams of victory, he broke camp, moved rapidly eastward, and never halted until he had put the West Fork of Grand River between him and his imaginary pursuers. He and his men had won glory enough for one day, anyhow! They had not lost a man killed and only three wounded. John Renfrow had his thumb shot off, Allen England was shot in the thigh, and—Hart in the arm.

The Mormons killed and mortally wounded numbered seventeen. Here are the names:

Thomas McBride, Augustin Farmer, Levi N. Merrick, Simon Cox, Elias Benner, Hiram Abbott, Josiah Fuller, John York, Benj. Lewis, John Lee, Alex. Campbell, John Byers, Geo. S. Richards, Warren Smith, Wm. Napier, Chas. Merrick, 9, Sardius Smith, aged 10.

The severely wounded numbered eleven men, one boy (Alma Smith, aged 7), and one woman, a Miss Mary Stedwell. The latter was shot through the hand and arm as she was running to the woods.

Dies here! Bloody work and woeful. What a scene did Col. Jennings and his men turn their backs upon as they rode away in the gloaming from the little valley once all green and peaceful! The wounded men had been given no attention, and the bodies of the slain had been left to fester and putrify in the Indian summer temperature, warm and mellowing. A large red moon rose and a fog came up from the stream and lay like a face-cloth upon the pallid countenances of the dead. Timid and wearily came forth the widows from their hiding places, and as they recognized one a husband, one a father, another a son, and another a brother among the slain, the wailing of grief and terror were most pitiful. All that night were they alone with their dead and wounded. There were no physicians, but if there had been many of the wounded were past all surgery. Dreadful sights in the moonlight, and dreadful sounds on the night winds. In the hamlet the groans of the wounded, the moans and sobs of the grief-stricken, the bellowing of cattle, and the howling of dogs, and from the woods the dismal hooting of owls.

By and by, when the wounded had been made as comfortable as possible, the few men who had returned gathered the women and children together, and all sought consolation in prayer. Then they sang from the Mormon hymn book a selection entitled "Mormon's Lamentation," a dirge-like composition, lacking in poetry and deficient in rhythm, but giving something of comfort, let us hope, to the choristers. And so in prayer and song and ministrations the remainder of the night was passed.

The next morning the corpses had changed and were changing fast. They must be buried. There were not enough men left to make coffins or even dig graves. It could not be determined when relief would come or when the Gentiles would return. There was a large unfinished well near the mill, which it was decided should be used as a common sepulcher. Four men, one of whom was Joseph W. Young, a Brother of Brigham Young, gathered

up the bodies, the women assisting, and bore them one at a time, on a large plank, to the well and slid them in. Some lay strewn upon the ghastly pile and then a thin layer of dirt thrown upon the hay.

The next day Capt. Comstock's company returned to the mill, as they said, to bury the dead. Finding that duty had been attended to, they expressed considerable satisfaction, at having been relieved of the job, and after notifying the people that they must leave the State, or they would all be killed, they rode away. The pit was subsequently filled by Mr. C. R. Ross, now a resident of Black Oak, Caldwell County.

A day or two after the massacre Col. Jennings started with his battalion to join the State forces at Far West. He had not proceeded far when he met a messenger who informed him that the Mormons at Far West had surrendered, and gave him an order to move to Daviess County and join the forces under Gen. Robert Wilson, then operating against the Mormons at Adam-on-di-Ahmon. The battalion was present at the surrender at "Diamond," as it is generally called, and a day or two thereafter, Capt. Comstock's company was ordered to Haun's mill, where it remained in camp for some weeks. Herewith I give an extract from an affidavit made by Mrs. Amanda Smith, whose husband and little son were killed in the massacre, and who resided at the mill during the stay of Comstock's company:

"The next day the mob came back. They told us we must leave the State forthwith or be killed. It was bad weather, and they had taken our teams and clothes; our men were all dead or wounded. I told them they might kill me and my children and welcome. They said to us, from time to time, if we did not leave the State they would come and kill us. We could not leave then. We had little prayer meetings; they said if we did not stop them they would kill every man, woman and child. We had spelling schools for our little children; they pretended they were 'Mormon meetings,' and said if we did not stop them they would kill every man, woman and child. I started the 1st of February, very cold weather, for Illinois, with five small children and no money. It was mob all the way. I drove the team, and we slept out of doors. We suffered greatly from hunger, cold and fatigue; and for what? For our religion. In this boasted land of liberty, 'Deny your faith or die,' was the cry."

While in camp at the mill, according to the statements to me of two of its members, Comstock's company lived off the county, as did the State troops at Far West. The Mormon cattle and hogs had been turned into the fields and were fine and fat. The mill furnished flour and meal, and other articles of provision were to be had for the taking. The Mormon men were either prisoners or had been driven from the country. By the 1st of April following all had left the State. Many of them had been killed, their houses burned, their property taken, their fields laid waste and the result was called peace. BURN JOYCE.

THE SAN JUAN STAKE CONFERENCE.

The quarterly conference of the San Juan Stake convened at 10 o'clock a. m., Saturday, Dec. 3, 1887, at Bluff, San Juan County, Utah, and closed Monday, Dec. 5.

The Stake presidency were present and every Ward in the Stake was represented by its respective Bishop. Some of them coming a distance of 120 miles through storm to attend.

The Bishops reported their several wards as being in good condition, the Saints as a general thing are endeavoring to live their religion; the only drawback seemed to be the fact that their numbers were too small to develop the natural resources of the country. Good crops had been raised and the Saints were steadily gaining financially and felt well spiritually.

The remarks during conference were inspiring and instructive, all tending to better the condition of the Saints if adhered to.

The Y. M. M. I. Association held their conference on Saturday evening, Dec. 3d, and the Relief Society on Sunday evening. Both were well attended and an excellent spirit prevailed throughout the conferences.

CHARLES E. WALTON, Stake Clerk.

A cowboy at Winslow, A. T., attempted to ride his horse into a saloon on Wednesday, the 14th, and was shot dead by the bartender.

A prominent territorial official will soon leave for Washington, and it is whispered that his mission to the national capital is for the purpose of securing the removal of Governor Zulick and his own appointment to the position of executive of Arizona. The Gazette has under all circumstances, entertained a high opinion of Governor Zulick, and cannot but commend his administration as one of ability and advantage to our people. We trust that the ambitious gentleman who is seeking to oust him will fail to accomplish his designs, and further if the said official would score as dismal a failure as governor as he has in other official capacities. The change would be a public calamity.

HEBER CITY ITEMS

Cold Weather.—A Pleasant Entertainment.

HEBER CITY, Dec. 13, 1887.

Editor Deseret News:

Snow is about three inches deep here, but the roads are bare and good. The weather is clear and cold, the thermometer reaching zero nearly every morning, and sometimes ten degrees below. Good health prevails generally.

We have an agent of modern civilization in process of construction here in the shape of a saloon, with pool table attachment, which will be in running order by the holidays; so Heber will not be a prohibition just yet.

There was a pleasant sociable given on the 12th inst. in honor of President Hatch and family, on the 20th anniversary of their arrival in the valley, having been President Bishop ten years of that time and President of the Stake the other ten years. It was held in John Crook's house, and about sixty persons spent the afternoon and evening in a most pleasant manner. After a dinner of skillfully prepared dainties and substantial, a programme of five-minutes' speeches, interspersed with songs, recitations, music, etc., was rendered.

President Hatch gave a brief and interesting review of his labors from the commencement to the present time, and expressed his appreciation of the goodwill shown him on that occasion. A number of others also made fitting and instructive remarks, and at 10 o'clock the party closed.

Yours truly, A SUBSCRIBER.

Why Tumblers were so Called

How many times a day do we use the word without stopping to think what it means? Every day at luncheon and at dinner we drink out of a tumbler. But I, for one, never thought why the large glass that holds our milk or water was so called until, once upon a time, I happened to have luncheon at All Souls' College, Oxford.

All Souls' is a curious college. It has no students, or "undergraduates" as we call them in England. It consists of a master and a number of "fellows"—men who have taken their degrees, and have distinguished themselves as scholars. There is a quaint old rule in Latin, that says a man to be a Fellow of All Souls' must be "Well-born, well dressed, and a moderately good Doctor in singing."

There is no question nowadays of singing! But of good breeding and good scholarship there is. And to be elected a Fellow of All Souls' is a great honor.

One of the most distinguished Fellows is Professor Max Muller, the great philologist; who, though he is a German by birth, and was not educated at Oxford, was elected to All Souls' as a mark of respect for his immense learning.

The "Common room," or the Fellows' smaller dining-room, is a delightful old place, with its great fireplace, and its walls all wainscoted with black oak, while through the great window with its heavy stone mullions you look out on to ancient ivy-grown buildings round a quiet court, which is filled with a space of velvet turf.

On the day of which I speak, Professor Max Muller was giving a luncheon in this delicious room to the charming and talented Princess Alice, the wife of the Grand Duke of Hesse Darmstadt, and second daughter of Queen Victoria. There were not a dozen guests beside the Princess and her husband; and a very agreeable luncheon we had, with pleasant talk on all kinds of interesting subjects.

But what excited the curiosity of all the strangers present, was a set of the most attractive little round bowls of ancient silver, about the size of a large orange. They were brought round according to the custom of the place, filled to the brim with the famous ale brewed in the college.

These, we were told, were "tumblers," and we were speedily shown how they came by their name—a fitting lesson for the guests of a philologist!

When one of these little bowls was empty it was placed upon the table, mouth downwards. Instantly—so perfect was its balance—it flew back into its proper position, as if asking to be filled again. No matter how it was treated—trundled along the floor—balanced carefully on its side—dropped suddenly upon the soft, thick carpet—up it rolled again and settled itself with a few gentle shakings and sways into its place, like one of those india rubber tumbling dolls your baby brothers and sisters delight in.

This, then, was the origin of our word "tumbler," at first made of silver, as are these All Souls' tumblers. Then, when glass became common, the round glasses that stood on a flat base superseded the exquisitely balanced silver spheres, and stole their name so successfully that you have, to go to All Souls' and a few other old houses to see the real thing.

So do words, with the wonderful life that is in them, change and grow and get new meanings, full of interest and teaching and delight to those who think about them.—Rose G. Kingsley in Christmas Wide Awake.

THERE is a freight blockade somewhere between San Francisco and this city. Freight from California is now ten days over due.