

DESERT NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

No. 18.

FILLMORE CITY, WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1858.

VOL. VIII.

WE SIGH FOR HEAVEN.

BY D. SNOW.

LEAPS there a heart with joy and gladness,
That never knew a sorrow;
On whose bright path ne'er frown'd a storm,
To mar that bliss that e'er did form
A likeness of the morrow—
That ne'er inhaled a breath in sadness?

LIVES there a man in fair creation,
With wealth his ruling passion,
Who Crassus-like hath gained his end,
While servile slaves by thousands bend,
And ape this god of fashion,
Who feels contented in his station?

BREATHES there a soul by woe distracted
In error's mazes roving,
Whose way is dark, and dread, and drear—
Or lives there yet a constant fear
In its still onward moving,
That's not by hope oft counteracted?

Not by hope and fear we're led and driven,
We seek for lasting pleasures;
Like children, first we're pleased with noise,
Till weary of our rattle toys,
We grasp for richer treasures,
And each soul, immortal, sighs for Heaven!

HISTORY

OF
WILFORD WOODRUFF.
(FROM HIS OWN PEN.)

In tracing the history of my fathers, I find it difficult to obtain a satisfactory account of the Woodruff family for more than three generations.

My great grandfather, Josiah Woodruff, lived nearly one hundred years, and possessed an iron constitution and performed a great amount of manual labor nearly up to the time of his death. His wife's name was Sarah; she bore to him nine children, as follows:—Josiah, Appleton, Eldad, Elisha, Joseph, Rhoda, Phebe, and two names not given.

My grandfather, Eldad Woodruff, was the third son of Josiah. He was born in Farmington, Hartford Co., Connecticut, in 1751; he also possessed a strong constitution; it was said that he performed the most labor for several years of any man in Hartford Co., and from over exertion in hewing timber he was attacked with rheumatism in his right hip, which caused severe lameness, for several years before his death. He married Dinah Woodford, by whom he had seven children, viz.:—Eldad, Elizabeth, Samuel, Aphek, Titus, Hellen, and Ozem.

Eldad married Lewey Woodford; Elizabeth, Amasa Frisby; Samuel, Miss Case; Aphek, Beulah Thompson and Azubah Hart; Titus, Louisa Allen; Hellen, Amos Wheeler; and Ozem, Ackah Merrill and Hannah Hart; all of whom had large families.

My grandfather died in Farmington, with the spotted fever in 1806, aged 55 years. My grandmother, Dinah, died in 1824, in the same place, with a cancer in the left breast: her sufferings were very great.

My father, Aphek Woodruff, was born in Farmington, Nov. 11, 1778; he married Beulah Thompson, who was born in 1782, Nov. 29, 1801. She bore three sons, namely:—Azmon, born Nov. 29, 1802; Ozen Thompson, born Dec. 22, 1804; myself born March 1, 1807.

My mother died with the spotted fever, June 11, 1808, aged 26 years, leaving me fifteen months old. My father's second wife, Azubah Hart, was born July 31, 1792; they were married Nov. 9, 1810; they had six children, viz.: Philo, born Nov. 29, 1811, and died by poison administered by a physician Nov. 25, 1827; Asahel Hart, born April 11, 1814, and died in Terrahaute, Oct. 18, 1838; Franklin, born March 12, 1816, and died June 1; Newton, born June 19, 1818, drowned Sept., 1820; Julius, born April 22, 1820, and died in infancy; Renice, born June 19, 1821. I married her to Dwight Webster in Farmington, Conn., Aug. 4, 1841.

My father was a strong constitutioned man, and has done a great amount of labor. At eighteen years of age, he commenced attending a flouring and saw mill, and continued about

50 years, most of this time he labored eighteen hours a day.

He never made any profession of religion, until I baptized him with all his household into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the first day of July, 1838. He was a man of great charity, honesty, integrity and truth, and made himself poor by giving to the poor, and accommodating his fellow men by loaning money and becoming surety for his neighbors, and always saying yes, to every man who asked a favor at his hand.

I was born in the north part of the town of Farmington, now called Avon, Hartford Co., Conn., March 1, 1807. I assisted my father in attending the Farmington Mills, until I was twenty years of age.

In April, 1827, I took the flouring mill of my aunt, Hellen Wheeler, which I attended three years. In May, 1830, I took charge of the flouring mill of Mr. Collins, the ax manufacturer, in South Canton, Conn. At the end of one year it was demolished to make way for other machinery. In March, 1831, I took charge of the flouring mill owned by Mr. Richard B. Cowles of New Hartford, Conn. In the spring of 1832, in company with my oldest brother Azmon, I went to Richland, Oswego Co., New York, and purchased a farm and saw mill, and settled in business.

At an early age my mind was exercised upon religious subjects, although I never made a profession until 1830. I did not then join any church, for the reason that I could not find any denomination whose doctrines, faith or practice, agreed with the gospel of Jesus Christ, or the ordinances and gifts which the apostles taught. Although the ministers of the day taught that the faith, gifts, graces, miracles and ordinances, which the ancient saints enjoyed, were done away and no longer needed, I did not believe it to be true, only as they were done away through the unbelief of the children of men. I believed the same gifts, graces, miracles and power would be manifest in one age of the world as in another, when God had a church upon the earth, and that the church of God would be re-established upon the earth, and that I should live to see it. These principles were rivetted upon my mind from the perusal of the Old and New Testament, with fervent prayer that the Lord would show me what was right and wrong, and lead me in the path of salvation, without any regard to the opinions of man, and the whisperings of the Spirit of the Lord for the space of three years, taught me that he was about to set up his church and kingdom upon the earth in the last days. I was taught these things from my youth by Robert Mason, an aged man, who lived in Simsbury, Conn., who was frequently called the old prophet Mason: he taught me many things which are now coming to pass. He did not believe that any man had authority to administer in the ordinances of the gospel, but believed it was our privilege through faith, prayer and fasting to heal the sick, and cast out devils by the laying on of hands, which was the case under his administration, as many could testify.

In 1832, I was inspired to go to Rhode Island; my brother, Asahel, was also directed by the Spirit of God to go to the same place. When we met, we both told our impressions, and it caused us to marvel and wonder, what the Lord wanted of us in Rhode Island; but as we had made preparations to move to the west, we let outward circumstances control us, and Jonah-like, instead of going to Rhode Island, we went to Richland, Oswego Co., New York, and there remained until Dec. 29, 1833, when I heard Elders Zerah Pulsipher and Elijah Cheeny preach. My brother Azmon and I believed their testimony, entertained the elders and offered ourselves for baptism the first sermon we heard. We read the Book of Mormon, and I received a testimony that it was true.

We soon learned what the Lord wanted of us in Rhode Island, for at the time we were warned to go there, two of the elders were

preaching there, and had we gone, we should have embraced the work at that time.

Dec. 31.—I was baptized by Elder Zerah Pulsipher; he confirmed me the same evening.

Jan. 2, 1834.—I was ordained a teacher, and my brother Azmon, an elder, and a small branch organized of 12 members by Elder Pulsipher.

In February following, in company with Elder Holton, I walked some 60 miles to the town of Fabius, to attend an evening meeting of the Saints in that place, where Elder Pulsipher was presiding; I saw the book of commandments or revelations given through Joseph Smith, and I believed them with all my heart and rejoiced therein; and after spending several days, and holding several meetings, we returned home rejoicing.

During the winter, we were visited by several of the elders. Feb. 1st, Elder Parley P. Pratt called upon us and instructed the branch till midnight: we had a precious time. I accompanied brother Pratt to Jefferson Co., and told him my circumstances; he said it was my duty to prepare myself to go to Kirtland, and join the camp of Zion. I immediately settled my business.

April 11, 1834.—With my horses and wagon I took brs. Harry Brown and Warren Ingles, and started for Zion. I met with Orson Pratt, John Murdoch and other Elders on the way, and arrived in Kirtland on the 25th day of April, 1834.

The Prophet Joseph invited me to make his house my home; I accepted his offer, and staid with him about one week. I became acquainted with many of the High Priests, Elders and Saints. I spent one Sabbath in Kirtland and heard many of the Elders speak, and I felt to rejoice before God for the light and knowledge which was manifested to me during that day.

May 1.—I started from Kirtland, and went to New Portage, and remained till all the company joined us, when we were organized.

March 7.—We took up our line of march, pitching our tents by the way, and traveled to Missouri.

After we had pitched our tents in Clay county (our numbers being 205) and many of the brethren had taken sick, and some had died, Joseph requested the camp to disperse, except enough to take care of the sick; all who had teams were required to leave the ground and go among the brethren. I went to br. Lyman Wight's, in company with Heman Hyde and Milton Holmes. Shortly, Joseph called the brethren together at Lyman Wight's, and told them if they would humble themselves before the Lord, and covenant to keep His commandments and obey His counsel, the plague should be stayed from that hour, and there should not be another case of cholera in the camp. The brethren covenanted to do this and the plague was stayed and there was not another case in camp.

Prest. Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland with many of the brethren, I remained with Lyman Wight, laboring with my hands till the following winter.

I had a great desire to preach the gospel, which I did not name to my brethren, but one Sunday evening I retired into the woods alone, and called upon the Lord in earnest prayer to open my way to go and preach the gospel to the inhabitants of the earth; the spirit of the Lord bore witness that my prayer was heard, and should be answered. I arose from my knees happy, and walked some forty rods and met Elias Higbee, a High Priest, with whom I had staid a number of months. As I approached him, he said "Br. Wilford, the Spirit of the Lord tells me that you should be ordained and go on a mission." I replied, "I am ready."

At a meeting of the High Council at Lyman Wight's, Clay county, Missouri, Nov. 5, I was ordained a Priest by Elder Simeon Carter; Stephen Winchester and Heman T. Hyde were also ordained Priests.

Bishop Partridge said he would like to have me go into the Southern States, through Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky, and if I

could find any body who had faith enough to go with me, for it would be a dangerous country to travel in, in consequence of the Missouri persecution, to take him. I told him I was as ready to go South as any where; and asked if I should go through Jackson county, as it lay in our route. He replied, it would be at the risk of life, and he had not faith enough to undertake it; if I had, I might try it. I also asked him, if I went through Jackson county, if I should start without purse or scrip according to the law of God. He answered, that he had not got faith enough to start on a mission through Jackson county without money, and if I did it, I must do it on my own faith. I felt strenuous to keep the commandments, so I started without money. I called upon Elder Harry Brown, and asked him to accompany me; he consented, and Bishop Partridge appointed him to go with me.

Jan. 13, 1835.—I received an honorable discharge from Lyman Wight, certifying that I had faithfully performed my duties in Zion's camp.

I took my valise in hand, weighing 15lbs, mostly books of Mormon, and started in company with Elder Harry Brown, crossed the river into Jackson county, and felt thankful. We bowed our knees, and prayed that God might protect us from the mob while going through the country, and that His judgments might rest upon the wicked who had shed the blood of the Saints in that land, that the land might be cleansed from sin. I had a petition to the Governor of Missouri, for redress of wrongs perpetrated upon us in Jackson county, for the purpose of obtaining signatures. We bent our way south, through Jackson county, without any molestation; yet, in one instance, we were preserved from a mob of about sixty, assembled at a grog shop which we had to pass.

June 18.—We called at the Harmony mission and had an interview with the President, a Presbyterian minister. Although it was near sundown he would neither give us anything to eat, nor lodge us, because we were Mormons. It was fifteen miles to the nearest house, which was Jerrew's Indian trading house. We asked the minister to direct us there. He gave us directions, but the Spirit said to me he was deceiving us. I asked him three times, and he declared he was telling us the truth. We followed his directions and we came to the Osage river swamp, where we were lost in the darkness of the night! We followed the river, but as it is very crooked, we made but little progress. After traveling through mud and water for one hour, we concluded to go out on the open prairie and lie down in the grass until morning, but when we got out into the prairie we heard the Osage Indians' drum and shout at the trading house as they were having a pow-wow. As we approached, we were met by a dozen large savage looking dogs; they smelt us in a friendly manner, but did not attempt to bite nor bark. We arrived about midnight, covered with mud, hungry and weary, and were kindly received and entertained for the remainder of the night by Mr. Jerrew, who had an Osage squaw for a wife; she prepared us a good supper, but marveled that we did not drink coffee. She proffered us their best bed, which was highly ornamented, but we declined her kind offer, as we were wet and muddy; she made us a good bed of mackinaw blankets before a large fire, and we slept comfortably. May the Lord reward both Mr. Jerrew and wife, and the Presbyterian minister according to their deserts.

—19.—Mr. Jerrew gave us a good breakfast, put us across the Osage river in a canoe, and we started upon our long day's walk, it being sixty miles to the nearest house; we had not anything with us to eat. Most of our travels through the day was through prairie; before dark we entered timbered land; as we approached the timber a large black bear met us; we had no weapons. When the bear got within about six rods of us, he rose upon his hind feet and examined us a short time, and went off. We were soon enveloped in su-