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SKETCH
OF THE AUTO-BIOGRAPHY OF
GEORGE ALBERT SMITH.

I was born in the town of Potsdam, St. Lawrence county, New York, on the 26th day of June, 1817.

My father, John Smith, was the sixth son of Asael and Mary, and was born on the 16th day of July, 1781. He married Clarissa Lyman on the 11th Sept., 1815.

My grandfather, Asael Smith, was the second son of Samuel Smith, the second, and Priscilla, and was born in Topsfield, Massachusetts, March 7th, 1744, and married Mary Duty Feb. 12, 1767.

My great grandfather, the second Samuel Smith, was the son of first Samuel Smith and Rebecca Curtis, and was born on the 26th January, 1714, in Topsfield, Essex county, Massachusetts, and married Priscilla Gould, 27th May, 1734. His father, Samuel Smith the first, was the son of Robert and Mary Smith, who came from England; he was born on the 26th January, 1666, in Topsfield, Essex county, Massachusetts, and was married to Rebecca Curtis, daughter of John Curtis, on 25th January, 1707.

My mother, Clarissa Lyman, was the daughter of Richard Lyman, who was an orderly sergeant for several years in the war of Independence; during which time, by exposure, he contracted a disease which produced an untimely death, a few years after the war, leaving a family of small children. My mother was reared under the care of her uncle, the Rev. Elijah Lyman, pastor of the first Presbyterian church at Brookfield, Orange county, Vermont.

My grandmother's maiden name was Philomela Loomace.

My father and mother were members of the Congregational church, at Potsdam; and spared no pains to impress my mind, from my infancy, with the importance of living a life of obedience to the principles of the religion of heaven, which they taught me as well as they understood it.

The winter after I was nine years old I received a blow upon my head, which rendered me insensible for three weeks. A council of surgeons decided that the skull was fractured and the blood settled under it, and that the only remedy was trepanning. My father being a man of faith, and believing that God would heal me, dismissed the physicians, and in a few weeks I recovered, although for many years, I felt the effects of that blow.

At an early age I felt a disposition to enquire after the original principles of the gospel. I asked my father where the Presbyterian church originated? He answered, with the Apostles. I enquired where the Methodist church originated? He replied, with John Wesley in England, about a hundred years ago. I enquired where the Baptist church originated? He said, with Mr. Williams, who first settled Rhode Island, or with the Waldenses. I enquired why these sects did not join the Presbyterians, who descended directly from the Apostles? He answered, they all *think* that they descended directly from the Apostles. This opened my eyes.

In the fall of 1828 my grandfather received by letter, from my uncle, Joseph Smith, sen., the information that his son Joseph had received several remarkable visions. My grandfather was then living in Stockholm, St. Lawrence county, also three of his sons, Jesse, Asabel and Silas. The old gentleman said that he always knew that God was going to raise up some branch of his family to be a great benefit to mankind; but my uncles ridiculed Joseph's visions.

Soon after a letter was received from Joseph, jun., in which he declared that the sword of vengeance of the Almighty hung over this generation, and that except they repented and obeyed the gospel and turned from their wicked ways, humbling themselves before the Lord, it would fall upon the wicked and sweep them from the earth as with the besom of destruc-

tion. This letter made a deep impression upon my mind, and my father said, "Joseph wrote like a prophet."

In the month of August, 1830, my uncle, Joseph Smith, and his youngest son, Don Carlos, came to my father's on a visit, bringing with them some Books of Mormon. My father had not seen his brother for about eighteen years; he had lived in Wayne and Ontario counties, western New York, a distance from us of 250 miles. As my uncle was in great haste to see his father, my father took a wagon and carried them to Stockholm, about twelve miles, where my grandfather and uncles resided.

My mother and myself occupied Saturday and Sunday reading the Book of Mormon. On Sunday evening the neighbors gathered in to see the "Golden Bible," as it was called by them, and commenced raising objections to it. Although I did not yet believe the book, their objections looked to me so foolish, that I commenced answering them, and exposed the fallacy of their objections so palpably, that they went away confounded, contenting themselves by saying, "You are a smart boy."

I continued to read the Book of Mormon, and framed in my mind a series of objections, which I supposed were sufficient to overthrow its authenticity, and on the return of my uncle Joseph, I undertook to argue with him upon the subject, but he so successfully removed my objections and enlightened my mind, that I have never since ceased to advocate its divine authority.

Uncle Joseph and my cousin, Don Carlos, labored diligently to convince our relatives of the truth of the work. Uncle Jesse, the oldest brother in the family, opposed them in the most vindictive manner, threatening to hew uncle Joseph down with a broad axe, if he brought his books into, or preached any such damn'd nonsense in his house. He followed him every place he went, and was so abusive as to prevent him talking on the subject in his presence. Notwithstanding this, uncles Asahel, Silas and my father, were so far impressed with the truth that they continued to investigate, as did also several younger branches of the family.

Soon after uncle Joseph returned home, Mr. Solomon Humphrey, a Baptist exhorter in Stockholm, being impressed with the truth of the work, went to Manchester, Ontario county, to see cousin Joseph, and was baptized and ordained an Elder; returned home and commenced preaching the word to the people, although constantly hissed at by the ministers of all denominations and their followers. We were also visited by Elder Joseph H. Wakefield, who, in connection with Elder Humphrey, baptized several in Stockholm and Matildaville, among whom were my mother's brothers, Asa and George Lyman, and my grandmother Philomela Lyman.

In the year 1831, there were several protracted meetings held by the Congregationalists for the conversion of sinners; the one held in December continued seventeen days. I had not yet obtained sufficient knowledge of the gospel to understand but what I needed conversion, after the manner of the sectarians, to fit me for baptism, and for this purpose I attended the meetings as a seeker after religion night and day; but could not profess to be frightened nearly out of my senses for fear of hell and damnation when I really felt no such fear; and I would not take my seat on the anxious benches without I felt as others said they did; and because I would not be a hypocrite, but remained in the gallery as the only sinner left while hundreds were moaning for their sins, I was sealed up by the Rev. Fred. E. Cannon, our minister, to eternal damnation. This solemn sentence was pronounced nine times, in the name of Jesus Christ, with the addition that "your blood is upon your own head." I concluded if the minister had any authority that my fate was sealed, and if he had none, I was foolish for going to his meetings, and this led me to investigate and learn

to my satisfaction that the sectarian churches were without the true priesthood.

In September, 1831, my mother was baptized. The Congregational Church commenced to labor with my father and mother, but did not begin correctly according to the directory; my father having been a prominent member, and having been engaged in the performance of almost every church labor with the refractory members for seventeen years, corrected their blunder, which caused them to begin again. They continued this labor by sending weekly committees until the 1st of January, when they excommunicated them for heresy.

January 9, 1832, my father was baptized by Elder S. Humphrey, and was confirmed and ordained an elder by Elders Jos. H. Wakefield and S. Humphrey. My father had been for several years very feeble in health, and for about six months previous to his baptism, had not been able to visit his barn, and was pronounced by physicians in the last stage of consumption; his neighbors all believed that baptism would kill him. I cut the ice in the creek, and broke a road for forty rods through the crust on two feet of snow; the day was very cold; the neighbors looked on with astonishment, expecting to see him die in the water, but his health continued improving from that moment. During that evening he had a vision of the Savior. The next day he visited his barn. He soon commenced traveling and preaching. His former Christian friends denouncing him as crazy, saying that the improved condition of his health was the result of insanity; and were greatly surprised that a crazy man should know more about the Bible than they did.

In every neighborhood where he preached he was followed up by sectarian ministers, who slandered and abused the Saints in every possible manner in order to save, if possible, their 'sinking crafts.' Mr. Talbert, who was very famous for preaching hell fire and eternal punishment, and was the Presbyterian minister at Parishville, at a salary of \$500 a year and perquisites, came into one of my father's meetings at Matildaville and interrupted him in a most abusive manner, demanding a sign and pronouncing the solemn sentence of damnation on all who should believe the word. My father told him in the presence of the congregation that he was a wicked man and an adulterer, and that his corruption should be exposed to the eyes of all men. In the course of a few months, Mr. Talbert was dismissed from his congregation, who did not approve of his conduct in lodging with his hired girls, a custom which, it was proved, he had long practised. Mr. Talbert, however, had been engaged for seven years by his congregation; he sued them for his salary in the district court, and recovered \$3000, being his salary for six years, the remaining term of his engagement.

In the spring of 1832, my father was invited to preach in a school house near home, which created an excitement. On the Sunday previous to his meeting, an appointment was circulated that Mr. Hall, a Methodist presiding elder, would expose Mormonism, at the stone school house, at 4 o'clock, p.m., and every family in the neighborhood was notified but ours: seeing the turn out, I went to the meeting. Mr. Hall delivered a discourse from Rev. chap. 22, v. 18, "If any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." He asserted that after that was written there was no more revelation, no more prophecy; and all that was written after that time professing to be revelation or prophecy was from hell. Although but a boy of fifteen, I looked sternly at Mr. Hall when he made this assertion, and could plainly perceive him change color; he stopped and stammered, and declared that if the proclaimers of the 'Golden Bible' would smite St. Lawrence River, so that he could go to Canada dry shod, he would believe it. His discourse was a tirade of abuse, backed up by Elder Bachelor, a Baptist minister. As soon

as the meeting was dismissed, I was surrounded by about forty of the neighbors of all denominations, and asked what I thought of Mr. Hall's sermon. I replied, I was never so astonished in all my life; I had supposed Mr. Hall to be an honest man, and to hear him lie to the congregation, when the whole assembly must know that he was lying, astonished me beyond measure. What did Mr. Hall say that was not true? they inquired. I replied, he said that after John wrote his text, that there was no more revelation—no more prophecy; and all that was written after that pretending to be inspired was from hell; when he knows, and so does every body else that looks inside a large family Bible, that John himself wrote his three Epistles and his Gospel years after that text was written. Several of his Methodist friends said it could not be so; but an old Presbyterian among them said, 'When you get home, look at the chronology in your Bibles, and you will find that Geo. A. is right.' A more astonished company I never saw.

My father preached the next Sabbath on the fulfilment of prophecy. Our neighbors were astonished at his knowledge of the Bible. The sectarian ministers visited every family around, and charged them not to visit or associate with us in any way in the least, as fanaticism was catching, and they would be in danger of going to hell. During my father's long sickness and feeble health, I had carried on the farm myself, and prejudice went so far that it was with the greatest difficulty we could hire hands to assist in mowing, thrashing, &c., and were under the necessity of hiring confirmed infidels, whom the Christians would scarcely ever employ.

Mr. John Dorothy, an influential and wealthy member of the Presbyterian church, proposed to me, that if I would leave my father and pledge myself never to become a Mormon, and commence immediately to go to school, he would warrant me seven years' education; he promised that there should be no failure, if I would study divinity and become a Presbyterian preacher. I told him that Mr. Cannon, his minister, had sealed me up to eternal damnation, and I would consequently be unfit for a minister. He replied, that would make no difference. I answered, "Then, Mr. Cannon has no authority from God, and I will not preach without authority." He then said, "I might choose my profession and I should have the education, if I would agree never to join the Mormons. I told him that my father was sick, and that the commandment of God required me to honor my father and mother, and it was my duty to take care of them, as I was their only dependence. He replied, "Your father and mother have dishonored themselves by becoming Mormons; take my advice, and I will guarantee that you shall have as good an education as can be got without costing you anything, but your time in acquiring it, and the wealthiest members of the church are ready to back me up in what I am saying, and you may become a member of Congress."

I retired to a secret place daily, and prayed to my Heavenly Father with all my heart to direct me in the right way, and give me a knowledge of the things of his kingdom, that I might not be led into any of the fooleries which were so common in the world. My mind was wrought upon by two spirits, the one of darkness and the other of light. Many times when I would kneel to pray, I imagined myself surrounded by a herd of wild cattle, as the place I retired to was near a grain field; I could hear them destroying the grain; the shock was at times so sudden that I turned my head to look at them. This kind of annoyance continued until I made up my mind to be baptized.

A CURE FOR BURNS.—The French Gazette Medical states that by an accident charcoal has been discovered to be a cure for burns. By laying a piece of cold charcoal upon the burn, the pain subsides immediately. By leaving the charcoal on one hour the wound is healed, as has been demonstrated on several occasions.—The remedy is cheap and simple, and certainly deserves a trial.