

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*Written for this Paper.*

## CONFERENCES IN ARIZONA.

ERASTUS WARD,

St. Johns Stake, Arizona,

August 9th, 1894.

Twelve hundred and sixty-one miles travel by railway over the Rio Grande Western, Colorado Midland, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe and Atlantic and Pacific lines brought us (Elder George Reynolds and myself) to the Navaj Springs, Arizona, after which a fifty miles' slow travel per team, over a sandy desert, landed us safe in St. Johns, the destination to which our first appointment required our labors. We left Salt Lake City on Tuesday evening at 9:30 p. m., July 31st, wending our way through Utah, Colorado, New Mexico into Arizona. On reaching Trinidad, Col., Thursday, August 2, at 1:30 p. m., we found U. S. sentinels pacing the station with guns and bayonets on their shoulders, as a guard against trouble from the strikers, and we also noticed a large card hanging from one of the windows of the train on which, in large print, was the following: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Two ladies inside the car had charge of it, one of whom had a similar card in front of her breast. A few miles further brought us to a tunnel on the divide between Colorado and New Mexico; at either end a guard of soldiers still remain to protect it against the threatened injury by the recently excited strikers. They were evidently getting tired of their protracted service, having been several times drenched with rain which had poured down in torrents, and their tents afforded them scarcely any protection.

We reached Navajo Springs at noon on Friday, August 3rd, and were glad to find our Stake Superintendent John W. Brown with his team to conduct us to St. Johns. He is the son of an old friend, T. D. Brown, well known in the early settlement of Utah. We traveled slowly over the deep sand, through partial rain and wind, until after 10 o'clock p. m. In the conveyance our blankets were soon spread, two occupying one end and one the other; thus closely hemmed in we lay, until aroused about 3 o'clock the following morning (Saturday), August 4th. Starting long before day break, we reached St. Johns, Arizona, at a quarter to seven o'clock. After being refreshed under the hospitable roof of our friend Brown, we were ready by 10 o'clock to commence the first meeting of our two days' Sunday school conference.

As a preliminary, we held a short interview with the Stake and other authorities, and as no program of exercises had been prepared, either by the children or otherwise, we had to depend upon the direction of the Spirit of the Lord to guide us in our meetings. President D. K. Udall and his counselors, Elders Freeman and Gibbons, were with us at all our meetings. His home is at Eagersville, Union ward, thirty-five miles from St. Johns. We held five Sunday school meetings, at which all that was necessary to be

said on Sunday school matters was attended to. The following ward schools were represented: St. Johns, Union, Erastus and Nutrioso. The Articles of Faith, and the prayer on the bread and water were recited by different classes in concert. Remarks were also interspersed by Stake Superintendent Brown and his assistants, Elder D. K. Udall, and his counselors, and Bishop Anderson, of St. John's ward. The visiting brethren occupied the balance of the time. A meeting with the presidency and other leading authorities was held at the close of Sunday morning's meeting. The members of the 104th Quorum of Seventies met after the afternoon meeting was dismissed, and were addressed by Elder George Reynolds on items of importance pertaining to their calling. An evening meeting at 8 o'clock closed our labors in Saint Johns, which is the county seat of Apache county, Arizona. The meetings throughout were well attended, and the Spirit of the Lord visibly enjoyed. In connection with other instructions pertaining to the general conduct and advancement of Sunday school work, the Word of Wisdom was not omitted. The unanimity of feeling that pervaded the congregation on this important subject was truly gratifying. This was made manifest by an almost universal expression of their determination in the future to observe it.

In accordance with the wishes of the Presidency of the Stake, we left St. Johns on Monday to attend two meetings with the members of the Union ward, which comprises the Saints residing in Springerville, Eagersville, Amity and the regions round about. Union ward, in Round valley, is 35 miles distant from St. Johns, which we traveled by team, driven by Elder E. N. Freeman, late of Ogden City. We reached Springerville on Monday night, and were welcomed by the family of Prime Coleman, one of the earliest Indian missionaries in Southern Utah.

Tuesday, August 7th.—Two miles from this place is a settlement called Eagersville, where lives Bishop George H. Crosby, son of the late well known Utah Pioneer Jesse W. Crosby, and also Elder D. K. Udall, who is president of this Stake of Zion. From the scattered condition of the Saints we were truly astonished and gratified to find such large congregations attending the three meetings held at 10 a. m. and at 2 and 8 o'clock p. m. Here we met with one of Utah's earliest merchants by the name of A. V. Greer, whose business was conducted under the firm name of Blair, Greer & Basset.

Wednesday 8th we left Union ward and after a pleasant ride of 35 miles, we reached Erastus ward, presided over by C. I. Kempe at whose house we were welcomed.

Thursday 9th. Here a ward conference was held which we had been invited to attend by Elder Udall, and a portion of the time in the morning and afternoon meetings was allotted us to speak on Sunday school matters. The evening meeting was occupied mostly by a lecture on the Book of Mormon

by Elder George Reynolds (by special request).

Here our labors close in the St. Johns Stake of Zion. Erastus ward contains 22 families, about 100 souls, who cultivate 450 acres of land; the second crop of lucern is mostly out and enough wheat is raised to sustain them. The Bishop has thirteen acres of orchard filled with several thousand fruit bearing trees, including apple, pear, peach, apricot, plums, etc.

Tomorrow, Friday, we leave on a 35 mile ride to Snowflake, at which place we hold a two days' Sunday school conference on Saturday and Sunday.

SALT LAKE CITY, Aug. 16, 1894.

We bade adieu to our friends in Erastus ward, St. Johns Stake on Friday, Aug. 10, and after a ride of thirty-five miles, driven by Samuel Baird, (grandson of Father Camp who built and lived in a large house in the Thirteenth ward, Salt Lake City, many years ago) we reached Snowflake between 4 and 5 p. m. and were welcomed at the home of our esteemed Stake Superintendent, J. A. West. In the evening we had a pleasant visit with Jesse N. Smith, president of the Stake, and other authorities, and talked over the object and purpose of our visit, viz., to hold a two days' Sunday school conference.

Saturday, Aug. 11, at 10 o'clock we were greeted with a well filled meeting of parents and children, also at 2 o'clock, and another at 7:30 p. m.

Sunday 12. We had the pleasure of holding three more crowded meetings, at 10, 2 and 8, besides a Seventies' meeting at 4 p. m., at which Elder Reynolds imparted special instructions and filled up the presidency of the Eighty-third Quorum by the appointment and ordination of two to fill the vacancies. At the above meetings all that was necessary to aid and encourage superintendents, teachers, officers, parents and children in the more active and improved methods of conducting our Sunday school work was imparted and thankfully received. Our instructions were interspersed with reports from superintendents from Snowflake, Woodruff, St. Joseph, Taylor, Shumway, Jumper, Sholow, Fairview, Pinetop, and Pine Creek. Remarks also were made by the Presidency, Bishops and Stake superintendency, and a number of pleasing exercises by the children of several schools.

Snowflake is a very beautiful settlement of about 500 inhabitants, with water seeps and shade trees on either side of the streets, and many comfortable and well-built residences. Fully 80 per cent of the Saints are observers of the Word of Wisdom. All the families live in their own houses, and only one is under mortgage. There is no saloon there, and no prospect of any. Our old friend Charles Shumway, 86 years old, we had the pleasure of meeting; he was one of the 70 hand cart missionaries who left Salt Lake City on the 23rd of April, 1857, and the only pioneer of 1847 living in Snowflake. We also found our particular friend Ralph Ramsay, wood carver, whose workmanship may still be seen in the eagle whose wings have so many years been spread over what is known as the Eagle Gate. He was a resident of the 20th ward. He is still hale and hearty, though not so young