

Written for this Paper

ACROSS THE PLAINS TO UTAH.

NANCE, Rockenlam Co.,

North Carolina, Sept. 24, 1894.

Your valuable sheet is ever a welcome visitor to all who have been so fortunate as to make its acquaintance, and that too without regard to their location; but especially so to those of us abroad to labor for the spread of truth.

In perusing the columns of the NEWS containing recitals of incidents connected with the early settlement of our now peaceful vales, my mind reverts to many scenes associated therewith in which I took an active part in the days of my youth and early manhood. My mind recalls vividly many of those scenes of violence and mobocracy which resulted in the expulsion of our people from Illinois. My parents shared the common lot of the Saints upon that memorable occasion, and thence took up their westward journey under circumstances that, to be fully understood, must needs have been participated in. One wagon did duty for two families of us, embracing thirteen members, as far as the Des Moines river, where we went into winter quarters. Father died there.

Early in the spring we resumed our journey to Council Bluffs, thence on to Salt Lake City, where we arrived in the autumn of 1850. Although but fifteen years old, I walked and drove loose stock for the company. Captain Gardner Snow, with whom I boarded, had charge of fifty wagons, and Uncle Joseph Young, as I remember, was in our ten.

In the spring of 1851 we moved to Springville where I had the honor of assisting to put in the first dam in Hobbie Creek, and also in plowing the first ditch that tapped that stream. I put the roof on the first house built outside the old fort; enrolled in the first cavalry company that was organized there, and always took my turn in guarding the people from the attacks of the treacherous red men. I would have been in the engagement known as the battle of Little Salt Creek, fought where Goshen now stands, but was ordered back with several others on account of our tender years, and we reluctantly gave up our arms to older soldiers. I was present with the Y. X. company when, in 1857, it pitched its camp at the upper crossing of Sweetwater, and I remained there until the place was vacated. R. L. Johnson had charge of this company, but was superseded by Stephen Markham.

I have spent much time on guard at the mouth of our canyons to protect the lives and property of the people from falling a prey to our wily Indian adversaries. While pursuing a band of depredating savages up Hobbie Creek and across the mountains north we obtained our first view of the beautiful Provo Valley, long before the flourishing settlements now occupying it were thought of.

In 1860 I went as one of a company of volunteers into the head of Saupete Valley and guarded the good people of North Bend (now Fairview) while they built their fort and put in their crops. While upon this campaign we made the claims and ditches that spread the water over Thistle Valley, and subse-

quently produced the famous meadows for which the valley is noted.

And now, Mr. Editor, I am in the "Sunny South," laboring in the interests of the human family—trying to teach the people the true plan of salvation. We find some very kind friends and a few who accept the Gospel as it has been revealed in this dispensation.

Ever praying for the welfare of Zion and the spread of truth, I remain your brother in the Gospel,

MORONI MINER.

CONFERENCE AND DEDICATION.

The morning of September 29th ushered in one more notable event in the progress of truth, by the uniting of the Elders and Saints in the Massey branch of the Indian Territory mission to participate in the dedicatory services of another house of worship to the Lord.

At the appointed time Elder Isaac A. Jensen called together the congregation and the services began by singing the hymn "We are not ashamed to own our Lord." Elder J. C. Lyon then opened with prayer, following which was sung, "What was witnessed in the heavens."

Elder Isaac A. Jensen addressed the Saints as to the divinity of the services we were participating in and hoped all would impress this fact upon their minds.

Presiding Elder Ephraim Jeppson then took the stand and with divinely inspired eloquence offered up the dedicatory prayer. This was followed by the impressive hymn "Dedication."

An address to the Elders and Saints of the Massey branch, Choctaw Nation, written by our highly esteemed president, Andrew Kimball, was read and the heartfelt words of kind remembrance and encouragement to those engaged in the Latter-day work seemed to bring with them a feeling of joy and impart in the hearts of the listeners a firmer determination to press onward and upward in the work of the Lord.

The remainder of the meeting was spent in the bearing of strong and faithful testimonies to the authenticity and divinity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by Elders Herman E. Campbell, J. C. Lyon, R. G. Winter, E. L. Saunders and Ephraim Jeppson. All joined in singing the hymn, "Come, come ye Saints," and Elder I. A. Jensen brought the services to a close by pronouncing the benediction.

Some few months ago Elder Andrew Kimball, in company with Elder R. M. Harper, established a branch of the Church here, placing Elder I. A. Jensen over the same; they also laid the corner stone for the erection of a house of worship, and since that time, though many obstacles presented themselves to view during its construction, the words of encouragement from Elder Kimball to have faith and push onward have ripened and borne their fruits, and now the mists have vanished away and left standing out in bold relief one more monument in the cause of the latter-day work.

Much praise can be attributed to the Elders of the Indian Territory and Oklahoma missions for their liberal donations toward the construction of our meeting house and to Elders Isaac

A. Jensen, Jas. E. Nally and Herman E. Campbell can much credit be assigned for the neat workmanship and diligence they have exercised in its construction. Nor can the Elders ever forget the aid and kindness of Grandma Griffiths for her part in the furtherance of the Gospel truths.

Afternoon—At 2 p. m. conference was called to order, Elder Ephraim Jeppson being in charge. "O My Father," the opening hymn, was sung and E. L. Saunders delivered the opening prayer, after which "Come let us anew our journey pursue" was sung by the congregation.

Elder Herman E. Campbell then spoke upon the miraculous achievements to be obtained in obedience to the laws and commandments of the Gospel, citing proofs both from the Old and the New Testament to substantiate the same. Elder Richard G. Winter bore his testimony to the blessings enjoyed by the Latter-day Saints and also spoke upon faith as a moving power.

"Ye mountains high" was sung and a very attentive and enjoyable meeting was brought to a close by Elder Ephraim Jeppson pronouncing the benediction.

Sunday morning—At the usual time Elder Herman E. Campbell called the meeting to order and all joined in singing the hymn "O God, we raise to Thee." Prayer by Elder Isaac A. Jensen; singing, "Come all ye sons of Zion."

Elder Ephraim Jeppson addressed the assembly as to the importance of the Gospel of the Latter-day Saints, and the condemnation to be brought upon the false advocates of religion. He also dwelt upon the apostasy and the opening of the dispensation of the fullness of times. Elder E. L. Saunders spoke a short time in confirmation of the remarks made by his brethren, and the morning services closed by singing "O say what is truth." Benediction by Elder H. E. Campbell.

Afternoon.—Elder J. C. Lyon, being in charge, called the meeting to order and the hymn "Do what is right," was sung by the congregation; prayer by Elder Ephraim Jeppson; singing, "Go ye messengers of glory."

Elder Isaac A. Jensen spoke upon the necessity of baptism for the entering into the kingdom of God, producing sprang proofs as to the proper mode and authority of administering the same. The Holy Ghost and the other blessings that were to follow true repentance and baptism were also spoken upon. Elder J. C. Lyon closed the conference by giving a historical outline of the life of Joseph Smith the Prophet, the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its rise, and dwelt upon the necessity of new revelation in these last days to carry out the will of the Lord.

All joined in singing the hymn, "Glorious things are sung of Zion;" and Elder Richard G. Winter pronounced the benediction.

This conference, the first one held in this nation, is a success in every respect; there has been a good attendance and a peaceful spirit manifest throughout, and it is pleasing to note that at its close two honest souls were brought into the fold through baptism. The Elders will now leave for their vari-