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WEDNESDAY, - JUNE 29, 1881.

THE OLD FOLKS' EXCURSION, 1881.

The annual excursion of the Old Folks on Bishop Edward Hunter's birthday is always successful. It grows in magnitude with each succeeding year. The number of aged people who pass away to their rest is much less than the number who advance to three-score-and-ten, which entitles them to a free pass for the day, so the ranks grow with time and the veterans increase with the years. On Wednesday, June 22nd, thirteen cars were needed at the Utah Central Depot to accommodate the excursionists on their trip to Ogden City. A few minutes after the appointed time, 7.45, the train started, gaily decorated with flags, the stars and stripes showing prominently on the engine and tender. A limited number of guests was taken on board at each of the stations on the way.

It was genuine pleasure to look at and converse with the aged people, who had been carefully conveyed from their homes to the cars, and were comfortably seated, enjoying the lovely morning, the fresh, balmy air, the verdant landscape, the grand and varied scenery and the feeling of exhilaration occasioned as the train moved steadily but swiftly northward. The old folks were all respectably attired, and in good health, exhibiting plain evidences that they were well cared for, and that grim Want had no place in their homes and lives. They were as gay and happy as children. Reminiscences of bygone events, some of a very remote period, figured in the conversation, and dear old friends met each other with genuine affection made strong by associations in hours of trial. Nauvoo and Missouri, "the times which tried men's souls," the early days of the country's history, and many events—the recounting of which seemed like echoes of the past, could be heard of as the visitor moved from car to car, and mingled with the white-haired veterans and spectacled matrons who had passed through scenes that none but heroes and heroines could survive.

Presidents John Taylor, George Q. Cannon and Wilford Woodruff, also Bishops Edward Hunter and L. W. Hardy, of the Church authorities, were with the party, which, however, was not confined to any society, sect, party or race, but was made up without regard to any distinctions of that character, every one freely participating in the enjoyments of the occasion, with no "middle walls of partition," or boundary lines of faith or opinion.

Inspection and inquiry elicited the fact that there were three gentlemen and one lady on the train over 90 years of age, fifty persons over 80 and under 90, and two hundred and eighty-five between 70 and 80. Besides these, there were a large number just under 70 years of age, with a sprinkling of younger people in charge of the feeble. The whole company on the train by actual count was 610, but a few might have escaped the census, so the traveling party was reckoned at 650.

To each person over 90 years of age a silver medal was given on the way. Brother George Goddard asked them in turn to stand upon their feet, also all who were in the cars, with uncovered heads. The ribbon attached to the medal was then placed over the neck of the veteran to whom it was awarded, accompanied by a hearty blessing pronounced by Bro. Goddard. The recipients were deeply affected, the tears streaming from their eyes and running down their aged faces, while the spectators were also moved to deep emotion. Those who received the medals were John Wilson, ("Father Wilding") of

the 17th Ward, aged 97; Susannah Livesage of the 17th Ward, aged 97, and Wm. Hines, 2d Ward, aged 96; Mary Bishop, 16th Ward, 91.

On the way, refreshment, in the shape of cakes, candy, oranges and lemonade were freely passed around, and a most excellent choir, under the charge of Brother William H. Foster—Professor Ebenezer Beezley kindly assisting—rendered some charming selections, going into every car and entertaining the occupants with sweet melody. The voices were all good and blended in perfect harmony. The singing was a most enjoyable feature of the trip.

Everything went along pleasantly until Kaysville had been passed for some distance, when the train came to a halt and could go no further. A joint had given way in a steam pipe of the locomotive. But a man was promptly dispatched to Kaysville and the word telegraphed to Ogden, where another engine with Mr. John Reeve in charge came on quick time to the rescue. During the delay there was time for visiting, refreshments and music, and the wait occasioned no unpleasantness.

When Ogden was reached the train was curved on the switch to the east of the Y, and the ground to the west with the space between the train and the U. C. and U. P. tracks was filled with vehicles waiting to convey the party to Farr's Grove. It was an animated scene. Flags flying, the people dismounting, two hundred and eighty-five carriages and wagons with lively teams, mounted men directing the transfer, and the band playing with vigor. Apostle F. D. Richards, Pres. D. H. Peery and C. F. Middleton with others were at hand to receive the party, and soon a procession was formed, headed by Barnard White, Esq., Marshal of the day and the Ogden Brass Band in splendid uniform, followed by fine carriages with the Presidency, Bishoprick and others and over three hundred vehicles in line, which marched through the main street of the city and on to the grove, attended by the Marshals' aides, the band playing splendidly by the way.

At the spacious grove on the banks of the Ogden river there were ample preparations for the excursionists. Stoves were heated, tables laid, provisions in immense abundance spread for the company, and soon, under the pleasant shade, the great picnic was partaken of with plenty for all comers, in rich profusion and great variety. Hon. Lorin Farr, proprietor of the grove, a number of Bishops from different settlements of Weber and Box Elder Counties, and a bevy of young girls of Ogden City, were ready to make things comfortable for the visitors. The train had brought in a large company from Brigham City and Willard, while teams from all the Weber County settlements conveyed additional instalments to the gathering. Over five thousand persons were assembled in the Grove. It was a grand and impressive sight, and the entire absence of rowdiness, intoxication, ill-humor or discontent was specially noticeable and pleasing.

After the picnic the company assembled around a large stand that had been erected and were called to order by Bro. C. R. Savage. Fosters choir sang the anthem "Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord," composed by Bro. E. Stevens of Willard, a rising young musical genius. It is a very fine effort and was beautifully rendered.

President Wilford Woodruff followed with prayer.

Then came music from the Ogden Brass Band.

President D. H. Peery came forward and said:

On behalf of the people of Weber County we welcome you all to Ogden. I thank President Taylor, Bishop Hunter and the brethren with them for their presence and all who have come to see us and have contributed to the enjoyment of the day. There are few here who will ever live to see what they now behold, such honor paid to a man like Bishop Edward Hunter. Few men who were born in 1793 are living who could obtain such respect as is now paid to him. He lived under the administration of General Washington, and out of twenty-four Presidents during his life all but three have passed away. But he lives to behold this joyful day and is honored by his friends. I thank you all for the hospitality shown to our visitors, and hope you may live long to enjoy the blessings of peace and prosperity.

Bishop Edward Hunter being called upon, said:

"I do not want to be considered anything more than one among you. Why are we here? Well, five or six years ago Bro. Savage and others called on me about an excursion for the benefit of the old people. Nothing was more pleasing to me. We arranged for a trip. Our first was to Lake Point. One of the finest affairs I ever saw. It is said by phrenologists that there is quality of brains and quantity of brains. This was quality; a fine affair. We have kept this up every year. We should honor the aged, it is right and proper. I can call back the scenes of many years. I hope I have been true to my God and my country. The best thing of all is that I met with this best people, who are taught of the Lord. I recollect the time when Washington was buried. I was but a small boy, but I felt the gloom that was on the people. My father and my sister told me about him, the father of our country. I learned to love the Constitution, which provides that all men may worship God according to the dictation of their own consciences, and the Declaration of Independence, which hails all nations as brothers. When I was old enough I felt moved upon to enlist as a volunteer. I served seven years faithfully and received my honorable discharge, which I have preserved. I tried to live according to the laws of my country. I learned many things but never came to an understanding about God and His laws till I met with this people. I believed there was a God, but I knew not how to approach Him. I met with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and told him this, and he was the first I ever met who could give me light. I kept the law of the land, but was not in Nauvoo eighteen months till I was accused of treason. What for? I broke no law. Yet there was enmity against us, though no one could prove their accusations. I was convinced of this great work and Priesthood, and I feel blessed therein. I am proud and pleased to meet you. We are among the redeemers. We have blessings greater than we could ask for. This reception; it is far more than we could expect. We will treat you in the same way when you come to us. I was on the spot where Ogden is now in 1847; there was no house there nor any settlement; now there is a fine town, and we are blessed temporally and spiritually. I took an active part in Nauvoo, and when I listened to Joseph, the Lord talked through him and unfolded glorious things. I helped to dig his grave and saw him placed away. He was a prophet of God. Next day I saw Brother John Taylor, who was wounded and who stood between his brother and death. He is here now. May God help us also to do our part, and may we all do our duty in my prayer. Amen."

Supt. L. Monch, in the name of the Sunday schools of Ogden, and as a token of their appreciation of the services of Bishop Hunter, presented that gentleman with a handsome testimonial. It consist of a large framed memento, containing the portraits of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who occupies the head of the group, President Brigham Young to the right, President John Taylor to the left, and Bishop Edward Hunter below. At the top, at either corner are the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants. Below are the following words, and some verses by Sister E. R. Snow Smith, the whole with the exception of the portraits which are photographs, being beautifully executed with the pen by Professor A. J. Phelps:

Testimonial to Bishop Edward Hunter, presented in behalf of the Sunday Schools of Ogden City, on the 22nd of June, 1881, being the 88th anniversary of his birthday, when he visited Ogden with the Old Folks' Excursion. This presentation is tendered as a token of affection and esteem, in which the faithful veteran, to whom it is made, is held by the donors. The world at large hold up the lives of their great men, that the young may follow their illustrious footsteps. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can proudly do the same, furnishing some of the brightest examples that grace the pages of history. Among the individualities that will be thus presented, Bishop Hunter will always find a prominent place. His purity and simplicity of character and untarnished integrity should be never failing objects of emulation by the youth of Israel. May the God of our fathers bless him forever.

To the Presiding Bishop EDWARD HUNTER, on the 88th Anniversary of his Birthday.

Hail, our worthy, aged Bishop,
On your Anniversary,
You have won unfading laurels,
Thro' your staunch integrity.
Rich in gifts of grace and wisdom—
With celestial light imbued,
By supernal beams of knowledge,
From the Eternal Source of Good.
Our first Prophet loved you dearly—
Well your sterling worth he knew;
He in holy bonds of friendship,
Still retains his love for you.
Your large heart, with generous impulse,
Unrestrained by selfish greed,
From your ample store, imparted
Freely to the Prophet's need.

When unhallowed persecution,
Waged against the Saints of God;
You, unflinching and undaunted,
Firmly as a bulwark stood.
Men of trust—of faith and courage,
When the sky was dark and drear,
Were esteemed most choice and precious,
By our noble, martyr'd Seer.

You have blessed the lonely widow—
Soothed and cheered the orphan's heart;
You, with kindness, faith and patience,
Have performed a brother's part.
As a fond and loving father,
You alleviate distress—
When officially presiding,
You decide in righteousness.

You have made a noble record,
Filled with useful service here,
Where the name of Edward Hunter,
Many "hearts and homes" hold dear.
You have reached a mark of honor,
Far above all earthly fame—
You require no sculptured marble,
To immortalize your name.

The following verses were composed by one of the old folks, a lady too retiring to have her name mentioned as the author:

All hail to Father Hunter,
Whose birth we celebrate,
His useful life has been prolonged
To the age of eighty-eight.
The good book says, the age of man
Is three-score years and ten,
If he attains to four-score years
His days are grief and pain.

We rejoice to meet our President,
And all the brethren here,
We know they come to bless us,
And give us words of cheer.
May the spirit of Elijah's God,
Rest mightily on them,
That they may stand as saviors
Among the sons of men.

We're glad to meet our aged friends,
Within this shady grove,
We hope to spend the day with them
In harmony and love.
Gray hairs a crown of glory are,
If found in wisdom's ways,
Oh, Father! bless each hoary head,
And lengthen out their days.

We thank our friends and brethren
Who brought us to this place,
Where we can join in song or dance,
Perchance we'll have a race.
We have left our aches and pains behind,
Rheumatics all forgot,
And we thank the God of Joseph
For this our happy lot.

To our kind friends of Ogden
We have a word to say,
We will return, with interest,
The favors of to-day;
The project soon will be a blaze,
Which now is but a spark,
We hope ere long to welcome you
In Salt Lake City Park.

Three cheers for Father Hunter,
Whose birth we celebrate,
We fain would keep him with us
Till he is ninety-eight.
May kindly greetings, year by year,
Still lengthen out our days,
And heaven's choicest blessings fall
Upon the silver grays.

Bishop Hunter responded, with thanks and good wishes, when President John Taylor said:

"I am very happy to meet with you on this occasion, in commemoration of the birthday of Brother Hunter, with whom I have been acquainted for many years. He is a man of integrity and faithfulness, and we delight to honor him. I am also pleased to meet so many aged brethren and sisters, with many of whom I have been familiar for a number of years. We are all hastening along towards the great change that must come. The hoary head is honorable, if attained in righteousness. It is, on righteousness and truth that we base our hopes. The Lord honored Abraham, and why? Because he knew him and knew that he would command his children and his household after him that they should keep the ways of the Lord. We

must follow this illustrious example. I am pleased at this testimonial coming from the children of the Sunday school, it is a token that they are being trained to fear God and keep His commandments. I am glad that they, with their teachers, had it in their hearts to get up this token of their reverence for our venerable Bishop. Let us all try to do what is right under every circumstance, and let the old teach the young the ways of righteousness that they may walk therein their days, so that when we are through with the affairs of world we may secure an exaltation in the kingdom of our God. O, bless you and help us so to do Amen."

An attempt was then made to clear a space in front of the stand for the oldest people in the company but the crowd and pressure were too great to effect it. Presents of silver medals were then made to Mrs. Mary Ann White, of Ogden, aged 89; Wm. Davis, (blind) of Brigham City, aged 87; Erastus Bingham of Lynne, 83; Sabra Eldredge, Farmer's Ward, 87; Samuel Chandler, Willard City, 81; Susanna Garrett, North Ogden, 82. The medals were suspended from a blue silk ribbon, which was placed around the neck of the recipient.

The oldest man present, John Wilson (sometimes called Father Wilding), of the 17th Ward, 98 years of age, received a \$5 gold-piece and a huge plug of tobacco—as he is a user of the weed.

The oldest lady present Susannah Livesage, of the 17th Ward, 98 years of age, was given a \$5 gold-piece, some beautiful artificial flowers made by an Ogden lady, and a sunshade.

Thomas Edwards, of Ogden, received a silver cup and a bottle of wine.

Rachel Middleton, of Ogden, 88, and Margaret De Saules, of Lynne, 88, were awarded a parasol.

The oldest woman in Plain City, Hannah Peterson, was given a fine teapot.

It was stated that Brother Wm. Falconbridge, of the 17th Ward, was over 100 years old, but was not able to be present.

The oldest lady present that had pulled a handcart over the plains proved to be Catherine Wilson, of the 20th Ward, aged 78; she received a dress pattern.

John Morris of 11th Ward, 84, a package of tea and bowl of wine.

Mrs. Gibbons of Ogden, 83, received a dress pattern.

Mrs. Ann Moss of 11th Ward, having had 21 children, was given a dress pattern.

Hon. Lorin Farr was awarded a set of Church Works (donated by Pres. Geo. Q. Cannon) as the most present, the father of the greatest number of children—39.

Any man over 60 that could spell Nebuchadnezzar was entitled to a dollar. One old gentleman said "Two pairs of slippers and one pair of shoes spells, Nebuchadnezzar the King of the Jews," and received a prize.

A number of canes, parasols, dress patterns, packages of coffee and tea, etc., were distributed to worthy people.

Brother George Goddard, on behalf of the committee, returned thanks to the people of Ogden for the handsome manner in which they had received the old folks. From President Peery down every body had done nobly. He hoped to acknowledge their kindness by treating them well next year, when their presence would be desired, he expected, in the new Park, Salt Lake City. He prayed that God would bless them a hundred fold.

The time having expired, the Foster choir sang "Auld Lang Syne" and the benediction was pronounced by Pres. Geo. Q. Cannon.

The party was then conveyed to the depot, the work causing some delay because of the large number of vehicles and the dust in the lane, which was unavoidable and all being safely placed on board at 5.15 the train started on the return trip. On the way refreshments, music, etc., helped to while away the time, and all arrived safely at 7.15; the old people standing the journey splendidly.

The committee are deserving of high commendation. They are Bishop Edward Hunter, George Goddard, C. R. Savage, Wm. Eldington, Wm. Naylor, W. L. Bieder and John Kirkman. They planned everything admirably and succeeded as usual, perfectly. Bro. Savage was, as on former occasions, continually on the alert, and full of life and kindness, and Bro. Goddard also.