

Written for this Paper.

## STEVENSON IN ARIZONA.

LAYTON, Arizona,  
January 2, 1896.

On the way to Bowie, Arizona, on the Southern Pacific railroad, by the courtesy of Mr. S. T. Goodman, general passenger agent, with a clergyman's pass. I left Denning, N. M., for Maricopa and Mesa City, Arizona. The country passed through is more like an open sea for its level view each way is as far as mortal vision possibly can discern. The earth is of a brown, sandy color, with but little vegetation in most places, with here and there a modest hill or low mountain without timber or anything to give the dull appearance, but I learn that after the rainy season grass starts up on here as well as in Old Mexico. Even the Joshua plant is not so plentiful as in many other parts of our journey, but occasionally here and there small ones appear. No town, scarcely a habitation except stations until we come to Lordsburg, twenty-five miles on our way. Here I did see one pig, one dog, one blacksmith shop, one store and five flat roofed hog shops.

About twenty-five miles on we pass some flooded salaratus beds of considerable dimensions. This is about all to break the monotony of 109 miles except Cook's Peak near where the Mormon battalion passed in 1848. The sad tale of that important mission can better be told by the sufferers of those days.

We arrive at Teviston, Bowie, station, Arizona, fifteen minutes to four, being three hours and three-fourths, running 109 miles. There are forty or fifty persons in this place. I was compelled to lay over here to await the train to Thatcher, on the Gila river, till next day. I expect to do missionary work in St. Joseph Stake and then return to this main line and on to Maricopa Stake. The accommodations at this hotel are very good. Nights are cool; days have May-like weather.

Saturday the 28th in due time the scream of the steam whistle announced the arrival of Gila Valley, Globe & Northern R. R. train. It is about fifty miles to Thatcher. In due time, we glide to Solomonville, where the Gila valley opens out from three to four miles in width and about thirty miles of Mormon settlements, between Solomonville and Fort Thomas, on both sides of the river. There are eight wards on the river, and one, St. David, on the San Pedro river, 100 miles up the Southern Pacific railroad. President C. Layton informed me that there is room on this beautiful river and in this mild climate for many more settlers; he says 1,000.

Above the Mormon colonies is the home of the natives, who are Mexicans, on both sides of the Gila river. President Layton lives at Thatcher, about 10 miles above Solomonville. Safford is also a station and thriving town close by. Layton, which is only about 3 or 4 miles from Thatcher. Center is a little town between Thatcher and Pima, 6 miles down the Gila river. Brother Layton has bought thousands of acres of lands between Solomonville, and bought out several of the Mexicans so as to let his friends have homes together. There are many very

desirable homes in this valley. The soil is very productive; climate mild, although the cold snap now on is said to be one of the coldest known for many years. The nights are cold but the days are fine, more like May than December. Six crops of lucern are cut each season—I was shown one piece which was sown this year and had been cut three times the same year. Two crops of grain are harvested in one year. I am informed that there are eighty miles of canals running out from the river to different points. It is marvelous to see what has been accomplished in clearing out the Mosquito mosquito brush, fencing up fields, building up many fine red colored brick houses, in the space of nine years. I looked over Brother Christopher Layton's ten acres of orchard and vineyard—some fig trees which he gathered two crops from last year. We measured some branches of pear, plum and prune trees, that measured of this past year's growth eight, ten and eleven feet long. Onions are now up; lettuce is green and next month (January) lucern and other things will show very nicely. A creamery, cheese factory and ice machine are close by and on President Layton's premises his fish pond he says looms up with thousands of carp. Some out 200 to 300 tons of hay a year, mostly lucern. One man said that he had cut over 200 cords of wood from his farm of his own growing.

Notwithstanding these many favorable circumstances, I find thorns on even the beautiful rose tree—but certainly anyone of usual energy can flourish and build up a home in Arizona much easier than in some cold, long winter countries. . . . Thatcher will become a fine place ere long. An enterprising steam plating mill of small dimensions to begin with, would find some assistance, in the place of freighting all into the country a lot to. It is much needed here.

Since my visit and holding eight meetings I have found many old acquaintances—one of my old neighbors and one one who crossed the plains in my company in 1855. Sister Wilmerth East is living in Pima and was glad to meet her old captain. Her health is poor, age is creeping over her, but she feels happy in the good cause in which she enlisted in Texas. Many of her old Salt Lake friends will be pleased to learn of her fidelity to the cause of truth. She sends a Happy New Year to all her old friends. She is Stake president of the Relief Society. Philemon Merrill, of Mormon Battalion fame, also is one of the settlers. Moses Curtis, of Michigan, who joined the Church in 1833; Marshal Fite, of Ogden; Lorenzo Johnson, of Springville, Utah county; William Boyle, of Payson, of old Missouri fame, and many old timers reside in these settlements and flourish with good homes.

The mines furnish an excellent market for butter, cheese, lard, etc. Plums bring 10 cts per pound green, butter 30 to 50 cents. Some little difference prevails in some parts. In Layton President Christopher Layton and family drove a fine span of horses with which he took us through the settlements. Lastly on New Year's day to Layton where we held two crowded meetings thus spending our Happy New Year's day. On the 2nd we took

train at 10:30 to Bowie where we arrived safely and soon will be off for Benson and St. David.

E. STEVENSON.

MESA, Arizona, Jan. 4, 1896.

On January 2nd our train pulled out from Bowie forty minutes late, but arrived at Benson on time, 6:10 p.m., 65 miles from Bowie. Bishop Peter A. Luigreen was waiting to take me to St. David, six miles up the San Pedro river, where about 220 souls are located. I felt thankful once more to find rest for my weary body from the labors of three meetings, of New Year's day, and my travels. On the 3rd mine host took me a ride to explore St. David. "Here," said the Bishop, "is a beautiful townsite; when we have proved that we can depend upon artesian wells." John K. and Thomas A. McKee, grandsons of Bishop Alexander McKee, deceased, have two flowing wells, six inch pipe, that are 180 and 200 feet deep. The iron pipe only reaches about thirty feet into the ground, for want of means to pipe the whole depth, yet the wells have flowed about 60 gallons per minute for the past two years. The boys have made a reservoir, about 120x200 feet, which can be filled in four days from the constant flow of tepid water. The force or capacity is to be 22 feet high, found by holding up a pipe of that length perpendicularly and then the force was not exhausted; so that they have not yet proven how high the water may be thrown above the level of the ground. From this reservoir they say they can water twenty-five acres of land. The two boys have a quarter section each and can put down other wells. So we think these Utah boys have struck a very good thing in St. David, Arizona, and on the San Pedro River. They have, I believe the first artesian water in this territory. We say, well done for the grandsons of Bishop McKee of the Eleventh ward, Salt Lake City, Utah. There other wells of a similar nature in the valley, so that the townsite is likely to be sustained by artesian flow.

This is the oldest location of our people in the country. I believe David Kimball died here; and recently Calvin Reed, an old settler from Pond town, Utah county, was laid to rest after doing much hard labor to build up this hard place, which is now likely to become a success by aid of water. Elder Christopher Layton's pile of ruins was pointed out, where once his buildings stood; many similar ones were pointed out. The obtaining of water has been "a terror." The settlement is likely to be limited for the present, at least. It has, however, a long history.

After holding two meetings and spending twenty-four hours in St. David, the Bishop took me 6 miles to the Southern Pacific railroad, and I soon found a cot bed in Maricopa for seventy-five cents. There are in the city of Maricopa one station, two saloons and two lodging houses; fifty cents will get you breakfast; and a train, a brand new one, will take you gladly 35 miles to Mesa City, passing through Tempe on the way, for \$2.10. Bishop Peter A. Luigreen wished me to say to the Elders passing that he will take pleasure in meeting them at