

Joseph S. Porter and Wayne H. Redd, Greenville, Butler Co.
Heber Ricks and E. L. Terry, Butler, Choctaw Co.
John C. Poulson and Lewis E. Barney, Orrville, Dallas Co.
Charles Alley and James P. Jensen, Linden, Marengo Co.

D. H. THOMAS.

WEST VIRGINIA CONFERENCE.

The fame of the "Blue Grass" region of Kentucky is world wide. We write from one of its most favored spots. The rolling hills look like beautiful green pictures, inlaid in frames of greener oak, beech, hickory and walnut. Complying with the request of the President of the Southern States mission, we present with pleasure the work accomplished in the West Virginia conference. Our last report was dated November 30th, 1895, and, to give a complete history of our labors, we take up the thread where we laid it down.

Being honorably released, our beloved president, Samuel Brinton, left for Zion December 7th, and Elder Rydahl was appointed his successor. Fulfilling the counsel of President Elias S. Kimball of the Southern States mission, Elder Rydahl and companion commenced visiting the brethren in their counties on January 15th. Boyd County, Kentucky, was the first locality visited, and a most excellent time was had. Elders H. H. Cluff of Provo, and Elias S. Woodruff of Salt Lake City, represented the cause there and were performing a noble work. We then became acquainted with Brother John Keelish and wife and Brother M. E. Eden who joined the Church several years ago and are steadfast in the truth.

On Saturday, January 25th, we reached Lawrence county where Elders W. H. Hindley of American Fork and L. C. Olsen of Manti were stationed. Much has been said regarding the rough region of the Big Sandy river. We followed it through the county and never were better treated. Many good meetings were held. We met a number of people who had heard the Elders speak years ago. The last night in Lawrence county we stayed at the best hotel in Peach Orchard, and our bill was "come again."

As we neared the county seat of Martin county we began to hear good reports of Elders H. W. Beers of Manassa, Colorado, and Fred G. Warnick of Deseret, who we found diligently doing their duty. Indeed when we reached town we found them the heroes of the hour. They had held two meetings in the court house and had obtained it for us. We held three services more and everybody in town became our friends. Today the hotels are open to us to stay without charge.

Friday, February 14th, found us on our way to Whitehouse, Johnson county. Elders William J. Glade of Salt Lake City, and Matthew Spiers of Tooele were here and met us with smiles. (We assure you Elders know how to smile when they see some one from home.) We stayed at the hotel Harris, and the next morning the proprietor put us across Big Sandy. We asked the amount of charges. He said: "Gentlemen, my place is a hotel to the public, but a home to the Mormon Elders, come back whenever you can make it convenient." In Johnson we met Brother J. B. Van

Hoose and family who had been out to Colorado, and also Mr. Samuel Spradlin who lived in Ogden some time.

Morgan county, where Elders James S. Campbell of Logan, and C. A. Streeper of Centreville were doing noble service, was our next point, at which we arrived February 23rd, finding the brethren well. A warm feeling truly was found towards our people. Friends were on every hand. We held twenty-seven meetings in ten days. A new organization "The Church of God" had recently been started there and had annihilated the old churches. The people were earnestly searching after truth and we delivered six sermons on the first principles in their finest church at Ezel. The very best of treatment was accorded us, the people seeming to vie with each other in being kindest to us.

Friday, March 6th, Elders Judson I. Tolman of Marion, Idaho, and I. H. Langston of Springdale met us on the line between the counties of Morgan and Elliott. They were well and were enjoying their labors very much.

Owing to the great number of appointments out in Elliott county, Elders Campbell and Streeper were invited to go into Elliott and aid us for a few days. Elders Tolman and Langston had surely been humble and prayerful because everywhere we went, we were received with open arms. We preached in the best churches in the county, and Elders Tolman, Streeper and Rydahl held a series of meetings in the court house in Sandy Hook. We stayed at the best hotel in the city and when we left, the only charge given was a charge to come again and preach for us. Just before leaving Elliott we baptized Larkey Branham, a fine young man twenty-one years old.

Elders C. A. Higginson of Chesterfield, Idaho, and W. D. Elder of Hinckley, met us at the Carter county line and we went with them into Carter, finding the brethren enjoying many friends. Twenty-six meetings were held in ten days, and on Sunday March 22nd, we baptized five honest hearted men and women. A splendid work is being done by Elders Higginson and Elder, especially in disposing of our Church works among the people.

Friday, March 27th, we reached Greeny county, where Elders George T. Taylor of American Fork, and T. E. Sparkman of Morgan City were spreading the Gospel truths. Here we met many kind friends and baptized William Messer. We left Elders Taylor and Sparkman, who are doing a fine work, feeling well, and on April 6th, entered Lewis county, finding Elder W. H. Burrows of Huntsville, Orson Hyde of Salt Lake City, Bion D. Wilcox of Preston, Idaho, and S. H. Blackburn Jr., of Brigham City, doing nicely. Elder Burrows and Wilcox had been doing most excellent work in Lewis and as we walked up town from the station a cordial "good morning gentlemen" came from every passerby. We here made the acquaintance of "Uncle Bill" Ginn styled by Elder Burrows the best man in Kentucky. We write from his home. In a late News you copied from the Post a statement that the people of a church near here had opened it against the protests of Reverend Rippetto, the pastor. The statement was true. Indeed it is getting quite popular to be called a Mormon preacher in Lewis County, Kentucky.

Friday, April 4th, we went into Fleming county. Elders Curtis B. Smith of Manassa, Colorado, and Thomas R. Reeve of Virgin City, met us on the county line and escorted us to friends. The brethren were doing a most regal work and as a consequence we were royally entertained. A series of meetings was held in the court house at Flemingsburg by which we made the acquaintance and friendship of the most influential men in the county.

Tuesday, May 5th, saw us entering Bath county, where Elders J. G. Pearl of Salt Lake City, and J. W. Hanson of Brigham City are doing much good and making many friends. Crowded houses greeted us everywhere. Entering Fleming county we again held a series of meetings and baptized Henry Figgins and Ida Parker a couple of most excellent young people. Leaving Fleming we walked into Lewis county where among kind friends we write to you.

In our travels among the brethren we have found a spirit of cheerful obedience to counsels of our president truly gratifying. All are working with a will for the sowing of the seed and we are confident that much good to the cause of Christ will eventually be manifest. The prospects are very bright for the triumph of truth. Since our last writing twenty-six additions have been made to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints in our conference. The conference is in a most flourishing condition. We have been making quite a record in meeting holding, having held one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight in the past five months with an average of about twenty-six Elders. The greatest number held during a week by one pair of Elders is seventeen and in one month fifty-seven. As a sample of the labor being done we present the report of the week ending May 23rd: Rejected testimonies of the Elders 11; refused entertainment 5; tracts distributed 3260; books sold, given and loaned 119; meetings held 95; all the brethren have not reported as yet.

The feeling towards our people is gradually growing more favorable, as, by the goodness of the Lord, we dispel the mists of misunderstanding and prejudice. If we had been told that the people among whom we have traveled would have been so kindly disposed to us, we could hardly have realized it. But the people, and especially the intelligent and influential men, are becoming our warm friends.

There seems to be, however, an awakening by the opposition to tear down the work of these humble Elders. Recently there have appeared in the papers here, letters from one Reverend B. F. Clay of Salt Lake City. He says that polygamy is still practiced and that membership in the Mormon Church is the only passport to political preferment. We will say that Mr. Clay may just as well develop his literary ability in preparing good substantial sermons for his flock at home, instead of writing such unchristian like and untruthful statements; because they are making us friends by the score. One gentleman remarked the other day: "I have never seen Mr. Clay, but I have seen the Mormon Elders and I will take their statements in preference to his."

Elders W. H. Mansell of Kaysville (owing to sickness) Jan 30th, Orlando Bradley of Moroni, March 27th, Henry C. Taylor of Salt Lake City March 27th,