FROM BLUFFS TO CHICAGO.

Reminiscences of Early Mormon Days on the Missouri.

Historical Sketches—Kansas City to the World's Fair—Utah Day's Celebration.

(Correspondence DESERET NEWS.)

KANSAS CITY, Jackson county, Missouri, Sept. 7, 1893.—A few days ago, while hunting up old settlers in Jackson county, I visited the old town of Westport, situated about three miles south of the lower part of Kansas City. While there I met three old men (Amazon Hayes, James Hunter and John S. Harris) who figured in Jackson county in the thirties, and remembered a great many things connected with the Mormon difficulties in 1833. They told me all the particulars they could remember of the skirmish which took place between a company of militia and a mob a short distance east of Westport on the 6th of November, 1833, during which Andrew Barber, one of the Saints, was mortally wounded and two of the mob were killed. The exact spot where that skirmish was fought, as well as they could remember, is the place where the present road leading from Westport to Independence crosses Springfield avenue, a street running through and south of Kansas City, on what was known for many years as the Calvin McCoy farm (John Calvin McCoy). A large number of the Saints had settled in that district of country now lying east and south of Westport; others along the Big Blue and some in the immediate vicinity of Independence. In answer to my questions as to the cause of the difficulties between the Mormons and the other settlers of Jackson county, they were all of the opinion that there were faults on both sides, but that the main controversy arose on account of the peculiar religion which the Mormons believed in. The old Missourians would not "take stock" in modern revelations, and did not believe in angels visiting the earth nor that missions could be performed in our day. And they would not live together with neighbors who believed in such "stuff" as that.

Westport, which will still be remembered by quite a number of Saints in Utah who crossed the plains in 1852 and following years, is now a suburban town to Kansas City, lying immediately south of that town. Many of the Saints who emigrated to Utah in early days came up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers as far as Westport Landing (the present Kansas City) when they disembarked, and thence proceeded to Westport, where they secured their outfits for crossing the plains. The old Mormon camping ground southwest of the town was pointed out to me.

Westport dates back to 1831. Some time during that year land was taken up in that locality by the Rev. Isaac McCoy, who subsequently acted somewhat in the capacity of a missionary, helping to drive the Saints away from Jackson county. In 1832 his son, John C. McCoy, who afterwards figured prominently in the early history of Kansas, established a trading post at this place, having the Indians to trade with on the one side and the new settlers of Missouri on the other. The first goods ever handled where Kansas City now stands, were goods shipped to Mr. McCoy in 1832. In 1833 Mr. McCoy's house of his new trading post had become so enlarged that he laid off the grounds adjacent to it into town lots, and called it Westport. The new town thus founded grew rapidly, and in a short time there were a number of trading houses established, which opened an extensive trade with the neighboring Indians. Later the so-called Santa Fe trade, or rather an extensive trade opened with northern Mexico, made Westport a place of importance, and the goods shipped to Mexico and other points were mostly landed at the great bend of the river, then called Westport Landing, now Kansas City.

At the present time Westport proper has about 2000 inhabitants, but there are perhaps 5000 people within its corporate limits. ANDREW JENSON.

KANSAS CITY, Jackson Co., Missouri, Sept. 7, 1893.—Nearly every county in Missouri has published, or caused to be published, histories of their respective localities; these are, as a rule, not very accurate, as to dates and circumstances, but they are nevertheless the best authorities on hand at the present time on many points of historical interest. From one of these histories (published the most of the others by the Missouri Historical company) on Jackson county, I have culled a portion of the following:

In honor of Andrew Jackson the seventh President of the United States, Jackson county, Missouri, received its name. There are at least twenty counties in the United States bearing the same distinguished appellation. Jackson county, Missouri, was not settled or organized at as early a date as some of the adjoining counties. The territory now embraced within its limits together with that of Cass, Bates and a part of Lafayette was occupied by the Osage Indians. Their title was relinquished by treaty with the government during the summer of 1825. However, the first occupancy by white men dates back to the year 1819, when the government purchased from the Indians a tract of land six miles square, which was afterward known as the "Six Mile," a name which that part of the country still bears. A fort was erected upon it during the same year as military garrison established which received its name from the tribe of Indians called Osages. The site of the fort was on a bluff of the Missouri river and a short distance from where the town of Sibley, in Osage township, now stands, about fifteen miles southeast of Independence. For nearly twenty years there was no important permanent settlements within the limits of the county. At Fort Osage a ferry across the Missouri river was established; which has been kept up to a few years ago. The town which sprang up at the landing of the ferry was known as Fort Osage, but it is now entirely abandoned. During the occupancy of this fort a few white families were encouraged by its officers to settle on the Indian lands. After the removal of the troops immigration commenced filling up the country with great rapidity. The Indians were removed during the summer of 1828, and in the autumn of that year all the unsettled portion of the country west of the Little Blue was partially occupied. The first settlers were principally from other portions of the state, but during the following year (1829) large immigrations from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, etc., augmented the population rapidly. During that year an application was prepared to submit to the legislature for county organization and the consent of the district was taken. The "Blue country," as it was then called, was attached for civil and military purposes to Lafayette county, and in the year 1826, at a general election, Abraham McClelland and Lindsey W. Boggs, both of "Six Mile" were declared representatives to the lower house of the state legislature. The ensuing assembly passed an act organizing the county, which was approved Dec. 15, 1826, and three commissioners were appointed to locate the county seat, which they did on the 29th day of March, 1827. The place selected was in the southwest quarter of section 12, township 49 of range 32, and gave it the name which it has since borne, that of Independence.

January 22, 1827, the state legislature appointed Abraham McClelland, Hezekiah Pritchard and Henry Burris as presiding judges of the county; these officers then appointed John Chrisman sheriff of May following, being sworn in on that day. At that session the county was divided into three townships, namely: Fort Osage on the east, Kaw on the west and Blue in the center; the first derived its name from Fort Osage, the second from the Kaw or Kansas river and the third from Blue river, which was named from the color of its waters.

The early settlements were all in or near the timber or some spring of water, the settlers thinking the prairie land not only difficult to be subdued, but actually worthless so far as agriculture purposes were concerned. When they first commenced breaking the prairie they used the "turnbrest" plow, to which they attached from four to eight yoke of oxen. After Independence was located for the seat of justice in March, 1827, that place became the most important point to the county, both in size and business.

The first clerk of the county was Robert Wilson, of Howard county who later became notorious in his persecutions of the Mormons. He gave up his position in disgust being unfavorably impressed with the rough exterior and uncultivated manner of the people. He was succeeded by the notorious missourian Samuel C. Owens, who served as county clerk for many years.

Kansas City dates back to 1828. During that year the first survey of a townsite was made near the old Westport Landing and called Kansas City, but the proprietors of the ground disagreed in some particulars, and the town made but little progress until 1840 when it was laid out on a larger scale, claim which it has grown with varying progress, in 1850 the place was duly incorporated as a city.

Kansas City, as remembered by the Saints who commenced their journey across the plains from that point in 1854, consisted of a little village crowded along the river front, together with a few residences built upon the hills overlooking the river. The levee was only about wide enough for a team to pass, jutting over a ledge of rocks into the river on the one side and rising somewhat of cost into bluffs on the other. Here and there such various had been made into the hill and business houses built.

One of these houses was the Union hotel (now Gillis House) built in 1839, and another Chick's warehouse, built in 1840. About the line of the present Broadway the bluffs, coming round in nearly a perpendicular wall from Turkey creek, jutted into the river, and a wagon road wide enough for one wagon had been cut across it leading into the Kaw bottom, which was then a dense wood, except where the French traders had cleared off a few patches. On this back of the levee were well covered with wooden stands for the sale of merchandise, which stands were generally made. In short, a few inviting spot for town building would be difficult to conceive. But from the great angle in the Missouri river at this point was the best natural road to the southwest and west, and it was the highest point to which goods for the Great Santa Fe and plains trade could be taken by boat without increasing the cost of land transportation and incurring worse risks. This was what determined this locality as the starting point for that trade, while the uncovered river landing determined the exact spot whereon the transfer to overland wagons should be made. Towns being recognized the points they are, they soon at Independence and Westport contested entirely at Kansas City. Outfitting houses were opened and provision made for the emigrants, so that they were no longer compelled to go either to Independence or Westport.

Kansas City has not grown much since I was here five years ago. The boom which "struck it" a year or so ago left its depressed effects. Whole additions which were laid out during the boom are at present almost worthless (unsurveyed) and many of the houses built of brick presents the appearance of being taken down because there were none "to dwell in them." Still, Kansas City is a thriving place, as a whole, and ranks in point of population and business among the great cities of the Union—a fact that any one who will make a short tour of inspection within the limits of the Union may see for himself. Its business expansion movements are in the ascendancy, and all descriptions of business which take place day and night at the point of contact between the Indian and the white man, will certainly fall to its share in a marked degree, both in business and population. I delivered last night from an hop in Hay & Carr's Hall, in addition, also brought I start for Chicago, Illinois.

ANDREW JENSON.

UTAH BUILDING, Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Ills., Sept. 14, 1893.—Yesterday was Utah's day at the Columbian Exposition, and according to previous announcement an interesting program was carried out at Festival hall. Owing to other special attractions on the same day, and also on account of the delays at the California state building, the attendance at Festival hall was not as large as might have been expected, only about three thousand people being present, while the seating capacity of the hall is about double that number. The 24th of July, Utah Pioneer day, had formerly been settled upon for Utah day at the World's Fair, but this was afterwards changed to the 14th of September, the day on which Utah, forty-three years ago, was granted a territorial government—that is, the day when the organic act creating said Territory received the executive signature.

The invitations yesterday were announced for 12 o'clock noon, but it was fully half an hour later when the proceedings commenced. At that hour the Tabernacle choir was occupying the space in front of the great organ in the west end of the hall. On the platform of stand immediately below were seated the following distinguished ladies and gentlemen, mostly citizens of Utah: Caleb W. West, governor of Utah; Presidents Wilford Woodruff and George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency, R. C. Chambers, president, and E. A. McDaniel, secretary, of the Utah World's Fair commission; Colonel H. C. Lett and E. L. Godfrey, of the Utah Commission (under the Edmunds law); Charles Crane, of the National Commissioners to the Columbian Exposition (residence at Kansas, Millard county, Utah); President Wm. E. Hubbard, of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce; John T. Caine, ex-delegate to Congress; Mrs. Emily S. Richards, president of the Ladies' Territorial board; Mrs. Electa Bullock, of Provo, and Mrs. J. T. Gilmer, of Salt Lake City, both members of said board; Mrs. Clalaire, daughter-in-law of U. S. Secretary Carlisle, and other gentlemen and ladies of prominence.

R. C. Chambers, of the Utah Territorial board, presided in the meeting; he delivered the opening address and afterwards introduced the other speakers.

The Tabernacle choir sang the "Star Spangled Banner," after which Mrs. Emily S. Richards, in behalf of the ladies of Utah, made a short address of welcome to all nations represented at this grand gathering at the World's Columbian Exposition.

Governor Caleb W. West then delivered the orator of the day in his usual eloquent and masterly style. Referring to the relative positions of Utah and California, he stated that on the same day that Utah's prosperous neighbor on the west (California) was clothed with statehood, Utah was placed under the swaddling clothes, being invested with a territorial form of government. This was the first recognition by the parent government of the young colony which at that time (1850) was struggling for existence in the midst of Indians, crickets and grasshoppers near the shores of the Great Salt Lake. The speaker could refer with pride to the brave pioneers of Utah, and particularly to that hardy band, consisting of 143 men, 3 women and 2 children, who, in July, 1847, first planted the standard of civilization in the crescentic of Salt Lake City. "And," said the speaker, "I am pleased to state that we have one of these illustrious men with us today in the person of President Wilford Woodruff (Cheers.) That man, now threescore years of age, was one of those noble souls in America who risked his life for the sake of his friends." The speaker contrasted the early old wagons and slow going ones with which the Utah pioneers of 1847 crossed the plains and mountains, with the stately Pullman cars in which the Salt Lake Tabernacle choir and their friends visited Chicago a few days ago, and also contrasted the present prosperity of Utah with its desert features not more than fifty years ago. The speaker concluded by drawing comparisons between Utah and its neighbors and all other states in the Union. "If," said he, "we cannot compare with them at yet in regard to wealth and as to fire, we can claim one thing. None of them need be ashamed of us in our devotion to our country. We have come to the World's Fair to help bear a part of the burden of our people in this enterprise. We ask for Utah only the recognition she deserves." The president's address was listened to throughout with much attention.

President Wilford Woodruff, after a few introductory remarks, gave a brief outline of the journey of the Utah Pioneers from Winter Quarters, on the banks of the Missouri river, to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, a distance of over 1,000 miles, in 1847, and how he personally, with others, had helped fathers to lay out the city, and had planted the first potatoes in the valley before he saw a meal there after the arrival with the late President Brigham Young, on the 24th of July, 1847. He also referred to the action of President Brannan and others trying to persuade the pioneers to go to California and not settle in the great desert valley, where Salt Lake City now stands, and that President Young and his people who were with him were determined to plant a colony in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, which they did most successfully. The President, in alluding to the work of the Jubilee celebration in the World's Fair, said that the idea was originated in the First Presidency by a man who commences his career in life as a shepherd boy, the present President Brigham Young, and that it received the sanction of the leaders of the Mormon Church; and the success that the idea has scored, not only to the country on this ground yesterday, but at the different cities where they have given celebrations since they left their homes in the mountains, was very gratifying. The speaker finished by extending an invitation to hundreds of the people of the whole world to join from a with that they might become acquainted with what we had for a citizens. "And," said the President, in addition to speakers and representatives of the different religious denominations, "if they have no stand to present to anything desire to be heard, we will tender them the use of our large Tabernacle."

Professor Willard E. Walbe treated the assembly to a beautiful and artistic violin solo, consisting of a medley of Hungarian airs, he was heartily applauded.

President Geo. Q. Cannon then delivered an interesting speech on the causes that led the Mormon Pioneers of 1847 to settle in what is now Utah, instead of proceeding to California or Oregon, which at that time were offering great facilities to those who would come and settle within their confines; that the pioneers who came with President Young were in search of a home where they could live in peace and worship God according to their own conscience. A privilege of this kind was of greater importance to them than anything else, and in order to obtain this boon they would rather settle in a desert country and put up with all the hardships and trials incident to pioneer life in such a land, than to enjoy the natural advantages which a better country afforded, if they in such a land should be subjected to the fruits of that kind of religious intolerance and bigotry which they in their own and lands had been accustomed to within the confines of the states in which they had formerly resided.

The next on the program was an organ solo, rendered by Mrs. J. R. Hamilton, who was followed by R. C. Easton, Esq., who, according to Professor Walbe's song, "O May Fairest," sang the "dweller," one, as a typical Mormon hymn. To the encore he responded with "Annie Laurie."

The proceedings were concluded with a selection by the choir, and were throughout spirited and interesting. At different times while the speakers were delivering their addresses, they were heartily applauded, and the music especially seemed to be highly appreciated by the audience.

ANDREW JENSON.

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