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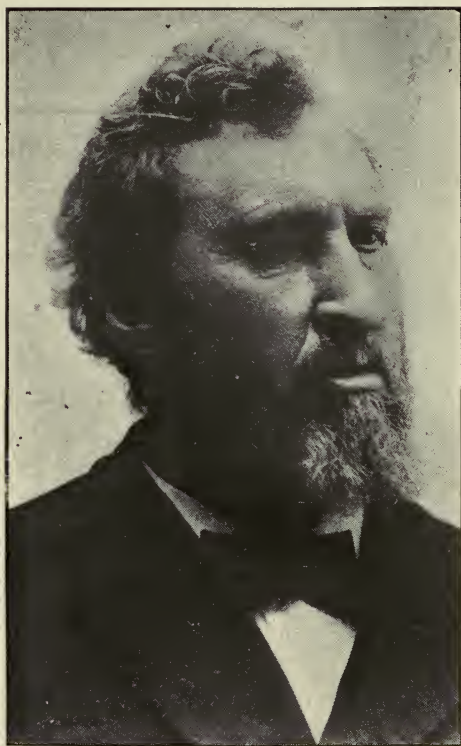
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The "Mormons" as
pioneers

THE UTAH GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1918.

THE "MORMONS" AS PIONEERS.

BY ANDREW JENSON, ¹⁸⁵⁰⁻¹⁹⁴¹ PRESIDENT HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF UTAH
AND ASSISTANT CHURCH HISTORIAN.

As years roll on, and the west half of the United States of America becomes more thickly settled, the achievements and labors of the early pioneers of the great west become matters of vital importance, and no one who visits Salt Lake City at the present time can afford to ignore the fact that the Latter-day Saints were the first to raise the standard of Anglo-Saxon civilization in the great intermountain region and elsewhere. Nobody dare dispute the fact in the face of history that they were also eminently successful as pioneers, for the many flourishing cities, towns and villages with which that part of our great country once known as the Great American Desert is now dotted, testifies abundantly of the energy, the union, the determination and success of the "Mormon" pioneers. Viewing these things in the light of history, the question naturally arises: Did the "Mormons" have any experience as pioneers and founders of commonwealths before they became the founders of Salt Lake City in the heart of the great American desert. Endeavoring to answer that question it becomes necessary to go back to the beginning of "Mormon" history.

Nearly everybody knows that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized as a religious body in 1830 in the western part of the State of New York, but it may not be so well known that said Church was only about a year old when the members of that organization commenced their labors as pioneers of the west. In the month of June, 1831, Joseph Smith with a small body of men left the little village of Kirtland, Ohio, as missionaries, for the western boundary of the United States, four men of the community having preceded them there in the beginning of the same year. Arriving in Jackson County, Mo., in July, 1831, Joseph Smith and his companions, together

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with a number of families known in Church history as the Colesville branch, commenced operations as a colonizing community immediately east of where Kansas City now stands. There those eastern people had quite an experience in establishing what we may term a Yankee colony in a Slave-holding state of the Union. They practically became the first farmers without slave labor in that part of our great country and in a remarkably short time they had a prosperous colony numbering about twelve hundred people. In this colony was established a printing office which at the time of its establishment was 120 miles further west than any other printing office in the United States. The "Mormons" also opened a successful store, built one or more mills and opened up a number of flourishing farms on lands which they bought from the United States government for \$1.25 an acre.

I am not in this article dealing with the causes leading to the breaking up of this first "Mormon" settlement in Missouri, but will simply state that the colony only existed about two and one-half years, when differences arose between them and some of the older settlers (who were nearly all slave holders) and the "Mormons" who, being eastern people, were mostly Abolitionists, but the year 1833 witnessed the exodus of the "Mormons" from Jackson County.

Their next experience as colonizers was on the flat lands lying adjacent to the Missouri River and some of its tributaries on the opposite side of the Missouri, mainly in Clay County, Mo. There the "Mormons" again gained experience as pioneers and were successful in turning the flat low lands in that part of the country into fruitful fields. Much of their success there as well as in Jackson County and also their future homes elsewhere must be ascribed to their unity and that co-operation which is based upon brotherly love and mutual help.

The experience of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County only lasted about three years, when it became necessary, in order to avoid trouble with their less industrious neighbors, for them to move out into an open prairie country, lying about sixty miles in a northeasterly direction from Liberty, Clay County. Those who were anxious to have them move promised that if they would be satisfied with that prairie country, where only a very few people had settled up to that time, they could have a country organization of their own. It seems that up to that time the early inhabitants of Missouri had avoided the cultivation of prairie land, believing that only such parts of the country which were fertilized by the falling leaves of trees growing adjacent to the Missouri and its tributaries were rich and productive enough to warrant the husbandman putting his plow into the ground, but the "Mormon" community, as soon as they had located in what soon afterwards became Caldwell County, Mo., proved to the rest of the inhabitants that the prairies were not useless, but that

good crops could be raised on these with careful cultivation. The consequence was that the "Mormon" community was more successful in Caldwell County, and also in some of the adjacent counties, than they hitherto had been elsewhere, for soon the community grew from 1200 souls to as many thousands and a promising town called Far West which reached the 2000 mark so far as inhabitants were concerned was founded on the prairies of Caldwell, and the community found itself gaining rapidly in wealth and comforts.

In the meantime another faction of the Church had experiences as pioneers in Ohio, not far from where the city of Cleveland now stands. Early in 1831 a number of the Saints located in a little insignificant hamlet containing only a mill, a store and a few farm houses, but soon they built a city containing about 1500 inhabitants with a beautiful Temple in the midst of it. In this connection it may therefore be said that the "Mormons" became the pioneer temple builders in North America, aside from masonic temples, so called, and other houses of worship. This settlement known as Kirtland, Ohio, did not continue in the hands of the Latter-day Saints more than about seven years, as complications arose, and it became necessary in 1838 for the bulk of the people to vacate, leaving their temple and improvements behind, and migrate to Missouri, about a thousand miles further west.

In the meantime trouble also arose between the "Mormons" and the other settlers in Missouri. I am not here dealing with the causes of this trouble, but I venture to say, that jealousy based upon the fact that the "Mormons" seemed to be more prosperous than their neighbors were at the bottom of it, and yet, it must be remembered that the religion of the Latter-day Saints was in many respects so different from that of many of their neighbors that persecutions on that ground easily arose, though the "Mormons" from the beginning had adopted as their slogan "to mind their own business." Suffice it to say that the early part of 1839 found the Saints to the number of about 12,000 driven into exile, after a number of their people had been murdered, much of their property destroyed and nearly all the rest confiscated. On this occasion, the Saints, instead of turning their faces westward, traveled about two hundred miles eastward in order to get out of the state of Missouri, the so-called exterminating order of Governor Lilburn W. Boggs having been issued recommending either extermination or expulsion.

In the little town of Quincy, Ill., the exiled Saints found temporary shelter, the people of Quincy treating them most kindly and taking immediate steps to relieve them of temporary wants.

But as the "Mormons" could never consent to live on charity, or to receive aid when there was a possibility of them helping themselves, they immediately fell back upon their former tac-

tics as colonizers. About fifty miles from Quincy, up the Mississippi River, a little village known as Commerce had been founded some years before by eastern people who came there well supplied with money and property to found a settlement in the west, but the place being very unhealthy these people instead of building up a town on the banks of the Mississippi river built up a good sized graveyard on the slope of a hill. The facts were these that the place was so marshy and swampy that the inhabitants were nearly all taken with malaria, mostly fever and ague, and the mortality in consequence was very great indeed. Hence, when the Saints through a committee appointed for the purpose investigated conditions for buying land upon which to locate another settlement they found the few people left at Commerce willing to sell on easy terms, and the consequence was that the "Mormons" located in that beautiful bend of the Mississippi River in Hancock County, Ill., where they in the course of six years built up Nauvoo, the beautiful, and that too in the days of their poverty, plucked and peeled as they were on account of their sufferings and persecutions in Missouri. Yet the facts are these that where the comparatively wealthy people from the east could not build up the village of Commerce, these persecuted "Mormons", through their union of toil and systematic labor, built up a city which, when it flourished the most, had about 20,000 inhabitants. The city contained a beautiful temple, a number of manufacturing establishments, public buildings, a printing office and many substantial private residences. Here the "Mormons" had experiences as pioneers to drain swamps and turn them into fruitful fields and to take other steps for improving conditions until, according to the statement of the late George A. Smith, Nauvoo became as healthy as any other place in Illinois. Joseph the Prophet, the "Mormon" leader and the founder of the Church, took a most active part in the building of Nauvoo which as years rolled on became a most endearing spot to him. This is exemplified by a remark he made when he left Nauvoo the last time alive to go to Carthage. When he had gone as far as the Temple he turned around and looked with admiration upon that building and then upon the city at large, remarking: "This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens; little do they know the trials that await them." His bosom friend John Taylor, in his beautiful composition known as "The Seer," in referring to Joseph Smith and Nauvoo, says:

"The Saints, the Saints, his only pride,
For them he lived, for them he died.
Their joys were his, their sorrows too:
He loved the Saints, he loved Nauvoo."

It was not only Joseph Smith who thus loved Nauvoo and its

people, but that beautiful place became the pride of all its inhabitants. Many years ago, when I first became acquainted with the inhabitants of this intermountain country and when many early Church veterans were yet alive, I often, in my endeavors to elicit from them historical information concerning early pioneer days, listened for hours to some of those Nauvoo Saints relating incidents connected with that city; and while they were telling of their thrilling experiences there and their associations with the Prophet Joseph, I would in many instances notice the tears coursing their way down their weather-beaten cheeks, as the pleasant or sad memories of the past touched their hearts.

After what I have said it will readily be seen that the Latter-day Saints had much experience as pioneers, founders of settlements and city builders before they came to these mountains, and these experiences indeed stood them well in hand when it fell to their lot to found this beautiful city in these Rocky Mountains.

It is a well known fact that the Saints were driven away from Illinois in 1846, after they had witnessed the murder of their Prophet and Patriarch and a number of others by the hands of mobs. Early in February of that year (1846), the exodus of about 25,000 people commenced by the advance guard crossing the Mississippi river and forming a temporary encampment on Sugar Creek, Lee county, Iowa. Thence the journey westward was continued through the southern counties of Iowa to the Missouri river, a distance of about three hundred miles, and here again the "Mormons" became pioneers in founding such settlements as Garden Grove, Mt. Pisgah, Kaneshville (the present Council Bluffs), and quite a number of smaller settlements, in southwestern Iowa. If our socialistic friends want to give an illustration of what true Socialism, based on brotherly love, can accomplish, then let them read the history of the "Mormons" after their expulsion from the state of Illinois, and also of their movements after their arrival in the Rocky Mountains. Let them post themselves as to how the advance companies of what was termed the camps of Israel, planted and sowed grain and vegetables at Garden Grove, Mt. Pisgah, etc., for the later companies of their co-religionists to reap the harvest. Let them read also of the covenant entered into by the "Mormons" in Missouri in 1839 when the better-to-do members of the community pledged themselves to spend their last dollar in assisting their fellow-sufferers to leave the state of Missouri. By what I have now written it will be seen that the Saints were practically the pioneer settlers in certain parts of Iowa, this being particularly the case in Pottawattamie county in that state.

It was the intention, when the exodus from Nauvoo was commenced in 1846, that the advance companies of the "Mormons" should arrive in the Rocky Mountains that year; but when the first companies had reached the Missouri river a call came from the United States government for five hundred men to be raised

among the "Mormons" to participate in the war, which had broken out between the United States and Mexico. This delayed the settlement of Salt Lake valley one year, for instead of going to the mountains in 1846 the Saints, after the Battalion had left, found it necessary to locate a temporary settlement on the west bank of the Missouri river, which became known as Winter Quarters. This meant that the "Mormons" became the first actual white settlers in what is now the state of Nebraska, for up to that time that part of our great country now included in said state had been in the hands of the Omahas, Pawnees, Sioux and other Indian tribes, and not only were the Saints the founders of that first settlement in Nebraska, Winter Quarters, where the little city of Florence now sands, but they also took an active part a few years later in founding the city of Omaha where a "Mormon" elder (Jos. E. Johnson) published the first newspaper ("The Omaha Bee") ever published in that city.

I now revert to the Mormon Battalion which left the Pottawattamie country in Iowa in July, 1846, and marched to Fort Leavenworth. Thence the real journey to California was commenced, and after traveling as far as Santa Fe, New Mexico, it was discovered that a number of families who had accompanied the Battalion that far were not able to undertake the other half of the journey to California which led through dry and trackless deserts; hence it was decided that those families, together with a number of the soldiers who during the first half of the journey had shown signs of not being as strong as some of their companions, should change their course of travel, and instead of continuing to California go north and winter on the Arkansas river. This meant that the "Mormons" also became the first Anglo-Saxon settlers in what is now the enterprising state of Colorado, and it was not only these soldiers and "Mormon" families who wintered at what is now the city of Pueblo in Colorado, but a number of Saints who had left the Southern States in 1846 with the intention of joining the pioneers on their journey to the Rocky Mountains that year were compelled to winter with the detachment of the Battalion, as the pioneers (as stated) did not proceed to the mountains till 1847.

The following is culled from Capt. James Brown's account of his detachment (sick detachment) of the Mormon Battalion who spent the winter of 1846-47 at Pueblo:

"When the Mormon Battalion arrived in Santa Fe, and ordered by General Doniphan to march to California, it was found upon examination that there were those in the Battalion that were not fit for service; hence, they were detached and sent to the Arkansas river near Bent's Fort to winter under my command. * * * *
We left Santa Fe on the 18th of October, 1846, on march for the Arkansas, near Bent's Fort, a distance of three hundred miles, with twenty days' rations without any bacon. Our beef was

broken-down oxen that had been driven from the States that season (dry picking for the sick). We made from fifteen to twenty miles per day, twenty-seven sick men not being able to travel a foot on the start, and no conveniences for the sick, only in our baggage wagons, which were drawn by broken-down oxen. Therefore the men who were well, in many instances, helped to draw the wagons, but with the blessing of the Lord all made the river. Milton Smith of Company C died the 27th of October, on the march to Bent's Fort, with intermittent fever. He was a good young man, and his death was much lamented by Company C. Abner Chase of Company B died the 3rd of November on our march to Bent's Fort. He was worn out with chills and fever, but was well attended to by his brother John D. and others. He was buried in a beautiful grove—a martyr for the kingdom of God. My acquaintance with him was during his sickness and he bore his suffering like a saint. * * *

"We arrived at Bent's Fort on the 7th of November, left on the 9th for Pueblo, seventy-five miles west, up the Arkansas river, arrived in Pueblo on the 15th, where we made winter quarters. There we found a company of Saints that had stopped for the winter, and been left there by Elder Wm. Crosby from the South. Elder Porter Dowdle was president. We made ourselves comfortable quarters for the winter, built a log tabernacle, 20x30 feet, where we sang, prayed and preached and sometimes danced during the winter. Joseph W. Richards, musician of Company A, died the 21st of November, 1846, of quick consumption, in Pueblo. I became acquainted with him after we left Santa Fe and I have often wondered why the Lord took so fine and promising a young man away in his youth. Notwithstanding he was worn out with affliction, his countenance beamed with intelligence and hope of eternal life. * * * He was calm as a summer's morning and expired in a few minutes without a groan. He was laid in the grave in perfect order, according to his request. He was beloved of all the Saints that knew him. John Perkins, of Company C, died in Pueblo the 19th of January, 1847, of consumption."

The following is copied from Bancroft's history of Colorado:

"The first American families in Colorado were a part of the Mormon Battalion of 1846 who with their wives and children resided at Pueblo from September (1846) to the spring and summer of the following year (1847) when they joined the "Mormon" migration to Salt Lake. A number of persons later living in Utah were born at Pueblo in 1846-47. A number of houses were erected by them for winter quarters and here were born, married and buried a number of their people. Driven out of Illinois at the point of the bayonet, seeking homes on the western side of the continent, they had accepted service under the government which had failed to protect them in their direst need for the sake of being provisioned and having their families transported across

the continent. Of their strange history the winter in Pueblo was but an incident." (Bancroft, p. 357.)

Going back a little in our story, I desire to draw attention also to the fact that on the very day in February, 1846, that the actual exodus of the "Mormons" from Nauvoo, Illinois, took place, a ship named the *Brooklyn* sailed from the city of New York with a company of 230 Saints on board, mainly farmers from the New England States and citizens of some of the eastern cities. This ship performed a wonderful voyage, doubling Cape Horn, touching at the island of San Fernandez (the base of the Robinson Crusoe story), touching then at the Hawaiian Islands and finally landing at the Bay of San Francisco July 31, 1846, nearly one year before President Brigham Young and his pioneers entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake. On the arrival of the *Brooklyn* in California the "Mormons" who had made the voyage in that ship found a small village called Yerba Buena, standing near the Golden Gate. After landing, the *Brooklyn* people soon found themselves outnumbering the native Californians and under their manipulations and industry the little insignificant Spanish village was changed to San Francisco, there being already a Catholic mission of that name in the vicinity. This change was brought about partly through the influence exercised by the *California Star* which was practically the first newspaper published in California in the English language. It was edited by Samuel Brannan, the "Mormon" Elder, who had led the *Brooklyn* company from New York to California. Thus it can be claimed consistently that the "Mormons" were the actual founders of San Francisco as well as Salt Lake City and many other places in the "Great West."

A number of the *Brooklyn* company, as stated, were farmers who naturally desired to carry on agriculture in California, and in looking around for a suitable place to locate a farming colony they selected a spot in the great San Joaquin valley, near the junction of the Stanislaus river with the San Joaquin river, and here the "Mormons" founded the first farming settlement in that great valley which now contains seven of the most flourishing counties in California. Later the same people that founded Salt Lake City located the fine and flourishing settlement of San Bernardino in Southern California.

The following is extracted from Hubert Howe Bancroft's "History of California," Vol. 5, page 548:

"It was on February 4th (1846) that the *Brooklyn* sailed from New York with her load of emigrants. She was not a fast sailer, but excellent preparations had been made for the comfort of the passengers. Elaborate regulations had been drawn up for all the details of routine conduct. There were ten deaths, and two births, the infants being named Atlantic and Pacific.

"In each ocean a storm put all in danger. Once Captain Richardson gave up the vessel as lost; but the 'Mormons' paid no heed

to such terrors, for were they not in the keeping of the Lord, and bound for a land of promise? It is even claimed that faith somewhat strengthened them to bear the pangs of sea-sickness. The last storm struck the ship when she was near the latitude of Valparaiso and trying to make that port, driving her back nearly to the cape. The first anchorage was at the island of Juan Fernandez on May 4th. But here they got for nothing the supplies that would have cost dear at Valparaiso. After five days they continued their voyage, arriving at Honolulu on June 20th and remaining there ten days, being hospitably welcomed and honored by Mr. Damon with a kindly notice in the *Friend*. Here they met Commodore Stockton, about to sail for Monterey, and learned something of the prospect that California would soon be occupied by the United States. Much of the time during the remainder of the voyage was spent in military drill, with a view to possible hostility on the part of the Mexicans. The arrival in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) was on July 31st. * * * *

"Thus San Francisco became for a time very largely a 'Mormon' town. All bear witness to the orderly and moral conduct of the Saints, both on land and sea. They were honest and industrious citizens, even if clannish and peculiar. They had a few months' provisions left on disembarking, but they owed something on their passage money. After camping for a time on a vacant lot, some went to Marin county to work as lumbermen and thus pay their debts; others were put in possession of the old mission buildings; all sought work at whatever tasks presented themselves, making themselves generally useful; while a party of twenty was sent into the San Joaquin valley to prepare for the coming of the Nauvoo Saints by the overland route. Many of them appear in the town records of 1846-47 as the grantees of building lots. * *

"In January, 1847, Brannan began the publication of the Yerba Buena *California Star*, using the material of the old "Prophet" office; and it was continued through this year and the next. It was not issued as an organ of 'Mormonism,' but as a newspaper. * * * *

"Brannan wrote from Yerba Buena on the 1st of January: 'We have commenced a settlement on the River San Joaquin, a large and beautiful stream emptying into the Bay of San Francisco; but the families of the company are wintering in this place, where they find plenty of employment, and houses to live in; and about twenty of our number are up at the new settlement, which we call New Hope, ploughing and putting in wheat and other crops, and making preparations to move their families up in the spring, where they hope to meet the main body by land some time during the coming season. The site of New Hope was on the north bank of the Stanislaus, about a mile and a half from the San Joaquin. Wm. Stout was in charge of the party that went in a launch from Yerba Buena to found the first settlement in San Joaquin county.'

A log house was built and a saw mill, eighty acres were seeded and fenced, and in April the crops promised well, but not much more is known of the enterprise except that it was abandoned in the autumn. * * * The reason for abandoning the enterprise was * * * the receipt of news that the Church had decided to settle at Salt Lake.'"

We will now return to the main camps of the exiled saints which my narrative left at Winter Quarters in 1846. As soon as possible the following spring (1847) a selection of men and teams were made to push ahead as pioneers to the Rocky Mountains, and thus it was that Brigham Young, together with 142 other pioneers, three women and two children left the Missouri river for the Rocky Mountains in April, 1847. Having proceeded about half way, four of their numbers left the main company at Ft. Laramie with the intention of going south to the Arkansas river to appraise the saints from Mississippi and the detachment of the Mormon Battalion who had wintered there that the pioneers were passing. These four men intercepted the parties mentioned who had already left their encampments at Pueblo for Upper California. At Laramie also the pioneers were joined by a small advance company of the Mississippi saints, Robt. Crow and family and others, 17 souls altogether. After deducting the four pioneers which had left, this increased the pioneer company to 161 souls. Continuing the journey as far as the upper crossing of the Platte ten men of the pioneer company were left to ferry the California and Oregon emigrants (who were on their journey westward) across the Platte. On the arrival of the Pioneers on Green River a small company of the Battalion overtook the pioneers who when they arrived in the valley on July 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, numbered about 156 people.

Five days after the arrival of Brigham Young and his company the detachment of the Mormon Battalion under the leadership of Capt. James Brown entered the Valley. Immediately the pioneers commenced to lay the foundation of our beautiful city which now can boast of 100,000 inhabitants. Space does not permit me to go into greater details, but I will simply state that about 1800 Latter-day Saints which crossed the plains and mountains in nine well organized companies reached this valley the same year as the original pioneers, not to speak of a number of the Mormon Battalion who, after serving their term of enlistment, made their way from Southern California northward and then across the Sierra Nevada mountains and what is now the Nevada desert to this valley. Thus it was that nearly 1800 people spent the winter of 1847-1848 in what we now call Pioneer Square, but which was originally known as the Old Fort, the beginning of Great Salt Lake City, which in 1868 was changed to Salt Lake City, its present name. From this beginning Utah's several valleys were subsequently settled. The year 1848 witnessed the arrival of thou-

sands of "Mormons" who had spent about two years on the frontiers, and soon Ogden, Provo, Manti, and many other cities came into existence.

Carson Valley, Nevada, which once constituted a part of Utah became known to the "Mormon" people as early as 1847, when the discharged soldiers of the Mormon Battalion passed through on their way from California to this valley, and as early as 1851 the first "Mormon" settlement, which was also the first Anglo-Saxon settlement of any description in what is now the state of Nevada, was founded in Carson Valley, or at a place known as Genoa. Thus it is readily seen that the same class of people who were the pioneers of Utah also became the pioneers of Nevada.

In 1855 Pres. Young sent out a colony about 400 miles north into what was then Oregon and founded a settlement among the Indians on a branch of Salmon River, and thus the "Mormons" also became the first settlers of Idaho; and though this settlement on the Salmon River was broken up in 1858 the honor was still retained for the "Mormons" to locate the first permanent settlement in Idaho, for the year 1860 witnessed the founding of Franklin in Cache Valley which at the time of its settling was believed to be in Utah, but which proved, after an accurate survey had been made, to be about four miles north of the boundary line between Utah and Idaho.

In 1854 a farming settlement known as Fort Supply was located by the "Mormons" near Blacks Fort of Green River, a few miles south of the original Fort Bridger. This was the first farming settlement in what is now the state of Wyoming.

In Hubert Howe Bancroft's history of Wyoming, page 696, the following is recorded:

"Bridger before engaging as guide with Gore had disposed of his holdings on Green River to the Mormons who were the first actual settlers to the number of 55 in what is now a portion of Wyoming but was then considered to be in Utah. Ft. Supply * * * was intended as a station where passing emigration could be furnished with provisions. It was abandoned on the advent of a command of U. S. troops in the vicinity. The occupants retired to Salt Lake."

In giving these details I have been careful not to exaggerate, but to tell the actual facts in order to show what the pioneer labor done by the "Mormon" people means to this western country.

Ever since the founding of Jamestown in Virginia in 1607 and the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock in 1620 America has produced pioneers by the thousands and tens of thousands, and the history of our country shows that these pioneers ventured farther and farther west out among the Indians or into unexplored or unclaimed countries, until the vanguard of Anglo-Saxon civilization stood about half way across the continent, looking westward toward the Great Plains, the Rocky

Mountains and the Great American Deseret, which, save for a few forts and a few settlements founded in what was then Oregon, was inhabited only by nomadic Indians. But Brigham Young and his pioneers with one grand leap so to speak cut that great desert or uninhabited waste in half by planting this city in the Great American Desert, and thus it was that Great Salt Lake City became the half way house between the Missouri river in the east and the Pacific coast in the west, just as literally and effectually as Palestine in the Orient is the half way house, so to speak, between the Great River Euphrates on the east and the beautiful Nile on the west. By the founding of the American half way house the emigrants from the east bound for California found it possible to make the long journey across the continent with comparative ease, for if they on their arrival in the Great Salt Lake Valley found themselves short of provisions, or impeded in their progress by tired or worn out animals, they were able to replenish their provisions and obtain fresh horses, mules and oxen to continue their journey to the coast, whither so many went in an early day to seek their fortunes in the gold fields, or to establish colonies on the Pacific coast. But not only were these overland travelers able to obtain these supplies as they needed them, but they found the "Mormons" an honest and upright people who treated the travelers right and were not inclined to take advantage of the situation. This meant so much to the "Mormons" by way of contradicting the numerous falsehoods which had been circulated by the enemies of the "Mormon" people at an early day. It must be remembered that the pioneers of Utah lived in this valley about four years before even a territorial form of government was granted by the Federal government and during these years the "Mormons" lived under laws enacted by themselves and were ruled by officers of their own selections. It would have been as easy for them to have built up a regular robbers roost in these mountains, had they been so disposed, as to build up a Christian community. We have at the Historian's Office numerous letters written by non-"Mormons" who passed through this valley at an early day, testifying of the good character of the Latter-day Saints, but I shall in conclusion only mention one.

One of the gold diggers en route for California signing himself as "Stranger in Quest of Gold," writes a long letter from Great Salt Lake City, July 8, 1849, to the "New York Tribune," of which the following is an extract:

"The company of gold diggers, which I have the honor to command, arrived here on the 3rd inst. and judge our feelings when after 1200 miles of travel through an uncultivated desert, and the last one hundred miles of the distance through and among lofty mountains and narrow and difficult ravines, we found ourselves suddenly and almost unexpectedly in a comparative paradise.

* * * *

"Descending the table land which bordered the valley, extensive

herds of cattle, horses and sheep were grazing in every direction, reminding us of that home and civilization from which we had so widely departed, for as yet the fields and houses were in the distance. Passing over some miles of pasture lands, we at last found ourselves in a broad fenced street, extending westward in a straight line for several miles. Houses of wood or sundried brick were thickly clustered in the vale before us some thousands in number, and occupying a spot about as large as the city of New York. They were mostly small, one story high and perhaps not more than one occupying an acre of land. The whole space of miles excepting the streets and houses, was in a high state of cultivation. Fields of yellow wheat stood waiting for the harvest and Indian corn, potatoes, oats, flax and all kinds of garden vegetables, were growing in profusion. * * *

"At the first sight of all these signs of cultivation in the wilderness, we were transported with wonder and pleasure. Some wept, some gave three cheers, some laughed, and some ran and fairly danced for joy, while all felt inexpressively happy to find themselves once more amid scenes which mark the progress of advancing civilization.

"And the strangest of all was that this great city, extending over several square miles, had been erected, and every house and fence made within nine or ten months of the time of our arrival; while at the same time good bridges were erected over the principal streams, and the country settlements extended nearly a hundred miles up and down the valley.

"This territory, State, or, as some may term it, 'Mormon Empire', may justly be considered as one of the great test prodigies of the age, and, in comparison with its age, the most gigantic of all republics in existence, being only in its second year since the first seed of cultivation was planted, or the first civilized habitation commenced. If these people were such thieves and robbers as their enemies represented them in the States I must think they have greatly reformed in point of industry since coming to the mountains. * * *

"I this day attended worship with them in the open air. Some thousands of well dressed, intelligent looking people assembled, some on foot, some in carriages and on horseback. Many were neatly and even fashionably clad. The beauty and neatness of the ladies reminded me of some of our best congregations in New York. They had a choir of both sexes, who performed extremely well, accompanied by a band who played well on almost every instrument of modern invention. Peals of the most sweet, sacred and solemn music filled the air, after which a solemn prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Grant of Philadelphia. * * *

"After this came a lengthy discourse from Mr. Brigham Young, president of the society. * * *

"Every one seemed interested and pleased with his remarks

and all appeared to be contented to stay at home and pursue a persevering industry, although mountains of gold were near them.

* * *

"The Mormons are not dead, nor is their spirit broken. And, if I mistake not, there is a noble daring, stern, and democratic spirit swelling in their bosoms, which will people these mountains with a race of independent men and influence the destiny of our country and the world for a hundred generations. In their religion they seem charitable, devoted and sincere; in their politics, bold, daring, and determined; in their domestic circle, quiet, affectionate and happy, while in industry, skill and intelligence they have few equals and no superiors on the earth. * * *

"I had many strange feelings while contemplating this new civilization growing up so suddenly in the wilderness; I almost wished I could awake from my golden dream and find it but a dream; while I pursued my domestic duties as quiet, as happy and contented as this strange people."

THE ESSENTIAL VALUE OF GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH.

A Discourse Delivered in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, Sept. 23, 1917, "Genealogical Sunday," by

JOSEPH F. SMITH, JR.

On the 21st day of September, in the year 1823, Moroni, a prophet who dwelt upon this continent some four hundred years after the crucifixion of the Savior, appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith in an upper room in his father's home, and gave him instruction concerning the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days and revealed to him many things pertaining to the Gospel and the fulfilment of prophecy that was given to the ancient prophets in Israel. Today is the twenty-third day of September and the nearest Sunday to the anniversary of that event; and therefore, according to custom, the day has been set apart throughout the Church as Genealogical Day, and the request has gone forth that the Saints in their meetings, in the various wards and wherever they should happen to meet, should devote a portion of their time to the question of the salvation of the dead and the interests of the dead in matters of genealogy. Among other things which that angel declared to Joseph Smith, which makes this request of importance to us today is found in the fourth chapter of Malachi, and I will read to you those verses, not as they appear in the Bible but as they were quoted by the angel to Joseph Smith:

"For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and

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