



PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

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BOYHOOD RECOLLECTIONS OF PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

AS TOLD BY HIMSELF

At the meeting of the Genealogical Society of Utah held in San Francisco, California, July 27, 1915; also at a meeting in the Eleventh Ward Chapel, Salt Lake City, Utah, Dec., 26, 1915.

Some of the good folks present are anxious to hear something about my early experiences. I hope I will be pardoned if I indulge in relating the incidents of my early life and experience, for you know one who speaks of himself is liable to use "I" very frequently, and he lays himself open to the suggestion that he is rather egotistical. I feel that my life has been an exception in some respects to very many lives in that I can look back and on the road-side I can see wrecks, I can see where some have fallen by the wayside and have not continued to the end but have fallen away—some of those that were with me during my earliest experiences—and most serious experiences, through which I ever was called to pass, although they were the experiences of my youth.

I may say to some of these young people here and to the older ones too, for I cannot expect to speak to the younger ones without you older people hearing me—that I am among a very few now living who can speak from their own knowledge of an acquaintance with the Prophet Joseph Smith. Of course, I was only a child in those days, but I was just as familiar in the home of the Prophet as I was in the home of my father. We lived neighbors, only a few steps apart, and his boys and my father's boys were constant playmates and we were so closely associated with each other that they were in my father's house perhaps quite as often as we were in their father's house. As a child I knew the Prophet Joseph Smith. I can see him in my mind's eye today just as he seemed to appear to me then on many occasions.

I want to tell a little incident that occurred almost in my

babyhood that I have never seen in history. I do not think it has ever been recorded at all and perhaps no one has ever given utterance to it as I will now give utterance to it. To preface this, however, I will say that our people had been driven from the State of Missouri. They had been robbed of their property, despoiled of all their possessions, had been driven away from their homes and from their homesteads which they had purchased from the Government of the United States, and held title to and do hold title to to this day; for the titles they hold have never been cancelled; they stand there today just as truly as they ever stood, with the exception that they have been sold for taxes to one and another from time to time and now others hold tax titles to the farms and to the possessions of the Latter-day Saints which they owned in Daviess County and in Caldwell County and in Ray County and in Jackson County in the State of Missouri.

Sometime ago I was visiting in Richmond, Missouri and a young lawyer came to me and he said "Joseph"—in fact, he was somewhat familiar because he was a grand-son-in-law to David Whitmer, or at least was to be, and is now a grand-son-in-law—he said, "Joseph, if you want to get possession of your father's farm in Caldwell County, I want to tell you that I know the way to get it and it won't cost you very much either."

"Why?" I said.

"Why," he replied, "they have no title to it, only the title of a tax sale, and your father was driven from there. Your people were driven away at the point of a gun and the bayonet and at the muzzle of the cannon, and therefore you were despoiled, you were robbed of your possessions. Every man that has had possession of your father's farm and the farms of the people here know perfectly well that he has no good title to the land."

I said, "Well, wait a while. I will inquire about it." I was younger then than I am today and I asked council about it. Perhaps I would have known enough to have said to him, "It is too much of a burden to take upon myself; I don't care to have any dealing with it at all. Let it rest and let justice come to those who robbed those that are now dead. Let the title rest where it belongs; it is not mine; it was not mine; it belongs to others and therefore I do not desire to take possession by force or by technical reasoning of that which did not literally belong to me." I asked advice of my brethren when I got home and that was their council to me, so I said to my friend, "Let it alone."

Our people then were driven from Missouri, robbed, plundered, and some of them were murdered. My own aunt, who was the wife of Don Carlos Smith and who was then living in exile, having been driven out of her own home, a little log cabin, the best they possessed then, with three little children, a babe in her arms and another little tot holding her hand and another a little older hanging to her skirts, at midnight in the month of Novem-

ber, with the frost in the air and the earth frozen solid, without time to put on her clothes; and she left prints of her feet in blood upon the frozen soil of Missouri. That only describes the condition of many others. She fled from what she had, the little she possessed in the world, by the light of the flames that destroyed her little cabin home. That is history which has not been said very much about, because we say now, "Hush; don't wound the feelings and sensibilities of the children of those who drove you out of Missouri. They repent of it, they are sorry for it, they wish you would come back. Now, keep these things silent, don't say anything about it," but you will pardon me for saying it, wont you, because I want to reach something else.

When the Prophet Joseph and my father and others of the brethren made their final escape, or rather were secretly and clandestinely released from thir long imprisonment in Richmond, Missouri—because their captors wanted to get rid of them—because they could not convict them of crime, they could not punish them by law because they were guiltless; they had done no wrong, and yet they held them there for months in chains and in dungeons. Why? Because Joseph had had a revelation. Joseph Smith was teaching revelation from God in this age of the world, when it was claimed by all Christianity that the heavens were brass over the heads of the children of men and were sealed up, and God would never more speak to man. Joseph declared that the Lord had already spoken to man by the mouth of the Christ Himself, by the mouth of His disciples whom He chose and anointed and ordained, endowed with power to preach His name to all the inhabitants of the world then known—that was his crime, and they said, "If you will only separate, and become like the rest of us, why all will be well; if you will discard your prophets and your revelations and give them up and become like the rest of mankind. We have nothing against you people, it is only these men that are leading you that we have cause against."

This was the condition when the Prophet finally made his escape and reached our people in the little place called Commerce on the banks of the Mississippi River, which was afterwards named Nauvoo, the Beautiful. There our people built up in later years, a beautiful city. It was a sickly place because it was on a little bend of the river running to the west and turning and running again to the east, making a beautiful little horseshoe in the river. There we started to make homes. That was the first land bought, the first land entered; and it was swampy, dismal and malarious and nearly every one that built their little homes there in the beginning suffered with the chills and the fever. I have seen poor old men sitting upon their bench, mending and cobbling shoes of the poor people, shaking until you would think their bones would rattle; and yet they had to mend their shoes and work.

Corn at that time was worth only ten cents a bushel on the ear but did our people have ten cents to buy a bushel of corn? No! No, they had nothing. They had been despoiled of everything. They had left everything and they had fled from the wrath of their enemies and their threatened destruction and extirpation. They came to Nauvoo. In Kirtland they established a bank. The bank was robbed and plundered; speculation was rife in it, all around it and those who sought to destroy it. Obligations arose; notes were given and obligations signed by one and another. They were driven from Kirtland into Missouri and they were driven out of Missouri, and these obligations, these notes remained in the hands of those who held the credit.

Now, I am going to tell the little story that I remember. One day during cold weather, my father took me by my hand and led me down the road to a little brick building. It was not much larger than what you would call a bee-hive house, a little bee-hive, but it was the best they had at that time, and in it was a little sheet-iron stove. I remember the looks of it just as well as if I had seen it yesterday. There I remember the Prophet Joseph, my father, Brigham Young, Sidney Rigdon and Willard Richards and there were a number of others. I remember these more particularly for the reason that I became better and better acquainted with them as I grew up. I remember them all the way through. They met in that hovel to consider what they should do with the obligations that rested in their hands, from those that had been despoiled of all they possessed in the world. "What will we do with them?" they said. "They are impoverished; they are without everything or anything and they cannot pay the debts. What shall we do with these obligations? Shall we hold them against those people that have been robbed and plundered and despoiled of all they had and wait until they are able to pay and then collect it with usury? No, I guess not." This is my conclusion, for I saw them sit there and talk together for quite a long while and these piles of papers lay on a little table before the Prophet, and my father and others. By and by, I saw the Prophet gather them up one after another, a bundle here and a bundle there, and put them together; he opened the door of the stove and stuck them in, and I saw them burn. Now, I understand that the brethren did that to cancel the debts, the debts and obligations of those that were rendered incapable of meeting their obligations because of the persecution and robbery and plunder. I think now that it was a mighty fine thing to do. There was forgiveness in it, there was charity in it, there was mercy in it, for those that were helpless at the time. Many of them, I believe, grew up well furnished, well fitted, in later years. Some of them, of course fell away because of the persecutions that were brought upon them. Well, that was an incident that I remember very well.

Again, while I was a little boy, one day, I think it was just about the noon hour, we were anticipating, or my mother was anticipating the return of my father from somewhere for he and Joseph the prophet had been in concealment away from the mob, and I was looking for them. I went out on the bank of the river, close to the old printing office. I sat on the bank of the river, and presently I saw a skiff starting out from the other side of the river. The river there is a mile wide. They rowed on across the stream until they landed close to where I stood. Out of that little skiff the Prophet and my father alighted and walked up the hill. I joined the hand of my father and we went home to my mother, to my father's home. Then both went into the house and sat down; they chatted and talked with each other and while my father was changing his clothes—I suppose his collar and cuffs and something of that kind, probably—Joseph the prophet sat there. He took me on his knee and trotted me a little and then he looked at me a little more carefully and finally he said, "Hyrum, what is the matter with Joseph here?"

"Well," he says, "I don't know; what do you think is the matter?"

"Why, he looks as though he had not a drop of blood in him."

"Oh!" Father says, "that is because he has been living on milk only," for up to that time—I was between five and six years of age—I had never eaten a thing harder than milk; I was living on it. I do not know whether that had the effect of making me white or pale, but that was the condition that I was in, and that was the remark the Prophet made. I never forgot it.

Two or three times after this, I saw them on their horses with a company of others, and I want to tell you that they were not mob-driven by force of arms as we saw represented here in a picture show of them. When they went to Carthage, Joseph Smith rode one of the best horses in the State of Illinois, and my father rode another. I remember very well his attempt to get on him with his military cap, on one occasion, and the sword by his side. The horse would not let him get on; he was simply obstreperous and would not permit him to get on while he wore his military cap and sword, and he was obliged to take off the sword and the cap and then the horse was docile enough to let him get on, and then they stole his cap and sword up to him the best they could without the horse seeing it. They were going on policy I suppose, and then old Sam took to his heels and ran up the road pretty quick. I thought it was grand; I thought, "Oh, when I get to be a man, wouldn't I like to have a horse like old Sam." We called him "old Sam," later; he was young Sam that day; but we kept him until we got to Winter Quarters and he gave up the ghost and we buried him there.

I saw the Prophet Joseph Smith myself get on his horse and there were my father and others—I don't just now recall exactly

who they all were, when they started to Carthage in June, 1844. I heard the voice of Dimmick B. Huntington at the window of the old chamber of my mother's home on the morning after the 27th day of June, 1844, saying to my mother, "Hyrum is dead!" I remember the exclamation that my mother made: I remember the gloom that seemed to hang over the City of Nauvoo. It was a misty, foggy morning; everything looked dark and gloomy and dismal, not only to me, but I have heard scores of others say the very same thing. Now, these are some of the things I remember.

I remember in February, 1846, seeing President Brigham Young and the Twelve, and as many of the Latter-day Saints as had the means to travel, drive down to the river and cross the river on the ice over into Iowa, when they commenced their journey to the West. My brother was one of the party that started on that occasion, and I stood on the bank of the river, wondering "Shall I ever see him again?" I did not know, it did not seem as though it would be possible for me ever to see them any more. We remained there from February till September, 1846, when suddenly the word of alarm came—"Get out of the city, the widows, the orphans, the children, the helpless, the very poor and the women, get out of the city as quickly as you can. The mob is upon us!"

My mother chartered a flat boat or made provision some way to get hold of a flat boat, which was drawn up to the shore next to the city, and we took our furnishings and our bedding and our wearing apparel and such things as we could not do without, leaving the furniture standing in the home. We took these things and dumped them into the flat boat and were rowed across the river to the Iowa side. We had neither tent nor shed nor shelter of any kind except the canopy of heaven and the shade of the trees along the bank of the river. We camped under those trees for several days and heard the bombardment that was carried on by the mob and the defense that was made by our brethren of the City of Nauvoo, until the city surrendered, or until the brethren surrendered to the mob. I laid there, or sat there on the bank of the river expecting every moment that a cannon ball would come across the river, but I do not know that they had cannon in those days that would shoot as far as a mile away, though I felt, through all the drear and dread, the apprehension of being murdered right there on the banks of the river during the cannonading of the city.

During this time, while we were thus camped on the river, my mother was absent, I knew not where. My father left a numerous family but I do not think there was a child in the family that knew where she was. We learned though, that she was off down to Keokuk, or down, perhaps, to Quincy, making arrangements to exchange some of the property that belonged to

my father in Hancock County, Illinois, for oxen and wagons and cows and things like that which would enable us to pursue our journey on after the Twelve through the state of Iowa. Some time passed—I do not know how long—it seemed a very long time to me, and then she returned with help. Her brother was one of the help, and others, driving a herd of oxen with yokes and chains, and some with wagons. We loaded from there. I rode a little pony—I remember very well riding a pony—and I drove the loose stock that we did not put in the yokes, as far as a place called Bonaparte. Now, I have no idea where Bonaparte is, nor how far it was from Nauvoo, but I know I drove the loose stock until we got to Bonaparte. We organized there, we loaded up a supply, what we could, of our provisions, and started out across the state or along the territory of Iowa.

Now, I am going to tell what I did. You may think it egotistical, I guess it is, and perhaps I ought not to say it at all, but I drove a team from Bonaparte to Winter Quarters, that is, to our stopping place across the river; I cannot think of it just now; and then from there we ferried across and camped with the camp of Israel at Winter Quarters on the west banks of the Missouri River. Well, I felt mighty proud to think I could drive a team three hundred miles over rolling prairie down hill up hill, sometimes sagging road, sometimes very poor road, sometimes mud holes and all that sort of thing, and I never got stuck once and I never tipped the wagon over, I never broke a tongue or reach or wreched a wheel. I got through the journey just as well as the old men who drove the teams and I felt mighty big about it, I tell you.

At Winter Quarters, during the winter of forty-six and forty-seven and the summer of forty-seven, I was herd-boy. Now, I want to tell you another little story. In the fall of forty-seven, we were making our arrangements as far as possible—that is my mother was and I was guarding her interests to the utmost of my ability, I can assure you—to go to the Valley next year, that is 1848. Part of our family had gone to the Valley in forty-seven. Then part of the family which belonged to my father came in the next company following the pioneers and our strength was partly with them. So I was herd-boy during the fall of forty-seven. We went out to herd as usual. There were two of us, three in fact—one large boy and two very small boys—myself and one other little boy, and we rode horses, while Alden Burdick, the older boy walked. Alden went up through the draw in another direction to gather hazel nuts for the crowd during the day, so Tommy Burdick and I drove the cattle out to the herd ground. We stopped at the head of a little spring where we generally put our dinner pails and had our dinner. Instead of turning out the horses to eat, as little boys ought to have done and as little boys seldom do, we were running races with them and jumping ditches

and having a real good time, because Alden was not there, and the cattle were feeding down the little spring creek through a point of the gully. Presently, all of a sudden, we heard the whoop and yell of a band of Indians, probably about twenty-five or thirty of them, coming, stripped to the breech-cloth and daubed with clay; their hair and faces painted, and all that sort of thing—rather a funny sight. My friend, the moment that he saw them, turned around the hill, and shouted, "Indians!" He wheeled and turned toward town as hard as he could run. The only thought that came to my mind was "Will they drive off our cattle? If they do, we cannot go to the Valley next spring;" and I put my thought to the test at once. I struck out for the head of the cattle just about the time that the Indians did, and with their yelping and howling and whooping, we stampeded our herd and drove them back up around the head of the spring and down toward the draw up which Alden Burdick was coming. Then they singled me out, for they wanted my horse. It was not mine, it was Brother Burdick's, and it was a good one; it could run. I could outrun them, but they ran me around the head of the spring and down the other side of the spring beyond the point of the hill from whence it came, and as they saw me outstrip them, another band crossed the creek there, ran in ahead of me. Then I veered around and those that were behind me veered too, and threw me in the rear, while the rear kept coming up; they slackened, and the rear came up and I was sandwiched in between two posses of Indians numbering, twenty-five or thirty each, possibly. Finally they closed up on me and one of them took me by the arm and the other by the leg, and raised me up off from my horse and chucked me down, and all the horses behind me jumped over me. I made several lusty bounds when I struck the ground but they all went over without a touch. They got my horse; we never got it again.

Just at this moment my friend, Tommy Burdick, had excited a lot of men that were going out to the hay field and they made their appearance on the brow of the hills and the Indians took back to their quarters and disappeared. I began then to get frightened; I began to think I was all alone in the world and I did not know how soon those redskins would return after the men disappeared from the hill, so then I took to my heels. Just as I reached the top of the hill, I saw Tommy going down the hill toward Winter Quarters and I followed, I assure you. Well, when I got to the top of the hill where I could look down on the camp, a large assembly of people were gathered in the bowery. Tommy had excited the camp and in a short time a company of horsemen was formed under the guidance of Hosea Stout and they went up the draw where Alden had gone. Then, William W. Majors, took another company with Tommy and myself as guides and we went back over the trail. When we got up to where the

dinner pails were left they were all gone. The thought struck me, "Well, the Indians have come back and they have got our dinner." They frequently used to do that. They used to take it away from us very frequently when they were more friendly and when they did not have large game in view as they did at this time. The cattle had disappeared, everything was gone. We spent that whole day traipsing through the country looking for lost cattle and for Indians, whom we did not want to see. We did not want to see the Indians; it was the cattle we were looking for, and we were in hopes that we would find them.

Finally, Brother Majors gave up the pursuit and they held a council of war and concluded that we would return home and leave the fate of the cattle with the Indians. So we started for home. I went home reluctantly. I brooded over the thought, "How will we ever get to the Valley next spring—the cattle gone and everything taken, nothing to go with; what will we do?" And I thought what would my poor mother say; how would she feel; how would the rest of the children feel when they learned that I had permitted in some way, all that we had in the world to depend upon, to be stolen by a band of savages. I was wrought up. We got pretty near to home and I broke down; I did not see how I could face the music. It was bitter to me, so I sat down and let the company go on. I cried and I prayed and I hoped, and the feelings were wrought up in my heart to a wonderful degree, and I said, "How can we ever get to the Valley?"

After exhausting my tears, I got up and went on. When I reached the brow of the hill and looked down upon the corral, to my joy and satisfaction, there was every hoof of our cattle in the corral. The Indians had not got them. Alden had come up just as we had got through with the fracas with the Indians. He discovered that something was wrong, the horses were gone, we were gone, the dinner bucket stood there by the spring. What should he do? So, he was alarmed, too. He began to be frightened, so he gathered up the cattle and drove them back down the draw to the town and put them in the corral, and we missed them, and hence our anxiety during the day.

Now, that was a little incident that I shall not forget while I live and I am going to tell you just one more and then I am going to quit. I don't want you to be tired because I may never tell it to you again. Later in the fall of 1847, we found—I say we, of course I was the boy, I did the herding, I drove the oxen, I watched them and guarded them and my mother did the calculations of course and was the business man of the firm—but she and her brother Joseph Fielding, found it necessary for their families to make a trip down into Missouri with empty wagons, with two yoke of oxen to each wagon. My uncle drove one and I drove the other one. I remember I was bare footed; it was in the fall of the year. It was very cold and it rained a good deal of the

time, as we were going along, I remember I had mighty sore feet, tramping through the timber, stubbing my toes on the roots and in the chuck holes and mud-holes as we went along for hundreds of miles, I think. We traveled down to Savannah and St. Joe and my mother made the purchases that we had to make of corn meal—that was our principal food—and pork bacon and such stuff as could be carried along, and not decay, and to get a little calico for dresses for the children and for the women. We loaded up and started back home.

One night we camped in a little open glade. We could see a river—the Missouri River, flowing right down in plain sight and in front and behind was timber. Over on the right were hills and on the other side of the spring a creek ran down into the river. We crossed that and camped on one side. There were a herd of beef cattle and some drovers camping on the other side, so mother and Uncle Joseph said, “We had better not unyoke our cattle tonight. They might get mixed with that herd and perhaps be driven off; we might lose them.” So they came to the conclusion that we would turn the oxen out that night with their yokes on, and we did.

Next morning my uncle and I went out to hunt the cattle, and we hunted and hunted. We found about two yoke of them and the others were gone. Where they were we could not find. We went over the hills and through the timber and all around through this herd of cattle which was waiting there seeming to be resting for some reason, we did not know what.

After hunting all forenoon, I was the first to come back. As I approached the wagon I saw the tongue of one of the wagons raised and a box lid laid over the hounds and a table cloth spread over the food that had been prepared for my uncle and me, and kneeling down by that table was my mother. I stopped and I heard her pray. She simply told the Lord that we were there helpless, that we were dependant upon His mercy and she asked Him to lead us to where our cattle were lost, that we might find them in order to pursue our journey. That was about the substance of her prayer. She arose to her feet and I came in. I was wet from foot to shoulder from traveling through the dew on the grass and mother said, “Where is your uncle?” I said, “I don’t know. I have been hunting everywhere that I could,” and I hoped he would find the cattle; presently uncle came in but he had not found them. He said, “Mary, somebody has driven those cattle away, I am sure. We have been all over, there could not be any chance for them to escape my attention or our search, and they are not to be found.”

“Well,” mother cheerfully said, “Brother and Joseph, sit down here and eat your breakfast and I will go and see if I can find them.”

My uncle stood back almost aghast. He said, “Mary, what

do you mean. We have been all over the country. If we could not find them, how could you think that you would find them?"

"Never mind, brother," she said, "you are hungry. You sit down and eat your breakfast and I will go and see if I can find them." Well, I thought to myself, I will go, too, I did not want to trust my mother out alone in the wilderness like that.

"No," she said. "You sit down and eat your breakfast with your uncle and I will go and see if I can find the cattle."

I had to obey but with my eyes I followed my mother. She went right down the little stream where we were camped beside it and we could see the river in a wide open space between two groves of timber but we could see a little bunch of willows growing up, as we supposed, right on the bank of the river, just on the edge of the stream. She walked right straight down the stream. Immediately the man on the other side—I remember seeing his gauntlet gloves—rode up in haste and he said, "Madam, I saw your cattle over in this direction this morning."

"Mother," I said, "come back and let us go there."

She paid no attention to me and she paid no attention to him. She walked right along and as soon as he discovered that she paid no attention to what he said, he turned his horse and they commenced immediately gathering up their herd and starting them off toward Savannah, where they were driving them for beef. My mother walked down to the edge of the river and there this little stream, little innocent stream, had washed a deep gulch in the bank of the river from the bottom of which grew up a bunch of willows. They were large willows and the tops of them reached up far enough so we could see them from where we were camped, and there in that gulch were chained up our cattle, and these men were waiting for us to move on that they might drive them away! I want to just add this: Never for one moment in my life, since that circumstance, have I doubted the efficacy of prayer.

Now, may the Lord bless you. I could follow this history clear up to the Valley here. Perhaps I might just say I was successful in driving a team for my mother from the Elkhorn River into the Valley of the Great Salt Lake or into the old fort or within the new fort which is now called Old Fort Square. In the summer of 1848, we landed in this valley, on the 23rd day of September, and I made the same record across the plains and deserts and mountains and canyons from the Elkhorn River into this valley, that I made across the Territory of Iowa in 1846.

There is just one other little thing I wanted to say. The choir here sang the hymn on page 166, written by William Fowler. I went on my first mission to England in 1860. William Fowler was one of our local elders in the Sheffield conference. He was a cutlery grinder. He was afflicted with what they called in Sheffield, "the grinder's rot:" in other words, he had consumption, due to the process of grinding knives. He composed this

hymn, "We thank Thee, oh, God, for a Prophet;" and we sang it there the first time that it was ever sung in the world. I was present with him; I knew him well. There were two brothers of them—William and Henry C. They both came to the Valley, but William, poor boy, was so far gone that he lived but a short time after he came here. I mention this for the reason that I have understood that there, was a man here somewhere who claimed that he was the author of this hymn. He was not the author; it was William Fowler, a poor boy that came here penniless and who had earned his living grinding knives in a little establishment in Sheffield.

God bless the Latter-day Saints. My heart is with you. My love is with this people. My whole interest is in the work of the Lord. I have been in it from my boyhood. I started out in it when I was about fifteen years of age on my own account, without even mother to guide me and only memories of her life and teachings to sustain me in foreign lands and in the midst of the worst of temptations that ever a youth was subjected to in the world; but with the memory of my mother and the memory of the covenants that I made in the days of my youth here in this city before I left on my mission, I was able to keep myself unspotted from the world. I am not ashamed to say this, although it may seem boastful for me to say it, but I don't say it in my own strength. It was not my strength, it was the memory of my teachings in my youth, it was the consciousness that I felt in my soul that I was in the Master's service, that I was following in the footsteps of my parents, and of the noblest and best men that I had ever known in the world, those who stood at the head of the Church, and I stood by it and I am standing by it to the best of my ability that the Lord gives me and to the utmost of the strength that I have in my being.

Now, I bear testimony to you of the Gospel. I know it is true. I feel it in every atom of my being from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I believe it with all my heart and what I have tested of it, what I have demonstrated in it, I know as truly as I know I live, that it is true; just as far as I have gone, as far as I have been able to see the principles of the Gospel or comprehend them or understand them, I know positively that they are uplifting, that they are righteous and just, they are merciful, they are kind, they are forgiving, they are long suffering, they are enlightening, they have in them the power of God unto salvation. May you receive this testimony and the knowledge of these principles in your hearts, as I feel that I have them in mine, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

[The following account of the journey across the plains to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake is taken from the *Juvenile Instructor* of 1871, Volume 6. The facts and incidents here related were furnished by President Smith himself, and therefore make a fitting

continuation of his boyhood recollections as told in the foregoing discourse.—EDITORS.]

In the Spring of 1848, a tremendous effort was made by the Saints to emigrate to the Valley on a grand scale. No one was more anxious than Widow Smith; but to accomplish it seemed an impossibility. She still had a large and comparatively helpless family. Her two sons, John and Joseph, mere boys, being her only support; the men folks, as they were called, Brother J. Lawson and G. Mills, being in the Valley with the teams they had taken. Without teams sufficient to draw the number of wagons necessary to haul provisions and outfit for the family, and without means to purchase, or friends who were in circumstances to assist, she determined to make an attempt, and trust in the Lord for the issue. Accordingly every nerve was strained, and every available object was brought into requisition. "Jackie" was traded off for provisions, cows and calves were yoked up, two wagons lashed together, and teams barely sufficient to draw one was hitched on to them, and in this manner they rolled out from Winter Quarters some time in May. After a series of the most amusing and trying circumstances, such as sticking in the mud, doubling teams up all the little hills, and crashing at ungovernable speed down the opposite sides, breaking wagon tongues and reaches, upsetting, and vainly endeavoring to control wild steers, heifers and unbroken cows, they finally succeeded in reaching the Elk Horn, where the companies were being organized for the plains.

Here Widow Smith reported herself to President Kimball, as having "started for the Valley." Meantime, she had left no stone unturned or problem untried, which promised assistance in effecting the necessary preparations for the journey. She had done her utmost, and still the way looked dark and impossible.

President Kimball consigned her to Captain ——'s fifty. The captain was present; said he, "Widow Smith, how many wagons have you?"

"Seven."

"How many yoke of oxen have you?"

"Four, and so many cows and calves."

"Well," said the captain, "Widow Smith, it is folly for you to start in this manner; you can never make the journey, and if you try it, you will be a burden upon the company the whole way. My advice to you is, go back to Winter Quarters and wait till you can get help."

This speech aroused the indignation of Joseph, who stood by and heard it; he thought it was poor consolation to his mother who was struggling so hard, even against hope as it were, for her deliverance; and if he had been a little older it is possible that he would have said some very harsh things to the captain; but as it was, he busied himself with his thoughts and bit his lips.

Widow Smith calmly replied, "Father —— (he was an aged man.) I will beat you to the Valley and will ask no help from you either!"

This seemed to nettle the old gentleman, for he was of high mettle. It is possible that he never forgot this prediction, and that it influenced his conduct towards her more or less from that time forth as long as he lived, and especially during the journey.

While the companies were lying at Elk Horn, Widow Smith sent back to Winter Quarters, and by the blessing of God, succeeded in buying on credit, and hiring for the journey, several yoke of oxen from brethren who were not able to emigrate that year, (among these brethren one Brother Rogers was ever gratefully remembered by the family). When the companies were ready to start, Widow Smith and her family were somewhat better prepared for the journey and rolled out with lighter hearts and better prospects than favored their egress from Winter Quarters.

Passing over from the Platte to the Sweetwater, the cattle suffered extremely from the heat, the drought, and the scarcity of feed, being compelled to browse on dry rabbit brush, sage brush, weeds and such feed as they could find all of which had been well picked over by the preceding companies. Captain ——'s company being one of the last, still keeping along, frequently in sight of, and sometimes camping with President Kimball's company which was very large. One day as they were moving along slowly through the hot sand and dust, the sun pouring down with excessive heat, toward noon one of Widow Smith's best oxen laid down in the yoke, rolled over on his side, and stiffened out his legs spasmodically, evidently in the throes of death. The unanimous opinion was that he was poisoned. All the hindmost teams, of course, stopped, the people coming forward to know what was the matter. In a short time the captain, who was in advance of the company, perceiving that something was wrong, came to the spot.

Perhaps no one supposed that the ox would ever recover. The captain's first words on seeing him, were:

"He is dead; there is no use working over him; we'll have to fix up some way to take the Widow along, I told her she would be a burden upon the company."

Meanwhile Widow Smith had been searching for a bottle of consecrated oil in one of the wagons, and now came forward with it, and asked her brother, Joseph Fielding, and the other brethren, to administer to the ox, thinking the Lord would raise him up. They did so, pouring a portion of the oil on the top of his head, between and back of the horns, they all laid hands upon him, and one prayed, administering the ordinance as they would have done to a human being that was sick. Can you guess the result? In a moment he gathered his legs under him, and at the

first word arose to his feet, and traveled right on as well as ever. He was not even unyoked from his mate. The captain, it may well be supposed, heartily regretted his hasty conclusions and unhappy expressions. They had not gone very far when another and exactly similar circumstance occurred. This time also it was one of her best oxen. The loss of either would have effectually crippled one team, as they had no cattle to spare. But the Lord mercifully heard their prayers, and recognized the holy ordinance of anointing and prayer, and the authority of the Priesthood when applied in behalf of even a poor dumb brute! Sincere gratitude from more than one heart in that family went up unto the Lord that day for His visible interposition in their behalf. At or near a place called Rattlesnake Bend, on the Sweetwater, one of Widow Smith's oxen died of sheer old age, and consequent poverty. He had been comparatively useless for some time, merely carrying his end of the yoke without being of any further service in the team; he was therefore no great loss.

At the last crossing of the Sweetwater, Widow Smith was met by James Lawson, with a span of horses and a wagon, from the Valley. This enabled her to unload one wagon, and send it, with the best team, back to Winter Quarters to assist another family the next season. Elder Joel Terry returned with the team. At this place the captain was very unfortunate, several of his best cattle and a valuable mule laid down and died, supposed to have been caused by eating poisonous weeds. There was no one in the camp who did not feel a lively sympathy for the captain, he took it to heart very much. He was under the necessity of obtaining help, and Widow Smith was the first to offer it to him, but he refused to accept of it from her hands. Joseph sympathized with him, and would gladly have done anything in his power to aid him; but here again, it is painful to say, he repulsed his sympathy and chilled his heart and feelings more and more by insinuating to others, in his presence, that Widow Smith had poisoned his cattle, saying, "Why should my cattle, and nobody's else, die in this manner? There is more than a chance about this. It was well planned," etc., expressly for his ear. This last thrust was the severing blow. Joseph resolved, some day, to demand satisfaction, not only for this, but for every other indignity the captain had heaped upon his mother.

On the 22nd of September, 1848, Captain ——'s fifty crossed over the "Big Mountain," when they had the first glimpse of Salt Lake Valley. It was a beautiful day. Fleecy clouds hung round over the summits of the highest mountains, casting their shadows down the valley beneath, hightening, by contrast, the golden hue of the sun's rays which fell through the openings upon the dry bunchgrass and sage-brush plains, gilding them with fairy brightness, and making the arid desert to seem like an enchanted spot. Every heart rejoiced and with lingering fondness, wist-

fully gazed from the summit of the mountain upon the western side of the valley revealed to view—the goal of their wearisome journey. The ascent from east to west was gradual, but long and fatiguing for the teams. It was in the afternoon, therefore, when they reached the top. The descent to the west was far more precipitous and abrupt. They were obliged to rough-lock the hind wheels of the wagons, and, as they were not needed, the forward cattle were turned loose to be driven to the foot of the mountain or to the camp, the “wheelers” only being retained on the wagons. Desirous of shortening the next day’s journey as much as possible—as that was to bring them into the Valley—they drove on till a late hour in the night, over very rough roads much of the way, and skirted with oak brush and groves of trees. They finally camped near the eastern foot of the “Little Mountain.” During this night’s drive several of Widow Smith’s cows—that had been turned loose from the teams—were lost in the brush. Early next morning John returned on horseback to hunt for them, their service in the teams being necessary to proceed.

At an earlier hour than usual the captain gave the orders for the company to start—knowing well the circumstances of the widow, and that she would be obliged to remain till John returned with the lost cattle—accordingly the company rolled out, leaving her and her family alone.

It was fortunate that Brother James Lawson was with them, for he knew the road, and if necessary could pilot them down the canyon in the night. Joseph thought of his mother’s prediction at Elk Horn, and so did the captain, and he was determined that he would win this point, although he had lost all the others, and prove her predictions false. “I will beat you to the valley and will ask no help from you either,” rang in Joseph’s ears; he could not reconcile these words with the possibility, though he knew his mother always told the truth, but how could this come true? Hours to him seemed like days as they waited, hour after hour for John’s return. All this time the company was slowly tugging away up the mountains, lifting at the wheels, geeing and hawing, twisting along a few steps, then blocking the wheels for the cattle to rest and take breath, now doubling a team, and now a crowd rushing to stop a wagon, too heavy for the exhausted team, to prevent its rolling backward down the hill, dragging the cattle along with it. While in this condition, to heighten the distress and balk the teams, a cloud, as it were, burst over their heads, sending down the rain in torrents: as it seldom rains in this country, this threw the company into utter confusion. The cattle refused to pull, would not face the beating storm, and to save the wagons from crashing down the mountain, upsetting, etc., they were obliged to unhitch them, and block all the wheels. While the teamsters sought shelter, the storm drove the cattle before it

through the brush and into the ravines, and into every nook they could find, so that when it subsided it was a day's work to find them, and get them together. Meantime Widow Smith's cattle—except those lost—were tied to the wagons, and were safe. In a few moments after the storm, John brought up those which had been lost, and they hitched up, making an early start as they usually did in the mornings, rolled up the mountain, passing the company in their confused situation, and feeling that every tie had been sundered that bound them to the captain, continued on to the Valley, and arrived at "Old Fort" about ten o'clock on the night of the 23rd of September, all well and thankful. The next morning was the Sabbath, and the whole family went to the bowery to meeting. Presidents Young and Kimball preached. This was a meeting long to be remembered by those present. That evening Captain —— and his company arrived, dusty and weary, too late for the excellent meetings and the day of sweet rest enjoyed by the widow and her family. Once more, in silver tones, rang through Joseph's ears, "Father ——, I will beat you to the Valley, and will ask no help from you either."

GENEALOGY AND THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH.

BY B. F. CUMMINGS, IN "DESERET NEWS."

One of the most remarkable among all of the intellectual developments that have taken place in the most cultured countries of the world during the last half century is the study of genealogy; and any person who will inquire into this movement will be astonished at the extent and rapidity of its growth. Prior to seventy-five years ago it was unknown either in Europe or America, except to a few persons who, for special reasons, gave attention to it. Today it numbers its devotees by hundreds of thousands, both in the old world and the new.

In several countries of Europe, notably those of Great Britain, and in many states of the American union, laws for the promotion of genealogy have been passed, and large sums for the preservation and printing of records containing genealogical data have been appropriated. Fifty years ago the literature of genealogy, both in Europe and America, was but meager, but since then, in both hemispheres, thousands of volumes relating to it have been printed. The literature of genealogy is growing much faster than that of any other subject that could be named.

In connection with this subject there are a number of coincidences which, to a Latter-day Saint, are very significant. A few months after the dedication of the Kirtland temple, which event took place early in the year 1836, a law was passed which pro-