

RECORD OF JOHN BIRD (90 years old) AS

TOLD TO MARY ANONA BIRD, ON THE

20th DAY OF JANUARY, 1931.

I was born at Birmingham, England, August 7, 1841. Birmingham was then a large manufacturing city. I had two brothers and two sisters, Walter, William, Rebecca, and Annie. My mother's name was Anne Russen; my father's name was John Bird. My parents were converted and baptized by Apostle Woodruff whom they had heard preach on the streets of Birmingham. They belonged to no other church before this, as I know anything about.

When I was fourteen years of age, we left Birmingham to cross the waters to America. My eldest brother, Walter, had left previously, in the year 1850. He came with a neighbor boy, Thomas Tew. The boys were then eighteen years of age. Walter had to work to help pay for our ways over. We, however, received our fare from the Church Immigration Fund, and had to pay back the money after we arrived in America.

We were seven weeks, and two days on the water. Our ship which was named "Ship Elious" was bumped into by another ship, and we were forced to go back and charter another ship, named "The Charles Buck." Brother John Grimmett came with us. There were three or four other families that came with us, but I have forgotten them. A son of John Grimmett's, whom I think was named George was thrown overboard by the wind. He had been standing by the ropes watching the storm when a sudden force of wind threw him into the depths of the sea. His family remained undaunted in their faith. Richard Ballantyne who was president of our company encouraged them kindly.

Rebecca my oldest sister was the sweetheart of Thomas Tew; so he paid for her fare out here. My youngest sister, Annie was the sweetheart of George Sumption; so he paid for her fare. These two couples later married.

We arrived in New Orleans, sailing up the Mississippi River, and up the Missouri River to a little landing place that we called Atchinson. My father died of cholera here at Atchinson. He had worked in the lead works while in Birmingham, and perhaps due to the strain of the trip, the poison worked on him, causing his death. We then started on a journey across the plains with ox teams. Our diet consisted of herbs, milk and bread, and what little meat we could get, but we had no sickness in coming across the plains.

We arrived in Utah in September, 1855. We went right on through Salt Lake City to Springville, a very small village at this time. Bishop Johnson got us a place in which to live. My brother Walter had been living with Richard Bird, a man of whom we do not know as to whether he was related to us in any way.

We lived in Springville ten years. Springville grew very fast while we were there. I was unable to attend the little school

in Springville. All the schooling that I had was received in a Sunday school of the Mormon Church while in England. I had to work to make a living, and was thus unable to attend school. I worked mostly at odd jobs in the village of Farmington, Utah.

I wanted to leave Springville so that I could take up land, and "do better." In the spring of 1864 I came to Bear Lake alone. I wintered with "Bill" Bird who was of no relation to me so far as I knew. "Bill" Bird had come in 1863. The following spring I started to stake my claims and take up land. I built a log cabin with a dirt roof and no floor, secured what little necessities I needed, and built most of my plain furniture. I then sent for my mother and the balance of the family. My one sister had married; so only my mother, sister "Beccy," and brother Will, and Tom Tew came up. William moved to Dingle, Staked claims for a homestead, and there married Mary Ann Sparks.

In the year '68, I went back on the plains as a night herder--herded cattle at nights so the Indians could not steal them. We had little trouble with the Indians. We made friends with them. This same season was a very high water season, and six young men were drowned in Green River. Bishop Ed. Stock of Fish Haven came almost getting drowned when Heber Oakley threw a rope to him. He caught the rope, was pulled to shore, and was saved.

I herded cattle here for about three months when we migrated back to Salt Lake City. Here I found that the last immigrant company was to arrive at Platte. Platte Missouri was the nearest to Utah that the railroad came. I met the train and assisted the last immigrant company in coming to Utah. This was in the year 1868. Mary Jane Whitehead was in this last company. I fell in love with her, and in the spring of the following year we were married at the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. The Temple had not then been built. George A. Smith married us. We later moved to Paris, Idaho where I have lived ever since.

In the early days in Utah the Indians gave us trouble. Black Hawk and Walker were two bad Indian Chiefs; but President Young told us to try to win the friendship and respect of the Indians. He said, "Feed them, and be kind to them, instead of war with them." We did this and to prove that Brigham Young was right in his estimation we found that when Johnston's Army came into the valley in the year '57, I saw the Indians come in from the south in bands three or four miles long to fight for and protect the Mormons against Johnson's Army. Then President Young told the interpreter to tell the Indians not to fight. Johnston's Army then came on from Fort Bridger through Salt Lake City and built a fort at Cedar Valley. These soldiers were a salvation to the Mormons because the army offered employment to the Mormons, and brought hundreds of dollars into the valley.

I am a father of nine children. By my first wife I had five children, Anne, Janie, John, Emma and Minnie. Janie died at the age of eleven years of diphtheria. Anne married William Nate, and moved to Canada where she died in the spring of 1901. The other three are now living. John married to Ettie Rebecca Nate, residing at Paris, Idaho; Emma married to Francis Orchard, residing in Tooele Utah; Minnie married to Walter Kelbaugh residing in Salt Lake City Utah.



I buried my first wife shortly after the birth of my youngest child. In this same year I met Anna Maria Musser at the home of George Spencer. By my second wife, I had four children, Walter, George, Edith and Mona. All of these at this time are living. Walter married to Sarah Ludlum, residing at Paris, Idaho. Mona married to Henry Ellis living at Moreland, Idaho; Edith married to Perry Nowland, and residing at Dingle, Idaho.

I have a testimony of this Gospel. I am sure that it is the true gospel of Jesus Christ or the saints could never have endured the great hardships and sorrows that they did. The saints were blessed by God. Only God's hand could have led them through such wild, untamed country into these valleys of the mountains. It took strength and that strength from on high. Times have changed now. This new generation will never know all that their old grandfathers and grandmothers went through, so that they might inherit the Gospel.

