

Life History of Nels August Nelson⁽¹⁾

FROM HISTORY IN CHURCH HISTORIAN'S OFFICE

"On April 10, 1864 at 5 P.M. the Swedish steamer L.J. Bager, sailed from Copenhagen, Denmark, carrying 350 emigrants from Sweden and Norway, and some from Frederica Conference, Denmark, with J.P.R. Johanson in charge.

This Company of Saints went by steamer to Liibeck, then by rail to Hamburg, thence by steamer to Hull and thence by rail to Liverpool, where the emigrants joined the company which sailed from Copenhagen April 13. Nils C. Flygare was one of the Conference Presidents.

On Thursday, April 28, the above emigrants sailed from Liverpool, England, in the ship "Monarch of the Sea", with 973 souls on board. Patriarch John Smith was chosen president of the Company with Elders John D. Chase, J.P.R. Johanson and Parley P. Pratt as his counselors, Elders were also appointed to take charge of the different divisions of the company. During the voyage there was considerable sickness and a number deaths, mostly of children. On the morning of June 3rd, the ship arrived at New York where the landing of the emigrants at the Castle Gardens, at once took place.

In the Evening they were sent by steamer to Albany, New York, and from there by rail to St. Joseph, Missouri, thence by steamer up the Missouri River to Omaha, from which place most of the Scandanavian Saints were taken to the Valley by the Church teams of which 170 were sent out that year.

Thus about 400 Scandanavians crossed the plains in Capt. Wm. B. Preston's Company of about 50 Church teams, leaving in the beginning of June and arriving in Salt Lake City Sept. 15, 1864."

then I was home by noon. I aimed to haul six loads a week. That year I grew about 400 tons.

A.L. was soon able to haul for me. When he was nine he took a load to B Street and 4th. Ave. I was behind him as far as 4th East and 8th. South, when I went with a man to try to locate some lost cattle. When I got to A.L. he was crying as the tire had come off the wagon. The man I had helped was a blacksmith, so he soon fixed the wagon and we were soon unloaded. How dear that dependable boy seemed to me, and father to him as we rode home together. That boy did all of the hay cutting on the farm after he was seven. The boys did all the stacking of grain after seven, and one year my wife pitched on to the stack. I remember a number of teams were hauling for John Neff and my two baby boys kept two pitchers busy. The two eldest were ordained deacons when they were eight and were active in priesthood work from then on. When the two oldest were eight and ten, Paul six, Virgil three, we ran two teams hauling. I pitched on and loaded, Paul tromped, Virgil rode the horse, Lawrence handled the fork and August stacked. Some of the present age intellectuals would cry out cruelty to children, but none have had happier children than they were on the whole, nor more efficient in in school or church.

So far this is all from memory. I did keep a diary for a time but many of my books have been lost in moving. I studied and did some systematic thinking. This was mostly from 9 P.M. to 12 P.M. I never allowed my late hours to interfere with my rule of getting up a six in the winter and five in the summer. Of course many nights were occupied with irrigating.

The first question for me to solve was regarding my future inheritance. I had heard preached varied thoughts, but they did not give a logical connection. My wife and I had read the scriptures together, but still I was not satisfied. One morning about three or four, a vision of the pre-existence, and the future was shown me. It was all so clear. My parents were my brother and sister. They were simply a medium in helping God (which is Adam) in bringing his children from the spirit to the mortal stage. This is necessary that we might have the opportunity of being celestial beings like the Father. If I could so conduct myself in this stage of action, to be worthy of the celestial kingdom with eternal increase, then and only then, would I gain an inheritance of my own to be as a Father Adam, and my wife, a mother Eve. Failing this I would forever inherit in connection with others of my brethren and sisters, one of the three glories eternally without increase, hence no need of an individual inheritance. Perfection and Celestial Glory of God are definite terms, the end of all human attainment. While we become fathers and grandparents a hundred times in this world, the highest possible attainment is celestial glory with eternal increase. I know the Redeemer to be the senior of Adam, where or from whence the Prototype provides Redeemers for each planet, is not material to us in this sphere of action. All intelligence comes from the Prototype. There is no intelligence where or beyond the first (first is inconceivable) intelligible. God is not eternally progressing in the sense that we understand it. He is the same today and forever, unchangeable. He is forever increasing in heirs and worlds numerically, but one eternal circle intelligently. With this information I asked the Lord to send

my way all the experiences necessary for me to attain an individual inheritance, which in itself includes eternal increase and Godhood.

On Christmas eve we were invited to Sister Eddins and while there baby James was playing on the floor with a lapdog, which had a cold. The child gave one cough. My wife was alarmed and picked him up until we returned home. She did everything she thought would help and he seemed to be better until New Years Eve when he took worse. He passed away about 2 P.M. 1 Jan. 1891. I seemed to be dead in my administrations to him. I have always felt that it took his passing to touch and refine my soul.

Sister Thurza Hanson called me a few months before to administer to her child which seemed to be dying. I told the mother the child would not die. As I took it in my arms I walked and prayed, and when I gave the child back to the mother it was breathing normally. She is still alive.

The people were so kind and sympathetic at James funeral. It all seemed to prepare me for future usefulness in time of sorrow.

When the Crescent Ward was organized, I was sitting in the choir. As each name was presented I felt it was the right man. James Jensen, Bishop, William Fairborne, first, and Albert G. Brown, second, counselor. From my youth I had aimed at some in my life to be a Bishop. Now I said, Nelson, you have overdone yourself. I heard the divine voice say, "Nelson, is there nothing left for you to do?" Oh, the sweet comforting assurance that my labors had been accepted, and that there was other work for me to do. I was made Ward clerk. My first statistical report was credited with being the first correct one sent in by a new ward.

Later I held the office of Sunday School Supt. M.I.A. Pres. Then I was appointed a committeeman to start building the L.D.S. U. I contributed \$5. myself and collected \$20.

Draper assisted us in building our first church and they held the deed. Draper demanded of us a definite amount for their church, or they threatened to sell ours. I told them they could not sell it but we could. We had a heated discussion, and I was told to sit down by Heber A. Smith, which I did not do. They then threatened to throw me out so I sat down. When I got outside I told the men that God would surely humiliate them some day. Later they were all asked to resign by the community. Pres. Angus M. Cannon told Soren Jensen, our presiding Elder to call a meeting to determine how much we would contribute to the Draper building fund. I moved that we assist Draper according to the honest conviction of our conscience. It was seconded by James B. Cunliffe and carried unanimously. When the report was read in Draper, Smith remarked, "Just like that dam Nelson."

While attending conference I was very sick. It was typhoid fever. Brother Joseph had just had it. I sent for the Elders, and Soren Jensen James. B. Cunliffe, and George Lunnen came. I told them it would be just as they said, and I was well in the morning, however, I had no desire for food. I hunted up a sow that had farrowed, and walked around most of the day and it appeared that all sickness had left me. In the evening Frank Thomas came in with the last load of hay, so I went out to help him unload. It was snowing and blowing, and Fidelia begged me not to go. When I came in I said, "I have it now. No need to send for the Elders again because the Father would not hear." Fidelia cared for me alone. Dr. Robertson did all he could for me, but I got worse and worse. It happened that a Brother Patterson stopped a Bishop Jensen's place one night. When asked what his business was he said, "Healing the sick." Sister Jensen remarked that there was a mighty sick man up the