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ABRAHAM OWEN SMOOT, PIONEER MORMON LEADER

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF RELIGION
OF
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

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by
C. ELLIOTT BERLIN
1955

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
I. THE FAMILY AND ANCESTRY OF ABRAHAM OWEN SMOOT	4
II. EARLY LIFE AND MISSIONARY SERVICE TO THE FALL OF FAR WEST	9
III. FROM THE FALL OF FAR WEST TO THE FALL OF NAUVOO	27
IV. FROM NAUVOO TO SALT LAKE VALLEY	41
V. IN GREAT SALT LAKE VALLEY 1847 TO 1851	47
VI. LEADER OF THE FIRST PERPETUAL EMIGRATING FUND COMPANY	54
VII. CONTINUED PROMINENCE IN SALT LAKE CITY 1854 TO 1868	66
VIII. EARLY EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE AND DEVELOPE PROVO	88
IX. BUILDING THE WOOLEN MILL AND CONTINUING THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT	107
X. BEGINNING THE BRIGHAM YOUNG ACADEMY AND THE UTAH STAKE TABERNACLE	126
XI. COMPLETION OF THE TABERNACLE AND THE ACADEMY BUILDING	143
XII. YEARS OF FINANCIAL DISTRESS	159
XIII. RELEASE FROM EARTHLY CARES	165
IVX. CONCLUSION	171

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Abraham Owen Smoot	3
2. Margaret T. Smoot	25
3. Emily Hill Smoot	39
4. The Cabin of A. O. Smoot at Sugar House	67
5. Sugar Factory Erected at Sugar House	69
6. Diana Tanner Eldredge Smoot	113
7. The Provo Woolen Mill	123
8. Anna Kirstine Morrison Smoot	163

INTRODUCTION

Abraham Owen Smoot was one of the stalwarts of the Mormon Church. He was a staunch supporter from the days of persecution in Missouri and Illinois until his death in 1895. As his leadership ability became evident he was entrusted with increasingly important responsibilities. In Salt Lake and later in Provo, he was a leader in civic, ecclesiastical, and economic affairs. Many times his efforts as foster father of the Brigham Young Academy kept that struggling institution from closing its doors. Few men exerted as great an influence on the early development of Utah as did A. O. Smoot. Only brief sketches have been written about this leader until the present time. His story is one that deserves to be told. To tell it is the purpose of this thesis.

The search for material about his life occupied several hours per day for a period of four or five months. Three months were spent in full time research. The major portion of this research was conducted in the Church Historian's Library in Salt Lake and in the Library of Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Materials were also found at the Utah State Historical Society, the Genealogical Society of Utah, the Sugar House Public Library, the Provo Library, and the Records Offices of Salt Lake City and Provo City. Former associates and members of the family have been interviewed for facts about the life of Mr. Smoot.

Many sources have been consulted in the search for material. Books contained only brief biographical sketches or occasional discussions about his associations with various institutions. Newspapers provided some details about interesting personal incidents, his participation in major public events, or occasional reports of a speech at a conference of his Stake.

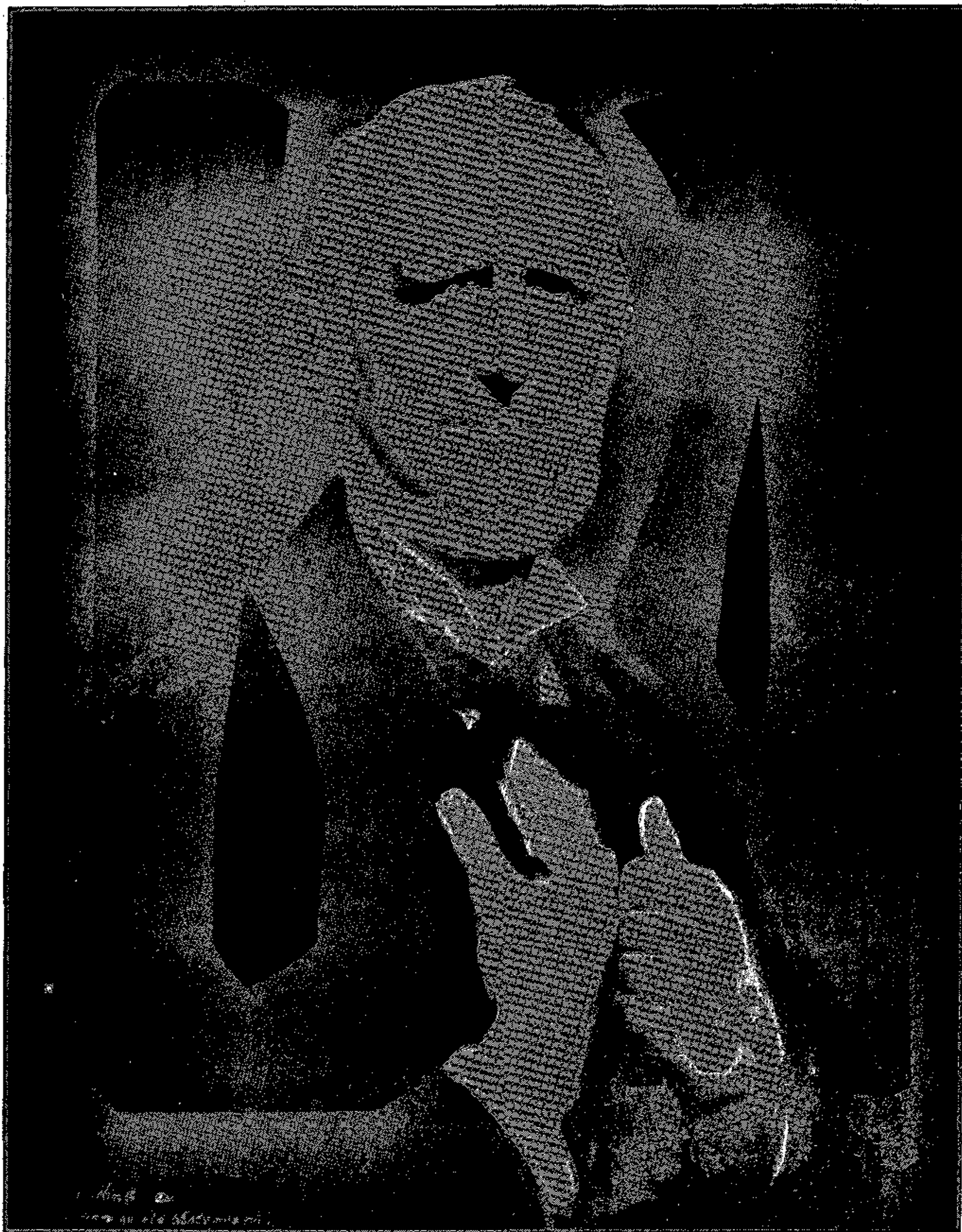
An attempt has been made to consult original sources as much as possible. Thousands of pages of hand written minute books were searched for items revealing the influence which A. O. Smoot exerted in rebuilding the peoples' faith, formulating plans for city and church growth, stirring the people up to action, or launching a new project. Unpublished sources have provided most of the material for this thesis.

One appraisal of A. O. Smoot declared that his influence on Utah was second only to that of Brigham Young. To show the extent of that influence, various avenues of his life have been examined. His efforts to stimulate the people spiritually and religiously have been studied. His attempts at civic improvement and industrial and business expansion have been traced. His attitude and philosophy toward the whole area have been shown.

In addition to showing his far reaching influence on the area, this study has attempted to describe his interesting life, to show him as more than just a cog in the machinery of progress, to point out that he was a man with problems to solve, and imperfections to overcome. I have endeavored to show that the great motivating forces of his life were a love for humanity and a deep devotion to his church.

To preserve the natural quality about his life the events have been set forth to a great extent in chronological order, just as he lived them. This served the additional purpose of showing the complicated course of his later life and the great ability which he had in integrating these varied avenues of activity.

A departure from this order seemed wise in some instances for the sake of greater unity. When Brother Smoot discussed doctrinal matters or expressed his attitudes about life, such material has sometimes been grouped together without respect to time. Also in some instances isolated activities have been placed with related activity when greater continuity was achieved without distortion of the events.



Abraham Owen Smoot

from a portrait by Alvin Gittins

Reproduced through the courtesy of the Sons of the Utah Pioneers

CHAPTER I

THE FAMILY AND ANCESTRY OF ABRAHAM OWEN SMOOT

To discover the origin of the name Smoot and of those who bore it, we must search back into thirteenth century Holland. There we find living upon his feudal estates near the town of 'S Gravenhage in the Province of Zuid Holland, a vassal of the Count of Holland. At this period of time family names were being adopted by the people of Western Europe. Just why this vassal adopted the name "Smout" remains a puzzling question especially when one considers that the term in the Dutch language means "lard" or more literally "grease".¹

In spite of the unsavory name, the family prospered with the passage of time. The men in the family often devoted themselves to public service and combat,

. . . during which one distinguished himself sufficiently to be granted by the reigning Count of Holland the privilege of using arms. At first the emblem was a plain black crescent painted on the metal shield of the senior member of the household, but gradually the emblem became more complex as the institution of heraldry advanced.

The crescent thus became the symbolic emblem of the House of Smout and thus served as the basis for the later and more modified coat-of-arms in which the background of the shield remained gold with three black crescents.²

As the family progressed some of its members became enriched through industry and commerce, and with this prosperity came increased prestige and intermarriage with the nobles and gentry houses of the Province. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, one of these married into the higher circles and thereafter established his seat at Rotterdam. At this same time the practice of quartering arms became popular among the nobility, and this gentleman was granted permission to bear the emblems of his maternal ancestry. "Thus we have the Smouts of Rotterdam, with the unicorn, shells, and bars, but still retaining the identity

¹Harry Wright Newman, The Smoots of Maryland And Virginia, (Washington D. C.: Harry Wright Newman, 1936), Introduction, p. xiii.

²Ibid., Introduction, p. xiii.

of the original symbols of his paternal line in the first quarter of his arms."¹

The record is incomplete from this time until William Smout or Smute was settled in London in the seventeenth century. The activity and movements of his immediate ancestors is not clear.

. . . one can only assume that he was one of the younger sons of a noble house and for that reason he became a constructor of watercrafts. But one cannot dispute the facts that William Smute, of Pickawaxon, Maryland, had the name and all the tradition of the Dutch House of Smout. It has been handed down from pre-Revolutionary members of the family that the Smoots of Maryland bore a coat-of-arms and that "there was a reindeer on it." . . .

Like most early colonial families, the name was spelled in several different forms on the early records--the most common and earliest was "Smute", but other variations found were Smut, Smot, Smoote, Smouth, and finally Smoot, but some who migrated South used Smoote as late as the War between the States.²

William Smute was the first member of the family to come to America. It is from this gentleman that we trace the line of descent to Abraham Owen Smoot. One genealogist in speaking of William declares that we do not know whether he was born in Scotland, on the continent, or in England. He is likewise uncertain concerning William's birth, listing it about the year 1596 or the year 1597.³ On the other hand, we find this more exact assertion:

William Smoot, progenitor of the Smoot family of Maryland, Kentucky and Utah, was probably born in Holland. The surname is derived from the Dutch name of Smout or Smoudt, and a family bearing this name has been traced back to the year 1500. In professional, civic and social life it was counted among the strong families of Holland.

According to an affidavit made by William Smoot in 1652, wherein he states his age as 56, he was born in 1596.⁴

According to the custom of the times when William reached his late teens, he was apprenticed in a trade to train in the ship building craft until he had reached a sufficient degree of skill to be accepted into the industry. The normal practice in Europe in that day was to take up the trade which had been hereditary in the family. The fact that he chose to become a designer and a builder of boats indicates that his early life was spent near the seacoast and adds another thread to his Dutch origin.

This choice of occupation may well be considered one of the most important factors in determining the future course of the life of William Smoot and his descendants. This work led him to the following circumstances:

¹Ibid., Introduction, p. xiv.

²Ibid., Introduction, p. xiv.

³Ibid., p. 1.

⁴Archibald F. Bennett, "The Smoot Family," The Utah Genealogical And Historical Magazine, XXIV (July, 1933), p. 104.

Sometime during the year 1633 William Smute was in London when he, as a member of the Boatwright Guild, agreed to perform 50 days of work in Virginia for Colonel Thomas Burbage. It was this contract no doubt which changed his destiny from being a progenitor of a relatively provincial family in England to one which subsequently attained in some branches of wealth and position in America.¹

In keeping with this agreement, William Smoot set sail sometime after 1633 for America to perform his fifty days of labor. The exact date of his arrival in the new land remains unknown. He first settled in Hampton, York County, Virginia. "The first mention of his name in public records is that of February 24, 1642, when he was granted for the transportation of eight persons into Virginia 400 acres of land in the Countie of Yorke near the head of Tymber Creek on the North side of Charles River near the land of Mr. Miniffee."² Also the records for that year show that he was taxed for four hundred acres of land there.³ Not only was William Smoot a supporter of the area by taxation, but he also bore arms in the defense of his newly adopted land. He served in expeditions against the Chickahominy and Pamunky Indians and for this service was awarded six hundred pounds of tobacco.⁴

Perhaps the pastures of Maryland appeared greener to William Smoot than the pastures of Virginia, for in one of the record folios in the land office at Annapolis, Maryland is a record that, "William Smoot transported himself, Grace his wife, Thomas, Richard, Elizabeth, Ann and Alice, his children, Elizabeth Wood, the daughter of his wife, and Ann Woodnot, a maidservant, at his own expense into Maryland, about April 6, 1646."⁵ The records also reveal on June 12, 1647 he was given a patent for three hundred acres of land near the mouth of Herring Creek, "In consideration that William Smoote hath transported himselfe, his Wife and two children into our province of Maryland in the year 1646 to plant and inhabit there."⁶

The apparent discrepancy in the two records one mentioning two children and the other five children must be explained on the basis that he made a return trip with the remainder of his family. The record listing five children further states, "For this he applied in 1652 for four hundred acres, and 'Smootly,' a

¹Newman, op. cit., p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 1.

³Bennett, op. cit., p. 104.

⁴Ibid., p. 104.

⁵Ibid., p. 105.

⁶Ibid., p. 105.

tract of that size, was surveyed for him on Jan. 25, 1652, which was situated on the west side of the Wicomico River. Here he made his home."¹

William Smoot continued active in acquiring land. He transported a number of people into the colony for which he received tracts of land. He continued in his profession of boatright and built and sold a number of boats during this period. He is described as a man of great energy and indomitable will power. Upon arriving in America, he associated from the very first with men of the highest social and financial levels.

Following down the ancestral line of Abraham Owen Smoot we next come to Thomas, the oldest son of William. Thomas was born in about the year 1634 probably in York County, Virginia. It will be remembered that Thomas was one of the children whom William transported to Maryland in 1646. In Maryland Thomas became an extensive planter and office holder in Charles County. In this county he held the office of sheriff, which was considered an honor held only by those of high social position in early colonial days.²

Thomas married Jane Batten, a sister of Captain William Batten, and a son named William was born to them in Charles County, Maryland on October 30, 1671.³ William's second wife, Eleanor, bore a son, John, after her husband's death. John was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia in 1707.⁴ John married Sarah (last name unknown), and they moved to St. Mary's County, Maryland. Here in about 1742 a son, George, was born to them.⁵ George married Anne Beale and before the year 1765 a son was born whom they named George after his father.⁶

This second George Smoot was born in St. Mary's County, Maryland, but he possessed land in Culpepper County, Virginia. This land he sold in about 1793, and shortly thereafter in company with his father migrated to Franklin County, Kentucky. Here he met Ann Rowlett, the daughter of William Rowlett and Jemima Owen. They were married in 1806. George is described as a physician and attorney. He died in 1823 or 1824 after six children were born to him and his wife.⁷ His son, Abraham Owen Smoot, the subject of this biography, was baptized for his father in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on September 8, 1870. He also

¹Ibid., p. 105.

²Ibid., p. 109.

³Newman, op. cit., p. 132.

⁴Ibid., p. 135.

⁵Ibid., p. 141.

⁶Ibid., p. 143.

⁷Archibald F. Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," The Instructor, LXXIX (September, 1944), p. 409.

did the work for his grandfather and his uncles, Reed Smoot and John Smoot. On the same day George's daughter, Martishia Smoot, was baptized in behalf of her aunts, Sarah Smoot and Mary Smoot.¹

From the time William Smoot first landed in America, he and later members of his family became prominent in the affairs of the areas where they lived. A study of their wills shows that they often acquired considerable amounts of property. Frequently a number of slaves would be listed as part of the property passed on to their heirs, which fact would place them among the more prosperous of the people where they lived.

Ann Rowlett, the wife of George Smoot, had an uncle of considerable distinction. This gentleman, Colonel Abraham Owen, was a prominent pioneer, lawmaker, and soldier of Kentucky. He was an aide-de-camp to General William Henry Harrison who later became president of the United States. During his last military exploit Colonel Owen met death in leading the charge against the Indians of Tecumseh at the famous battle of Tippecanoe in November of 1811. His loss was sufficiently felt that the legislature of Kentucky observed a period of mourning in December 1811 for the Colonel and the Heroes who died at Tippecanoe. When a new county was to be named it was named Owen County in honor of the dead hero. Also the little town of Owenton within Owen County was named after him.²

An interesting relationship comes from the fact that Colonel Owen's sister was General Stonewall Jackson's mother and Abraham O. Smoot's great aunt, thus making Stonewall Jackson and Abraham O. Smoot second cousins.³

It is not at all surprising to find that slightly more than three years after the famous battle of Tippecanoe and the death of Colonel Owen, George and Ann Smoot should name their infant son Abraham Owen after his illustrious great uncle. We shall see that as the years pass by young "A. O." added still more distinction to an already honored name.

¹Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV, (July, 1934), p. 117.

²Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," op. cit., LXXIX (September, 1944), p. 409.

³A. O. Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," Early Scenes In Church History, Eighth Book of the Faith Promoting Series, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), p. 18.

CHAPTER II

EARLY LIFE AND MISSIONARY SERVICE TO THE FALL OF FAR WEST

Perhaps the most fitting introduction for the life of Abraham Owen Smoot is that which comes from his own pen.

My life has been an exceedingly active, busy one, but when my experience is compared with that of many of my brethren there is perhaps nothing very extraordinary about it. I have seen the power of God manifested in various ways, and have had all the testimonies that I could ask for of the divine character of the work instituted through Joseph Smith, with which I have been connected for almost half a century. But I have never seen anything that I could call very miraculous, nor have I sought for anything of the kind as an evidence of the truth of God's work. To me everything has seemed to come along naturally. And yet when all things are considered, my whole life might be regarded as miraculous. When I reflect upon the precarious condition of my health when I was a boy, and the indulgence with which I was then treated, and then upon what I have been enabled to endure and accomplish, through the blessings of God since, there is something rather remarkable about it to me.¹

Abraham Owen Smoot was born February 17, 1815, in Owenton, Franklin County, (later Owen County after the formation of a new county) Kentucky. Speaking of his infancy and early years Mr. Smoot said, "From my early childhood, almost from my infancy, I was afflicted with a lung disease, and supposed to be in consumption. Indeed I was so bad a great deal of the time that my life was despaired of."²

When young Owen, as he appears to have been called in his boyhood, was about seven years of age, he moved with his parents to south western Kentucky. This would have been in 1822, scarcely two years before his father died. His father with a background as a physician and lawyer undoubtedly had considerable influence in moulding the character of this boy even at so young an age.

Misfortune seemed to be his lot in these early days for his health continued poor. Little time had elapsed after the passing of his father when

¹Smoot, op. cit., p. 17.

²Ibid., p. 18.

he recorded, "When I was about nine years old my death seemed so imminent that my burial clothes were made. However I rallied somewhat, but not to be able to do any work, I had a great desire to live . . ." ¹

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Smoot married Mr. Levi Taylor and lived with him and their family in Henry County. In 1828 when Owen was thirteen years old, the family moved across the border into Tennessee and settled on the Blood River in Benton County where they established their home.

It was here that A. O. Smoot grew to manhood. Although he remained sickly, he must have been observant and learned many things that later enabled him to guide wagon trains across the great distance from Winter Quarters to Utah. He grew up with little formal schooling. His background was that of a farmer and a backwoodsman. Perhaps his lack of physical activity in these early years lead him to greater mental activity and emphasized the importance of applying practical wisdom. He developed the ability to size up the whole situation and to make decisions that stood him in good stead for his later duties as a pioneer leader.

That the home on Blood River was a fine Christian dwelling, we know by the fine deeds performed therein and the friendly hospitality extended by its members. Until 1835 the parents and family of A. O. Smoot had not belonged to any church, but now with the arrival of Mormon missionaries his mother, her husband, and most of the family became members of the Church. A. O. Smoot chose to embrace this new faith also, but let him tell his own story.

I had a great desire to live, and also to know if the Lord had a church upon the earth, and I investigated the various doctrines professed by those with whom I came in contact, but could never feel satisfied to join any of the religious sects.

When I attained my twentieth year, and while I was still very sickly, Elders David W. Patten and Warren Parrish visited the part where I resided, as missionaries, and I became convinced of the correctness of the doctrines which they taught and embraced the same, being baptized by Elder Parrish and confirmed by Elder Patten. Brother Patten in confirming me, promised that I should be healed of my infirmity and become a strong and powerful man. This prediction was verified to the letter; I began to grow strong immediately. ²

This important event in the life of A. O. Smoot occurred on March 22, 1835. Before and after this day, the home of Levi Taylor was a stopping place for the missionaries. Wilford Woodruff was a frequent visitor at this welcome fireside while on his missionary tours during the thirties.

¹Ibid., p. 18.

²Ibid., p. 18.

It was young Abraham O. Smoot who became the leader for this little group of converts on the Blood River. His staunch faith and leadership ability were early recognized. In less than two short months after his baptism he was ordained to the office of Deacon and placed in charge of the Blood River Branch which had been raised up by Elders Patten and Parrish.¹

Accepting this religion brought with it new experiences and friends. As has been mentioned the home of his step father became the headquarters for the missionaries who labored in the area. After Elder Patten returned to Kirtland, Elder Wilford Woodruff became a companion for Elder Warren Parrish. Soon Elder Parrish also returned to Kirtland, leaving Brother Woodruff alone as a missionary.

On the fifth of August Elder Woodruff had an appointment at the home of Brother Taylor, the step father of A. O. Smoot. In order to arrive there he had to swim his horse across the Blood River which was in flood stage because of the heavy rains. Both horse and rider became entangled in a tree top in the passage and almost drowned. He finally succeeded in freeing the horse from the branches and both swam to the opposite shore separately. The horse waited for the rider and after mounting Elder Woodruff directed him to the appointed destination and a good meeting was held.² This experience and others marked the beginning of an association between Woodruff and Smoot that was to last for nearly sixty years.

Wilford Woodruff writes in his journal, "closed the labors of the year 1835, by eating johnny cake, butter and honey, at Brother A. O. Smoot's."³ These two brethren continued in close association throughout much of the year 1836. Woodruff continues to record in his journal:

I spent the fore part of January, 1836, (the weather being very cold) at the house of A. O. Smoot, in Kentucky, studying Kirkham's English Grammar. I continued to travel and preach in Kentucky and Tennessee and baptized all that would believe my testimony.⁴

This was evidently a study and training period for A. O. Smoot because in the near future he also embarked upon his missionary labors. Again it is the pen of Wilford Woodruff which furnished us the account of this event.

On the 26th of February we held a conference at the house of Brother Lewis Clapp (father of B. L. Clapp). There were represented one hundred

¹Ibid., p. 18.

²Bennett, "Abram O. Smoot, Pioneer," *op. cit.*, (September, 1944), p. 410.

³Wilford Woodruff, Leaves From My Journal, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), p. 21.

⁴Ibid., p. 21.

and three members in that mission. I ordained A. O. Smoot and Benjamin Boyston Elders, and Daniel Thomas and Benjamin L. Clapp Priests. I also ordained one Teacher and two Deacons.

After conference I took Brothers Smoot and Clapp with me to preach. The former traveled with me constantly till the 21st of April, when we had the privilege of meeting with Elder David W. Patten, who had come direct from Kirtland, and who had been ordained one of the Twelve Apostles.

It was a happy meeting. He gave us an account of the endowments at Kirtland, the glorious blessings received, the ministrations of angels, the organization of the Twelve Apostles and Seventies . . .¹

Such news would be welcome indeed to these missionaries eager for any information about the cause to which they were so devoted.

A. O. Smoot was soon thoroughly settled in the missionary harness. Missionary work was carried on steadily, with conferences held every few weeks. The conference held at the house of Seth Utley at Chalk Level, Benton County, Tennessee, on May 28 and 29 shows that Smoot still remained in charge of the little branch at Blood River. "Elder Abraham O. Smoot represented the Blood River Branch consisting of 10 members in good standing."²

At the close of this conference Wilford Woodruff and A. O. Smoot labored in Kentucky over a circuit of several hundred miles. Elders David W. Patten and Warren Parrish labored in Tennessee, and they all met in a conference at the Damon Creek Branch on June 9, 1836.³ These days brought wonderful experiences and growth to A. O. Smoot. Wilford Woodruff describes the activity as they met together:

. . . persecution raged against us. Elder Patten bore a strong and forcible testimony of the work of God, and when we were opposed by mobs he would rebuke them in great plainness; we were threatened, but not injured. The sick were healed under our administrations.⁴

One of these early experiences made a lasting impression on the mind of A. O. Smoot. He saw the reactions of a man who had literally been with the devil. When the new Apostle, David W. Patten, returned from Kirtland on April 21, he made his home with Levi Taylor, the step father of A. O. Smoot. He was returning from one of the near by towns when he had a most remarkable experience.

We are indebted to the clear memory of A. O. Smoot for the account which he gave to President Smith in a letter many years after it happened.

¹Ibid., p. 21.

²Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "Journal History of the Church" (Manuscript in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), 1836 May 29.

³Woodruff, op. cit., p. 22.

⁴Deseret News (Salt Lake City, Utah), July 14, 1858.

President Joseph F. Smith, Salt Lake City:

Dear Brother:--In relation to the subject of the visit of Cain to David W. Patten in the State of Tennessee, about which you wrote to me, I will say that according to the best of my recollection it was in the month of September, 1835.¹

It was in the evening, just twilight, when Brother Patten rode up to my father's house, alighted from his mule and came into the house. The family immediately observed that his countenance was quite changed. My mother having first noticed his changed appearance said: 'Brother Patten, are you sick?' He replied that he was not, but had met a very remarkable personage who had represented himself as being Cain, who murdered his brother, Abel. He went on to tell the circumstances as near as I can recall in the following language:

'As I was riding along the road on my mule I suddenly noticed a very strange personage walking beside me. He walked along beside me for about two miles. His head was about even with my shoulders as I sat in the saddle. He wore no clothing, but was covered with hair. His skin was very dark. I asked him where he dwelt and he replied that he had no home, that he was a wanderer in the earth and traveled to and fro. He said he was a very miserable creature, that he had earnestly sought death during his sojourn upon the earth, but that he could not die, and his mission was to destroy the souls of men. About the time he expressed himself thus, I rebuked him in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by virtue of the Holy Priesthood, and commanded him to go hence, and he immediately departed out of my sight. When he left me I found myself near your house.'

There was much conversation about the circumstances between Brother Patten and my family which I don't recall, but the date is, to the best of my recollection and I think it is correct, but it may possibly have been in the spring of 1836, but I feel quite positive that the former date is right.

Your friend and Brother,
A. O. Smoot²

Evidently A. O. Smoot had a stronger faith in God than he had fear of the devil, for this knowledge of one of Satan's workers failed to deter his future missionary efforts.

Traveling in Tennessee as a missionary companion to Apostle Patten was a faith promoting experience for Elder Smoot. Brother Patten's exercise of the gift of healing so impressed Brother Smoot that he declared, "I think Elder David W. Patten possessed the gift of healing to a greater degree than any man I ever associated with." To a woman who had been ill for five years and bed ridden for one, Elder Patten said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, arise!" He rebuked her disease and remembering her seven years of childless marriage, promised her that she would bear children. She immediately walked one half mile to be baptized, and was healed from that time. She bore a child within a year and several children thereafter, thus fulfilling the promise made by Elder

¹Since Patten was in Kirtland until the twenty-first of April, the spring of 1836 is accepted as being the correct date.

²Lycurgus A. Wilson, Life of David W. Patten, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1900), p. 50-51.

Patten.¹

Brother Smoot describes his own healing at the hands of Elder Patten:

I was myself healed under his administration in a manner which appeared to me very remarkable at that time. While traveling I was taken very sick and was forced to seek entertainment at the house of an infidel. Elder Patten was desirous of administering to me, and by way of a pretext, asked the privilege of praying. His request was granted and he knelt beside the bed upon which I was lying, and, without the family noticing it, placed his hand upon my head. While his hand was upon me, I felt the disease pass off from my system as palpably as I ever experienced anything in my life, and before he arose from his knees I was as well as I ever had been, and able to arise and eat my supper.²

During this period Wilford Woodruff and A. O. Smoot shared one of those experiences which draw men closer together:

On the 18th of July Brother A. O. Smoot and I arrived at a ferry on the Tennessee River, and, as the ferryman was not at home the woman kindly gave us permission to use the ferryboat. We led our horses on board, and took the oars to cross the river. Brother Smoot had never used an oar, and I had not for some years, so we made awkward work of it. Soon he broke one oar, and I let another fall overboard, which left us only one broken oar to get to shore with. We narrowly escaped running into a steamboat. We struck shore half a mile below the landing place, tied up the boat, jumped on the bank with our horses, and went on our way with blistered hands, thankful to get off so well.³

Struggles with the elements were not the only problems with which the two missionaries had to contend. A satanic spirit had already driven the Saints from Jackson County, Missouri. This same spirit existed in some degree in the country round about. This spirit of ridicule and persecution was the most serious obstacle to preaching the Gospel. Elders Woodruff and Smoot had preached at the home of a Mr. David Crider in Weakly County, Tennessee and were threatened by a mob.

I baptized Mr. Crider amid the scoffs of the rabble, who went in the night and poisoned both of our horses, the one which I rode, belonging to Bro. Samuel West, died two days afterwards; Brother Smoot's recovered; the swine that ate of the horse flesh also died.⁴

Elders Smoot and Woodruff continued their labors throughout the months of July and August until a conference was held at Damon Creek, Calloway County, Kentucky on September second through the fourth. In attendance were apostles David W. Patten and Thomas B. Marsh. It was no doubt these two brethren who released Smoot and Woodruff from their labors and counseled them to go to Kirt-

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 29.

²Ibid., p. 30.

³Woodruff, op. cit., p. 24.

⁴Ibid., p. 24.

land for their endowments.¹

Another six weeks were required to conclude their missionary labors when Elders Smoot and Woodruff took leave of the Kentucky Saints and started for Kirtland. On October 20, Smoot started out in company with Wilford Woodruff and Jesse Turpin. They evidently traveled by land to Paducah, Kentucky where they embarked on October 25 for Elder Woodruff's first steamboat ride. They got off the steamer at Louisville on October 28 and spent the ensuing nineteen days visiting Elder Smoot's relatives and preaching among the people. Such opportunities to spread the Gospel were never passed up. Continuing their journey they passed through Cincinnati on November 17 and arrived at Kirtland on November 25, 1836, a day of considerable moment in the life of A. O. Smoot.²

As he drew near Kirtland he strained his eyes to catch his first glimpse of the temple which stood for so much in his life. He was thrilled in the afternoon to call upon the leaders including the Presidents of the Church and finally to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith for the first time.³

Their greatest joy, however, was their visit to the temple recorded for us by Wilford Woodruff.

Then a more important scene opened to our view than ever kings saw in this generation. It was that of the Temple of Israel's God. Our visit to that holy house was to us the crowning event of the day. I was accompanied by Brothers Abraham O. Smoot and Warren Parrish. Each apartment of the Temple was visited in turn.⁴

As the new arrivals entered the upper rooms they saw the four Egyptian mummies and were especially thrilled to see the papyrus scroll written by Abraham of old. They were interested in many other sights in the upper story and belfrey and were everywhere impressed by manifestations of divine wisdom.⁵

Two days later on Sunday November 27, Elders Smoot and Woodruff were accompanied by Elder Warren Parrish as they retired to the House of the Lord for the purpose of worshipping. For the first time they saw a congregation gathered within the walls of the temple. In the morning they heard the Prophet speak, and in the afternoon both Elders Smoot and Woodruff were given the privilege of addressing the congregation in reporting their missionary activities in the South.⁶

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), July 14, 1858.

²Ibid., July 14, 1858.

³"Journal History of The Church," 1836 November 25, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., 1836 November 25, p. 4.

⁵Ibid., 1836 November 25, p. 4.

⁶Ibid., 1836 November 27.

At this point our natural curiosity asks for a picture of missionary Smoot in action. This picture although given later in his life is by a son-in-law who knew him well.

Large of frame, with strong features, one of the most prominent of which was a pair of piercing black eyes set beneath bushy beetling brows; while utterly devoid of ostentation, there was a dignity to his presence, a rugged grandeur to his physique that made him a striking personality wherever he appeared. When he spoke men listened, 'every word seemed to weigh a pound,' and a natural impediment in his speech (a defect that vanished as he warmed to his theme) but added force and impressiveness to his delivery; like a boulder in the bed of a mountain stream. Always practical and generally serious, he could be mirthful in season, and sentiment as well as humor bubbled up from the recesses of his soul like a sparkling spring on a rocky, weather scarred mountain side.¹

After a few days in Kirtland both Brothers Smoot and Woodruff followed the advice of the First Presidency to study Latin Grammar. This study under the tutelage of Professor Haws commenced on December 5, 1836 and continued for a number of weeks.²

The lot and experiences of these two men continued to parallel each other. On December 20 they met by appointment with the Council of Seventies in the loft of the Kirtland Temple where the Third Quorum of Seventy was organized.³ Wilford Woodruff was advanced to a place in the First Quorum of Seventies, and Abraham O. Smoot was ordained a Seventy in fulfillment of the prophecy pronounced upon his head by Wilford Woodruff as they rode together in Tennessee on June 30 of that year.⁴

Sometime during the early part of January Brother Smoot became ill. He says that,

The change of climate and a little carelessness on my part brought on an attack of typhoid fever and pleurisy, from which I suffered severely, and it was thought that I could not recover. Brother Woodruff, however, who was waiting upon me, called in Elders Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, and Hyrum Smith, and the five laid hands upon me and rebuked the disease and blessed me. While their hands were upon my head I fell into an easy sleep, and when I awoke my disease was entirely gone.⁵

Wilford Woodruff records that it was found necessary for Brother Smoot to return to his home in the South on account of ill health. Smoot's daughter

¹Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, (Salt Lake City, Utah: George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1892), IV, p. 98.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1836 December 5.

³Ibid., 1836 December 20.

⁴Mathias F. Cowley, Wilford Woodruff, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News, 1909), p. 66.

⁵Smoot, op. cit., p. 18-19.

says that the Prophet Joseph advised her father to return to his native state because the northern climate did not agree with him. However, Smoot himself says that a few days after being healed from his illness he was advised by Joseph Smith to return to the Southern States to raise a company of Saints to come to Far West.¹ He no doubt was well at the time of his departure, and the future place of settlement in Missouri was considered to be more healthful for him than the more northern climate of Kirtland.

As he prepared to journey south, he was given a patriarchal blessing on January 23, under the hand of Joseph Smith Senior. Wilford Woodruff acted as scribe in copying the blessing and afterwards presented a copy of it to Brother Smoot.²

The patriarchal blessing referred to the long journey which Elder Smoot had made to gain the blessings of the temple in Kirtland and promised him that if he exercised faith he would return in full health to his friends at home. It also promised him:

Thou shalt have great wisdom. Many shall seek wisdom at thy mouth
Thou shalt have much persecution on the earth, thy enemies will seek thy life, but thou shalt be delivered out of their hands and return to Zion, when thy labors in the Lord's vineyard are ended and possess an inheritance with the faithful where thy wisdom shall be great and thy fame known among the Saints.³

The unfolding of his life will reveal the literal fulfillment of these promised blessings.

On January 25 he set out for his step father's home in Tennessee and after a journey of three weeks arrived at the home on Blood River. Here he found his family already imbued with the spirit of gathering; already making preparations to move to Missouri and join the Saints. He assisted in making ready for the trip to Missouri and led his family to that destination.⁴

His assignment from the Prophet had been to raise a company, not just his family, and accordingly he organized a company of two hundred souls which required about forty wagons.⁵ In this labor he was assisted by Elder Henry G. Sherwood.

Entries in Smoot's journal show that by April 24 they were on their way

¹Ibid., p. 19.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1837 January 23.

³Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," op. cit., LXXIX (September, 1944), p. 412.

⁴Ibid., (October) p. 465.

⁵Smoot, op. cit., p. 19.

to Missouri. They averaged about fifteen miles a day traveling in this large group and pitched their tents each night as they stopped to camp. Frequently they were joined by other Saints who were also on their way to Far West. On May 9 they camped near St. Louis. The remainder of the month was spent traveling at a leisurely pace and preaching to the people of the small towns which they encountered on their way. No such opportunity to spread the Gospel would be passed up by Abraham O. Smoot. His journal entry for the last day of the journey reveals his feeling at the completion of the trip.

June 2. Friday traveled 8 m reached Far West where I met with the greatest pleasure menny of my Bro & Sisters in the Lord with whom I had a previous acquainttience Saw them situated in the land of Zion with peace and plenty which gave joy to my soul.¹

His mother's family set about to establish a home at Ambrosia in Daviess County, but Smoot was probably able to do little more than assist in building a home and getting established. He had little time to enjoy his efforts, because in the early part of January he was again called on a mission. This time he went for five months into the southern part of Missouri and throughout Arkansas.

Smoot's journal which contains daily entries describing his missionary travels records the start of this new missionary venture.

January 3. Wednesday after commending myself and my father's family to the Lord I took the parting hand with them to go at the Lords command into the world to preach his gospel of the kingdom unto a people that lyeth in darkness & in the shadow of death Traveled 14 m Spent the night at Br. R. Alexander's 2 m south of Far weast.²

January 14. Wednesday walked 6 m preached in the vilage of Virsales on the subject of the Gospel of Christ give out an appointment to preach at the same place at 6 o'clock P. m. which meeting was attended by a large and civil audience who give me there individed attention. I was much blessed with the spirit of the Lord and thus favored I was inabled to set fourth the glorious reign of our Saviour on earth to the understanding of my hearers. But before closing this interview there was an old priest arose to confound the aforesaid docttrin but in vain he was confounded & made a public example of.³

Eleven days later on a return to the same village, he met a far different reception. Perhaps the subject of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon was the deciding factor. At any rate, he and his companion were requested to leave immediately and not preach in their village any more.

They continued journeying and preaching to those who would listen until

¹A. O. Smoot, "Journal," (Handwritten daily journal, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), June 2, 1837.

²Ibid., January 3, 1838.

³Ibid., January 14, 1838.

they arrived at a place on the Osage River where the Big Buffalo flowed in. At this point they called to mind the people of Virsales and their rejection of the testimony which had been delivered to them. In true Biblical fashion Smoot and his companion "cleansed (their) feet & bore testimony against them in the name of Jesus Christ & went (their) way rejoicing."¹

Smoot records in his journal that in many places the people had so hardened their hearts that they refused to hear the message, and they were obliged to pass on in search of more productive territory. He found such a spirit of wickedness in Springfield, the County Seat of Green County, that the spirit forbade him to even open his mouth in defense of the Gospel of Christ.

In another place, Judge Younger played the role of Nicodemus of Bible days. He listened to the message himself, but showed such concern for his reputation that he requested the missionaries not to let the people know that his brother was a member of the Church.

Finally we discover the first suggestion of romance in the life of A. O. Smoot. Even in this you have to read between the lines to recognize it. However, he records in his journal. "Feb. 28. Wednesday traveled 2 m to Mc Cager Hogans and back to uncle Rowletts whear I spent the night untell 2 o'clock writing an adress to M. T. Atkinson."² Mrs. Adkinson (correct spelling) was a young widow who had travelled with the company which Smoot and Sherwood had led to Missouri. It is interesting to see this serious minded man stealing the hours until 2 o'clock in the morning to write a letter to a lady. Evidently he wrote with an eloquent and persuasive pen, and the hours were not spent in vain for ere the year passed away she became his wife.

It is certain that his missionary labors did not suffer from hours stolen for courtship, for we find him always busily persuing his labors. One of the practices which he commonly engaged in was to speak and then give the audience an oppportunity to ask questions about his remarks. Often a stray priest or two would attempt to entangle him or disprove his statements, but he always seemed to come off well in such encounters.

As he traveled about Smoot, acted as an agent for a publication which he refers to as the Journal. He quite often sent subscriptions to Don C. Smith in Kirtland. March 26 reveals an entry of seven subscriptions sent.

Attending meetings of the various faiths in the area brought Elder Smoot into contact with people who already had an interest in religion and sometimes

¹Ibid., February 5, 1838.

²Ibid., February 28, 1838.

aided him in preaching the Gospel. On Saturday, April 14, he walked one mile to attend a Baptist meeting, but the Baptist Priests who had scheduled the meeting did not show up. This merely spelled opportunity to Smoot. He arose in the place of the absent preachers and spoke to the people on the principles of salvation through Jesus Christ.¹

As we might expect his associations with the local ministers and priests were not always the most pleasant. On Sunday, April 15, he attended a meeting in the town of Yellville, Marion County, Arkansas, held by a Methodist Priest. This fellow was filled with all manner of deceit. Upon Smoot's appearance in the meeting, this priest pretended a feeling of friendliness and desired to take a walk together so that they might talk. Smoot sensed his false and evil intentions and was therefore on guard. The Priest requested that Smoot take the lead of the meeting for the morning, desiring him to preach his principles of religion without any reference to the scriptures to establish them. Smoot replied, "Sir I would not for my wright arm do that thing for I see your cunning that you would take the advantage of my words & thus make the people beleave that I denied the words of the Lord." Now the true colors of the priest showed forth as he returned to the congregation and began abusing the Mormons. At the close of the Priest's remarks, Smoot arose and defended the truth to the apparent satisfaction of everyone present.²

The bitter spirit continued to canker the bosom of the Methodist Priest. Only a few days later as Smoot concluded speaking to an audience at a little town near Yellville, the same Priest arose and attempted to tear down what Smoot had said on the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Smoot shows his disdain for the Priest and his type in his description of the encounter.

But the poor hyerlin was so confounded at the foregoing testimony that he was holy unable to advance any testimony to coop with it. And the baseness of heart was clearly made manifest to the assembly & he was compelled to assom his seet under the disapprobation of the people and a sharp rebuke of the spirit of God.³

Frequent entries during this period show that Elder Smoot felt the influence of the spirit of the Lord in his labors.

Mar. 25. Sunday preached at the same place to a large audience whilst my heart was overwhelmed by the spirit of God--I preached on the authentisity of the Book of Mormon the congregation seemed to be much Amazed & altogether

¹Ibid., April 14, 1838.

²Ibid., April 15, 1838.

³Ibid., April 18, 1838.

Confounded with the word of God.¹

April 27, Friday preached at Elijah Tabors on the dispensation of the fullness of times to a civil audience. I was much in the spirit & great power & forcible testimony attended the word whilst the prejudices of my audience was broken down & many caused to weep under the influence of truth.²

Not all his listeners were touched in the same manner. Along in the latter part of April he records the cases of three women who have received testimonies of the truth of the Gospel, but their husbands, unable or unwilling to see the truth, forbade their wives to be baptized.

Among the other little experiences common to missionary labor is the experience of not finding a shelter for the night. On April 20, after walking a distance of twenty miles through the mountains and hills, Smoot and his companion were forced to sleep outdoors "in a wilderness country amongst the wild beasts of the forest."³

Sometime in the month of April Elder Smoot had one of the most impressive experiences of this missionary journey. He was speaking one afternoon in the court house at Yellsville,

. . . when in the midst of my discourse I was interrupted by a Baptist deacon who arose and exclaimed: 'That young man is not quoting the scripture correctly.'

I was speaking at the time upon the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. I was also enjoying an unusual flow of the Holy Spirit, and felt more calm and collected at this interruption than I otherwise would have done. I deliberately opened the Bible and read therefrom the very passages which I had previously quoted verbatim, and cited the chapter and verse.

At this the Baptist took his seat, but I had not proceeded much farther with my remarks when I again had occasion to quote from the scriptures, and lest I again should be found fault with, I opened the Bible and read from it, when the Deacon, a second time arose and declared that it was not from King James' translation of the Bible that I was quoting, but 'Joe Smith's golden Bible,' etc.

Several of the audience immediately ordered him to be still and let the young man proceed, as they wanted to hear the preaching.

Again he became quiet, but soon broke forth in a perfect rage, said I was lying and denounced, in a rather incoherent manner, 'Joe Smith' and his 'golden bible,' and the 'Mormons' as 'chicken thieves' and 'hog stealers,' etc.

A number of persons immediately surrounded him as if they intended to thrust him out, and lest they should use violence I began to plead for him, and requested them to allow him to retire quietly. I added, however, that I was there on my Father's business, commissioned to proclaim the gospel, and if he did not speedily repent the Lord would rebuke him and the judgment of God overtake him. At this he turned and rushed from the room almost foaming with rage.

¹Ibid., March 25, 1838.

²Ibid., April 27, 1838.

³Ibid., April 20, 1838.

He had four drunken sons in the town and he proceeded to hunt them up to incite them to mob me. Just then a fire broke out in the Baptist meeting house, and on hearing the alarm I adjourned the meeting for one hour.

In the audience was a Major John Houston, a brother of the celebrated Sam Houston, who was in command of a military post near by. He had boarded a few days at the same place that I had, and had therefore become somewhat acquainted with me.

He followed the deacon and advised him against molesting me, telling him if he persisted in it he would have to take him in charge. The deacon concluded to desist but raged, and cursed 'Joe Smith' and the 'golden bible' and the young preacher, and everything connected with him as he proceeded home, and on entering his house, almost immediately fell dead and turned black.

In the condition he lay for two days, no one, not even his own sons, daring to go near him until, a Campbellite preacher, who also happened to be one of my audience, and who had heard of his condition, came to me and informed me of it. I went with him to Major Houston, and through his influence some persons were employed to go and bury the dead man.

Within a week from the time of the deacon's death his wife also died, and his sons kept up their drunken spree until they had run through four thousand dollars of the money which their father had left and also other property.

Many of the people of the town regarded this series of calamities as the judgment of God, and even the Campbellite preacher admitted to me that it had very much the appearance of it.¹

As the time for his departure and return to Far West drew near, Smoot assisted his uncle, Moses Rowlett, who had decided to emigrate to Far West, in making preparations for the journey. This activity occupied his time from the first until the eleventh of May except a few days which he spent in studying and writing.

Not long after the dramatic encounter with the Baptist Deacon at Yellville, Smoot returned according to previous appointment to a place about twenty miles distant from the former scene. While there he received word that Major Houston, down sick with the cholera, felt that he was going to die and desired Smoot to come to him. Smoot recalls,

I had conversed with him many times upon the subject of religion, and, though he professed to be an infidel, I could see that he was pricked in his heart but was too proud to acknowledge it. Shortly before he died he made request that I should preach his funeral sermon, and on my return to Yellville I did so, and I think I never had more of the Spirit of God in preaching in my life than I did on that occasion, infidel though he pretended to be.²

This funeral was held on May 13, 1838 at the home of Ewing Hogan, a good friend of both Smoot and Houston, and a place where Smoot often spent the night.

On May 15, he spent the afternoon making final preparations for the

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 19-20.

²Ibid., p. 21.

departure of himself and uncle Moses Rowlett. He "took the parting hand" with his good friends and helped the little company on its way. They usually pitched their tents at night but as this group was smaller than the group which he had led to Missouri the previous summer they often spent the night with friends along the way. The journey was without any special incidents except that they encountered an unusually late snowfall on May 25 near Springfield.

An interesting entry in Smoot's Journal is:

Monday May 29. Traveled 19 m on the state rode towards the land of inheritance Spent the night at Joseph Smiths on the 25 m Prarraries.¹

On Thursday, June 8, the day before their arrival at their destination in Far West, the group traveled thirty miles, the greatest distance for one day on the trip. Here at the home of Brother Jones on Long Creek, Caldwell County, Missouri, they listened intently to their first news of the fortunes of the Church since Smoot's departure five months before.

After entering and spending the next day at Far West, our wanderer continued his journey on June 10. He travelled twelve more miles to his stepfather's home in Ambrosia to find the family all well and in good spirits. For the next eight or ten days, A. O. Smoot enjoyed a pleasant change visiting about the region with his friends as he rested from the fatigue of his journey.

This ten days rest would bring the date up to June 20, 1838, when Smoot began to assist Alanson Ripley in surveying the site at Adam-ondi-Ahman. Years later when Wilford Woodruff and others were visiting at the home of Smoot in Provo to administer to his sick wife Smoot related an experience in Church history which had occurred back in June of 1838.

President Smoot said that he and Alanson Ripley, while surveying at that town, which was about 22 miles from Jackson County, Missouri, came across a stone wall in the midst of a dense forest of underbrush. The wall was 30 feet long, 3 feet thick, and 4 feet high. It was laid in mortar or cement. When Joseph Smith visited the place and examined the wall he said it was the remains of an altar built by Father Adam and upon which he offered sacrifices after he was driven from the Garden of Eden. He said that the Garden of Eden was located in Jackson County, Missouri. The whole town of Adam-ondi-Ahman was in the midst of a thick and heavy forest of timber and the place was named in honor of Adam's altar. The prophet explained that it was upon this altar where Adam blessed his sons and his posterity, prior to his death.²

This stone structure should not be confused with the stone tower standing on the same hill but which Joseph Smith identified as a Nephite tower at least a month earlier than Smoot and Ripley could have discovered Adam's altar.

¹A. O. Smoot, "Journal," May 29, 1838.

²Cowley, op. cit., p. 545-546.

For a few brief weeks Smoot was to enjoy peace in this land. Soon, however, the sound of hammer and mallet and axe were to be replaced by the sound of fire arms and the horrible oaths of marauding mobs as they charged into the once peaceful cities. Smoot records that it was no later than the first of August that these scenes burst upon their eyes and ears.

. . . and thus finding myself engroced in such a seen of things as this it became my indispenceable duty as well as my sacred privilege to gird on my armes yea my armer of war my equipage of battle & unite my strength with that of my brethren & go forth in the field of contention against our enemies for the protection of our fathers & mothers wives & children our property our houses & homes and thus it became one continual round of invasion from our enemys on every side from the first of Aug untell the first day of Nov. at which time we were compelled by supery force & traiterism to give up our armes I am bold to assert that I was always found on my tower standing in my lot & place redy to go to the defence of my Brs at all times at a minuets warning During the month of Aug. I was in several adventures with the enemy by reconortering the country, to search out the quarters of the mob & pri into their desines¹

As the tension between the Saints and the Missourians increased, the tempo of events also increased. On October 25, came the Battle of Crooked River in which David W. Patten, the friend and missionary companion of A. O. Smoot, was killed. Five days later, the inhuman massacre of Haun's Mill was carried out with the killing of seventeen men and the brutal wounding of others. Finally, on October 31, Colonel Hinkle's infamous treachery was perpetrated on a helpless people, and Joseph and his associates were betrayed into the hands of General Lucas. On November 1, "about eighty men were taken prisoners and the remainder were ordered to leave the state, and were forbidden, under threat of being shot by the mob to assemble more than three in a place."²

Among those taken prisoners at Far West on November 1, was Abraham O. Smoot who now saw in full the persecution promised in his patriarchal blessing. The men having been taken prisoners and the arms having been given up, the Saints were now completely at the mercy of the mob which continued its depredations.

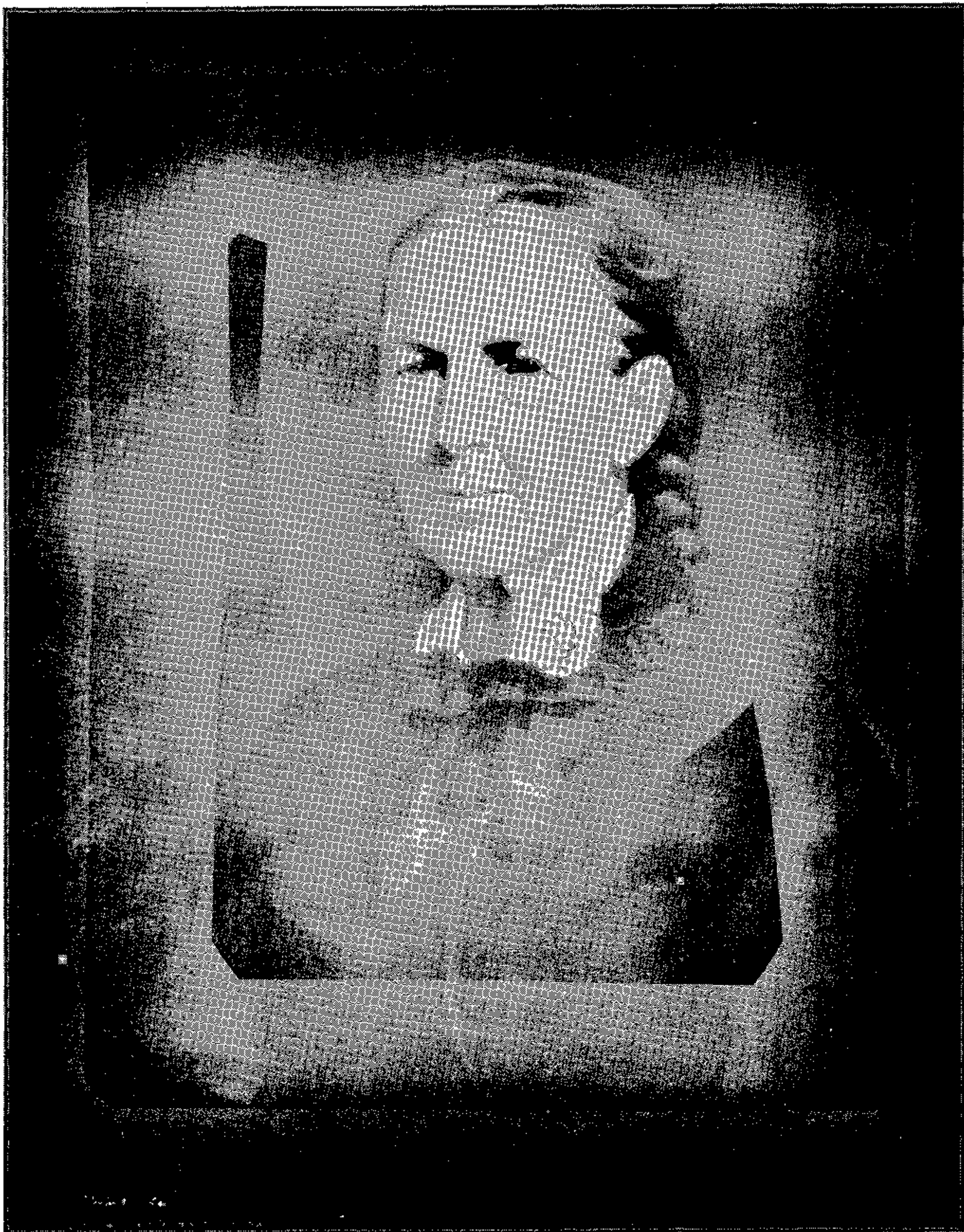
After depriving these of their arms the mob continued to hunt the brethren like wild beasts, and shot several, ravished the women, and killed one near the city. No Saint was permitted to go in or out of the city; and meantime the Saints lived on parched corn³

On Nov. 5 the Mormon men at Far West were ordered to form a line, and fifty-six were made prisoners and sent to Richmond for a mock trial. The

¹A. O. Smoot, "Journal," June 10, 1838. (Evidently this was all written at a later date, but placed under the date of June 10, 1838).

²Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), III, p. 192.

³Ibid., p. 202.



Margaret T. Smoot

from a portrait by Alvin Gittins

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remainder were forced to sign over their property and 1500 Saints were ordered to leave the state.

Later Elder Smoot estimated he had sustained a property loss at the hands of the mob amounting to \$1415.00.¹

A. O. Smoot's midnight letter writing now bore fruit. On November 11, 1838 he was married, an action which might be considered unusual for a prisoner. His later comment on this step was that it might be considered as a proof that he had not lost hope. His wife, Margaret Thompson McMeans Adkinson, proved to be a wonderful companion, beloved by all that knew her. A daughter of Anthony McMeans and Esther Hunter, she was born April 16, 1809 in Chester District, Chester County, South Carolina. She was the widow of Charles Adkinson by whom she had a son, William Cochrane Adkinson. This boy was adopted by Smoot and bore his name.² Smoot recalls, "I was fortunate in securing a wife who was zealous and devoted to her religion and ready to sacrifice or endure anything to further its interests."³

Several loose pages in Smoot's journal, at this point bear the day of the month or the year. One such entry, dated Saturday 24th, reads, "also was taken ill with the Scarlett fever which held me some 10 or 12 days."⁴ From the position of these pages in the journal and from a comparison of calendar dates which show Saturday the 24th to fall on November 24, 1838, we conclude this was the date of his illness.

Margaret Smoot recalls this time as being most severe. "The suffering and privations of this period of my life cannot be portrayed by mortal tongue."⁵ Although we do not know all of the circumstances of the Smoot family and its suffering in Far West, we know that while many souls weakened they remained "true to the faith."

¹Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," op. cit., LXXIX (October 1944), p. 466.

²Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV (October 1934), p. 155.

³Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 21.

⁴A. O. Smoot, "Journal," Saturday 24th.

⁵Margaret Smoot, "Experiences of a Mormon Wife," (In a letter requested by H. H. Bancroft, 1880, microfilm on file B. Y. U. Library).

CHAPTER III

FROM THE FALL OF FAR WEST TO THE FALL OF NAUVOO

The governor's order to leave the state hung like a sword over their heads. The unhappy scenes of Far West must be left behind; happiness must be sought in a new area. Under these circumstances, they wearily made their way to Illinois.

Smoot's own story best describes their prospects and difficulties after the struggles at Far West.

After the troops were withdrawn from Far West I visited my farm two miles south of the town, to look after my stock which I had left there, and found that all my earthly possessions save my real estate had been confiscated by the army.

On visiting the late camp ground of the army I found the heads of eleven of my oxen which had been butchered, and there was no trace left of my sheep, swine, etc.

Brother John Butler, who had been obliged to flee to the north to save his life, had left his family in my charge. He had a span of very poor horses and an old wagon. I loaded the wagon up with his wife and five children and what goods I had left, which consisted of one trunk full of clothes besides what my wife and I wore. I managed to find one of my horses which the mob had taken and used in such a shocking manner that his back was skinned almost from his withers to his tail. This animal I hitched on ahead of Brother Butler's horses, and by those of us walking who were able to do so, we slowly made our way to Quincy, Illinois, in the depth of winter.¹

This faltering journey began in Missouri in the month of February and ended as they reached Quincy on March 8, 1839. Smoot recalls, "On arriving there I went to work carrying hod up a four-story building--really the first hard work I had ever done, to make a start in life, while my wife assisted by taking in sewing."²

It was during these dark times that Joseph Smith showed his genius to keep the Church growing and continued to send missionaries to labor in the world. At a general conference of the Church held at Quincy, Illinois May 4 to 6, 1839,

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 22.

²Ibid., p. 22.

seven resolutions were agreed to by the conference. One resolution directed that a number of the Seventies have the sanction of the council to accompany the twelve to Europe on missions.¹

Although Smoot's circumstances at the time would have made such a journey extremely difficult, he was ready to respond to the call. However, other circumstances arose which resulted in a second call superseding the first. On Saturday, June 1, 1839, a council of the Quorum of Seventies met in Quincy, Illinois. During the meeting presided over by Joseph Smith,

Elder Jedediah M. Grant made known a request which had been sent to him to return to the late field of his labors in the state of North Carolina which was considered and the council resolved that Elder Grant receive a letter of recommendation to be sent to the place where required and that Elder Abraham O. Smoot be recommended to go with him as a fellow laborer.²

As Elder Smoot could not get ready to leave in time, Elder Grant left alone for the mission field. There is no record that Smoot went on a mission during that year.

About June 24, 1839, the Church purchased a tract of land lying west of Montrose, Iowa. Shortly after Joseph advised that a town, to be called Zarahemla, be built on this purchase. Into this area came the Saints to raise new homes. Among them was A. O. Smoot. Before building his home in Zarahemla, Smoot and his wife moved to Montrose where they lived in an old barracks.³ This black period for the Church must have been a trial for Smoot and his wife. Perhaps during this month they witnessed the remarkable healings performed by Joseph Smith on July 22, of that year wherein he healed many in his own home and in Commerce, and then crossed the river to Montrose to heal the sick on that side of the river. Or they might have seen the faith of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball as they arose from their sick beds to begin their missionary journey to England.

John Lyman Smith, one of the new settlers in Zarahemla, records in his diary during the period he was building his cabin, "Near by, upon lots laid off, several persons built cabins and became our near neighbors, among whom were A. O. Smoot."⁴

With the influx of Saints in this new area and the growth of population, the need arose for church organization. This became the order of business at a

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1839 May 6.

²Ibid., 1839 June 1.

³Bennett, "Abraham O. Smoot, Pioneer," op. cit., LXXIX (October 1944), p. 467.

⁴John Lyman Smith, "Diary," (Typewritten copy of the original, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah). p. 4.

General Conference of the Church which convened on Saturday, October 5, 1839, in Commerce, Hancock County, Illinois. With the Prophet Joseph presiding, the formation of a stake in Commerce was approved, and then the assembly voted that a branch be formed on the west side of the river in Iowa. A. O. Smoot was among the members selected for the high council in the vicinity of Zarahemla.¹ At a young age Smoot was being assigned to important responsibilities. At 22 years of age, he had led a company of emigrants from the south. Now at 24, he advanced to this important position of trust and responsibility.

One of the notable actions which this high council passed was a vote to completely forsake the practice of suing their brethren at the law. Those who persisted in doing so were to be disfellowshipped by the branch.² Also at a meeting of the High Council at Montrose on March 6, 1840 he was selected from among that number to be a member on a committee of three to obtain affidavits to send on to Washington to verify the loss of property suffered by the Saints in Missouri. This was a matter of considerable urgency to the Saints at that time.³

In May of this year, he went on a short mission to Tennessee from which he returned in October. In a letter sent from Whitleysville, Jackson County, Tennessee in October just before his return home, he reports the success of his labors. He arrived at the scene of his labor on June 12 and worked in the counties of Jackson, Smith, and Overton in company with Elder Pitkins and Priest Webster. Much of the effort here consisted in organizing and strengthening some of the small branches which had been raised up by Elder J. Moses and others. Smoot reported in his letter that they had baptised fourteen members since his arrival, bringing the total membership in the area to 65.⁴

A special conference of the Church held at Nauvoo on August 16, 1841 gave A. O. Smoot still another call to missionary service. One of the main purposes of this conference, presided over by Brigham Young, was to select missionaries for various areas of the country. Smoot was selected to go to Charleston, South Carolina to begin his labors.⁵

After making the necessary preparations, he and his wife left Nauvoo on August 25, traveling in a light one-horse carriage. They rested up for a few days

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1839 October 5.

²Smith, History of The Church, op. cit., IV, p. 54.

³Ibid., p. 93-94.

⁴Times and Seasons, (Nauvoo, Illinois, 1840), I, p. 181.

⁵"Journal History of The Church," 1841 August 16.

at the home of Mrs. Smoot's brother, Andrew McMeans, in Post Oak Springs, Roan County, Tennessee. Here they were joined by her mother Esther McMeans, who had come from Alabama and was baptized by Elder Smoot during the stay at Post Oak Springs. After this auspicious start, he continued laboring in that vicinity until February. At this point, he parted with his wife who returned with her mother to Zarahemla, and he proceeded to South Carolina.¹

As he reached Chester County, the scene of his wife's birth and childhood, many pleasant thoughts occupied his mind.

'To think,' says he, 'that I stood on the ground so often pressed by the footsteps of the prattling child in whom I had found a kind and affectionate companion and faithful friend, but who was now separated far from me, gave me feelings of no ordinary kind.'²

In fulfillment of his instructions to introduce the Gospel to Charleston, South Carolina, Smoot labored diligently. He hired a hall on Queen Street, where on April 5, 1842, he preached the first Mormon sermon heard in that city.³

Elsewhere he records:

I spent all the money I had in renting halls and publishing placards announcing my meetings, but although I had large audiences, and numbers of persons came to me, Nicodemus-like- by night, to inquire about the Gospel, I failed to make one convert.⁴

In the face of such apathy on the part of the inhabitants of Charleston, Smoot and his companion left the city. On April 9, they parted company with the companion setting sail for Boston, and Smoot starting for home on April 14. He arrived in Nauvoo on July 14, just three months after starting out on the homeward journey. Now back at home, he was assigned by the Prophet to preside over the branch of the Church at Keokuk, Iowa, during the fall and winter of 1842.⁵

The summer of 1843 found Smoot traveling through southern Illinois and northern Kentucky in the interests of the Mansion House. He does not tell us the nature of his business.

Having emerged from a bitter experience in Missouri without adequate protection for themselves, the Saints were determined to strengthen themselves in their new home at Nauvoo. Accordingly Joseph met with the City Council at 4 P.M. on December 29, 1843, where forty men were sworn in as policemen of the City of Nauvoo to uphold the laws and to protect the inhabitants of the city.

¹Whitney, op. cit., p. 100.

²Ibid., p. 100.

³Ibid., p. 100.

⁴Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 22.

⁵Whitney, op. cit., p. 100.

Among those who were selected as policemen and who heard the Prophets instructions to that body was Abraham O. Smoot. One of the interesting instructions which Joseph gave on that occasion was that if any policeman was offered a bribe the city would pay twice the amount offered in the bribe if the policeman would report the bribe.¹

In January 1844, Joseph Smith had been nominated as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Soon after that time capable Elders were selected to go to the various states to perform missionary labors and also to campaign for Joseph's candidacy. On Monday, April 15, the Twelve Apostles assigned men for this duty. Abraham O. Smoot was assigned to go to the State of Tennessee as the President of that State and director of the political campaign and the missionary work there.²

Again it became necessary to make preparations in the City of Nauvoo so that he could depart for his field of labor. By May 7, he was ready to depart and was accompanied by his wife on board the steamer "Osprey." He returned with her to the shore to bid her a final farewell and then boarded the ship which left port for St. Louis. Propelled by both current and steam, the vessel made good time, and by May 12, he had arrived at Mill's Point two hundred and forty miles beyond St. Louis. He now entered into his missionary activity and each day walked between ten and twenty miles from one small village to another where he would stop and hold meetings.

Saturday, May 18, brought with it a full share of excitement. About dusk he began a meeting in the court house at Dresden, Weakly County, Tennessee and began preaching to a good sized audience. Hardly had he read his theme for the evening, when a mob gathered outside and a shot was fired at Smoot through the window. The bullet passed by his head and lodged in the ceiling. This was immediately followed by a shower of brick bats hurled through the window. Smoot's journal reports the reaction.

The congregation seemed much frightened and startled and immediately began to leave the house. I hastened to inform the people that if they wished to stay that I would insure them protection from the fact that I knew that such³ meroders would abscond as soon as they had executed their diabolical desines.

Also Brother William Camp,

. . . somewhat noted as a fighting character, arose and called on the fleeing people to stop. He told them if they would only sit and listen to

¹Smith, History of The Church, op. cit., VI, p. 149-153

²"Journal History of The Church," 1844 April 15, p. 2.

³Smoot, "Journal," op. cit., May 18, 1844.

the preaching, he would go out and look after the persons who were creating the disturbance. About two thirds of the audience again became seated, and he went outside and procured a shot-gun, with which he patrolled around the court-house the remainder of the evening, . . .¹

. . . whilst I dispensed the words of eternal life unto them, which I did in as plain and conspicuous a manner as possible for the space of one hour; then closed and returned to B. Camps and spent the night in Dresden.²

At the close of the meeting, he announced another meeting to be held the following day. This announcement gave time for the enemies to lay plans to break up the meeting. He had barely commenced the services, when a local lawyer entered the room at the head of two hundred men and demanded that he cease speaking.

In this emergency, and for the only time in my life in public, I made use of a masonic sign calling for help, when lo! a number of persons sprang to assist me. The lawyer was commanded to give his reasons for interfering with me, which he proceeded to do by delivering a most abusive and slanderous speech. I finally commanded him to sit down and he did so very suddenly, and the masons who were present, who were very numerous and influential, gave him to understand that he would not be allowed to molest me. I continued my remarks, and at the close of the meeting Mr. Camp took vengeance on the lawyer by knocking him down and kicking him around the court-house yard.³

Some features of this incident are very much like the occurrences of a week later in the court house at Dresden, on May 25, which was the first day of a three day conference. On the first day, Smoot was elected president of the conference. He continued the meeting by giving instructions to the twelve Elders present and by presenting Joseph Smith as a suitable candidate for the office of president of the United States. The candidate's views on the powers and policy of the government were then set forth. During all this, considerable excitement was stirring outside the building, but let Smoot tell it in his own colorful style.

. . . about which time there was a harran atang animull in the shape of a lawyer began to hold fourth in frunt of the courthouse in a most abusive maner and slanders language which continued untell the cirvises of the forenoon had closed, at which time there was about 150 men principlly stimulated by Cardwell's gredious storyes and lying spirits rushed into the court-house in a foramable maner heded by M. D. Cardwell who commanded his followers to forme around us at each door. He then mounted the bench and exclaimed, 'fello citizens, you see that these men are come amongst us to raise insurrection and passing abolishaun principles amongst our slaves,' and with many other words did he agg on his clan tell thy strictly ordered

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 23.

²Smoot, "Journal," op. cit., May 18, 1844.

³Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 23.

us to leave the house.¹

Elder Smoot then asked the man if he were the sheriff of the county and if he knew their action to represent the sentiments of the people of the county. When the man answered in the affirmative, a vote was taken and the Elders and their followers left the house through the midst of the rabble which parted for their exit. However, one of the audience, a Mr. John Ray, offered them the use of his large house in Dresden to continue their meetings, and they held services there at three in the afternoon and again at seven in the evening.²

The conference continued for the next two days during which time William Camp was appointed elector for the district. Also an important decision was made that the conference have three thousand copies of Joseph Smith's view presented for immediate distribution.³ At Paris, a nearby town, he contracted to have three thousand copies of Joseph Smith's political views printed.

On June 2, he had the very pleasant experience of preaching the Gospel to some of his old friends with whom he had been raised. Their close attention to his remarks was a source of satisfaction to him.

Upon his return to Paris, where the publishing was being done, he received disquieting news. A Mr. Fitzgerald declared that he would initiate prosecution against the missionaries if they circulated the pamphlets which had been printed. This man claimed that publishing Joseph's views about slaves, advocating their purchase and emancipation by the Federal Government, was in violation of a state statute forbidding any publication or circulation of printed matter that was calculated to excite discontent, insurrection, or rebellion amongst the slaves or free persons of color.⁴ Smoot consulted a lawyer who was a boyhood friend of his and found that he held the same opinion. Remembering the difficulty at Dresden, where those views had been presented, he thought it wise to desist and suppressed the whole publication. The expense had already been incurred, and later he reports paying one thousand dollars on the contract to the printer.

His labors for the next few weeks were accompanied by far less excitement and opposition from the local citizens. Although they were less exciting, they were perhaps more fruitful. At a conference on June 8 and 9, large congregations were in attendance and six persons joined the Church through baptism. He added

¹Smoot, "Journal," op. cit., May 25, 1844.

²Ibid., May 25, 1844.

³Times and Seasons, (Nauvoo, Illinois), July 1, 1844.

⁴Smoot, "Journal," op. cit., June 4, 1844.

three more persons to the Church by baptism on June 14, and then, after purchasing a horse from Brother Camp on which to ride the remainder of the summer, he set out for the conference to be held at Eagle, Benton County, Tennessee. At Eagle on June 22 and 23, Elder Smoot presided in organizing a branch of seventeen members and baptized four new members.¹

As Elder Smoot went about his labors on June 27, 1844, little did he realize that his beloved leader, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, had been assassinated by a painted mob at Carthage Jail. Not until July 8, through articles in several newspapers, did he hear of the tragedy. Reluctant to accept the awful news, he claimed that he had no more right to accept these reports than like reports in the past which had proved to be false. Such an attitude failed to erase the forebodings of his troubled mind which he describes as being, "like the troubled sea that casteth up mire and dirt from the whisperings of the spirit of the probability of the death of Joseph and Hyrum."²

After riding thirty-six miles, he spent the night of July 11 in uneasy suspense. He had learned that two letters awaited him at Murpys Burrough, ten miles farther along. Fearing these letters would confirm the tragic news, he sent early the next morning to the post office. The contents drew forth a sorrowful lament from his burdened soul.

Important Eriah in my Christian life. Great God indow me with Christian fortitude, for all my forbodings and fears are more than realized. On the return of the messenger I received with my letters a Nauvoo Neighbor Extra, dressed in deep mourning, from which I learned the awfull tragedy had been committed, the persons of Presidents Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith had been assassinated by a painted mob, in which the pledged faith of the state of Ill. was stained with innocent blood. Great God and is it so was the emotions of my heart. Can it be so O Father, and thy will be done; if so incline my heart to resignation and cause my heartfelt greaf to cease. How long O Lord, how long wilt Thou suffer the orphents tears and widdows groans to come up before thee unevenged of their enemys. How long O Father, how long wilt Thou hear the cryes of the blood of innocence even from riteous able down to thy Prophets and seer, our brethren Joseph and Hyrum whom we loved of a truth for the truths sake that abided in them, who has so gently led us through seanes of affliction by the streams of divine intelagence that has so emanently flowed from thee through them to us, that has afforded us great joy in that we was persicuted for Christ's sake, even for the love of truth. Wilt Thou yet turne a deaf ear O Father to the universal lammentations of all Thy Saints on earth and in heaven, wilt Thou make bare Thine arme of power O Lord and restore Thy servants to the imbrace of thy Saints again soon that their mourning may be turned into joy and gladness.

How long O God, how long wilt Thou let thy judgements slumber and suffer thy Saints to be prevailed against by their enemys. Awake o arme of God, awake, is the preayrs of thy servent and avenge the blood of innocence on

¹Ibid., June 8 to 23, 1844.

²Ibid., July 10, 1844.

thine enemy. O Lord send forth the ancient of day that thy saints may possess the Kingdom in peace, that thy work may be cut short in ritionsness for thy elects sake. Even so Father let it be is my most fervent preayr to Israels God in the name of Jesus Christ, even so Father, let it be Amen.¹

The immediate desire of Smoot and the other Elders was to return to Nauvoo. They spent the next seven days traveling and gathering the Elders in the region who wanted to go with them. After preaching at a meeting on Sunday, July 21, they received word that a battle had been fought in Nauvoo, and eleven hundred of the Saints had been killed. With this further oppression of spirit, they embarked in a canoe and proceeded down the Duck River and along the Tennessee River towards Paducah. After paddling some fifty miles down the river on July 23, they sought shelter in an old abandoned house on the river bank. When they had eaten a few apples for supper, they sought sleep on the floor. The hard boards were cushioned only by pillows made from their knapsacks. At Paducah they took a steamer for St. Louis and then another for Nauvoo.

Sunday morning, July 28, found them arriving in Nauvoo about 9 o'clock. Smoot met his wife and friends who had gathered in anticipation of his arrival. He noticed a general prosperity, but all seemed covered by a pall of gloom. Sadness was pictured in the faces of all the people. Everyone still bore the weight of the recent tragedy. Smoot points out that, "These are days long to be remembered by me, for there seemed to be temptations present themselves on every hand by espiering spirits and otherwise."²

Many of the Saints had lost faith after the death of the two leaders and were now returning to their former ways of life. Some sought after wealth, and others sought to climb to positions of leadership and influence. He found Sidney Rigdon offering various unheard of offices to persons who would rally round his standard.³

Against these efforts, he kept in mind the foundation laid by Joseph on which the Church was to endure. He said that to his knowledge Joseph had conferred on the Quorum of the Twelve the keys of the Kingdom of God on the earth. With this knowledge, he was little swayed by the overtures of the unrighteous office seekers. Drawing him even closer to the leadership of Brigham Young and the Twelve, was the following experience:

I was present at the meeting held in Nauvoo on the occasion when President Young assumed leadership of the Church, and can testify with hundreds

¹Ibid., July 12, 1844.

²Ibid., July 28, 1844.

³Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 23.

of others that he spoke by the power of God on that occasion and that he had the very voice and appearance of Joseph Smith.¹

Brother Smoot was not alone in his support of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles with Brigham Young at their head. His wife, Margaret, also witnessed the display of supernatural power which attended Brigham Young as he appeared to be the actual person of Joseph Smith when the Twelve assumed their rightful position as the leaders of the Church. She said that she was firmly convinced that Brigham Young, "was the legitimate successor to the Martyred Prophet, and was as ready and willing to obey his council and receive his Revelations as I was those of Joseph Smith."²

With this staunch support on the part of both Smoot and his wife, it is not at all surprising to find him responding to the call of the leaders for another missionary assignment. In the session of the General Conference of the Church held on October 8, 1844, President Young selected men to go on missions to various areas of the United States. A. O. Smoot was selected to fill the Presidency of the Church in Alabama.

The instructions of President Young to the missionaries called on this occasion directed them not to go out for just six months, but to take their families and settle down. They were to return for their endowments when the temple was completed and then go back with their families and build up stakes as large as the one at Nauvoo.³

In later years, Brother Smoot recalled that he was to visit the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi to raise funds for the completion of the temple. The original instructions seem to have been altered somewhat by the time he left, because he said he was also to induce the Saints in that region to come to Nauvoo and prepare to move westward.⁴

Inasmuch as he was taking his family with him, the preparations required a longer time. With these completed, he went to Apostle John Taylor on November 3 and received a letter of commendation and a parting blessing which promised him prosperity in his labors, and in his personal life. They left Nauvoo on November 4, but did not get away from Montrose until the sixth. On board the vessel for St. Louis they traveled in company with Heber C. Kimball who renewed the blessings already pronounced upon him and his family.

¹Ibid., p. 23.

²Margaret T. Smoot, "Experiences of a Mormon Wife," op. cit.

³"Journal History of The Church," 1844 October 8, p. 5.

⁴Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 23.

They alighted from the vessel at Paducah where Smoot left his family and went on ahead to find a wagon to bring back and transport them overland. This method was employed in successive steps until they arrived at Benton County where they spent several weeks visiting and doing missionary work. Leaving their son at Eagle Creek, Benton County, to attend school, Brother and Sister Smoot resumed their journey on December 17, in company with her mother.

When they arrived at Florence, Lauderdale County, Alabama, they found that an imposter had caused serious dissention in the branch. This man claiming to be an Elder had ordained two other Elders, defrauded the people, and preached false doctrine. Elder Smoot called the people together and corrected the errors of doctrine which this man had sown among them.

Christmas day was observed in true A. O. Smoot style, by attending to business and traveling twenty-seven miles.

At Tuscumbia, Alabama, Mrs. McMeans was left with arrangements made that she should proceed on to Decatur to visit her son. On January 8 Mrs. Smoot also was left behind at Russelville while Elder Smoot started upon a preaching tour of the area.

On January 22, he was returning toward Russelville to join his wife and move further on. About the middle of the afternoon, his carriage, which he had procured for Mrs. Smoot to ride in, turned over, and the horse become frightened, drug it and damaged it considerably.

One of the frequent items of business and subject for discussion in the organized branches of the Church was to encourage the members in temple donations and to collect them whenever possible.

On February 15 and 16, Elder Smoot presided over the first annual conference of the branch at Sypsey, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. The burden of his remarks to the people on that day was the contrast of the just claims of the Quorum of the Twelve to the leadership of the Church, as opposed to the unlawful claims and pretensions of Sidney Rigdon. When a vote was taken after his remarks, it was unanimously in favor of the Twelve. When he explained the nature of his assignment to take charge of the affairs of the Church in Alabama, it was unanimously approved by the vote of the conference that A. O. Smoot be received as the presiding High Priest in that state.¹

Gospel conversations of from three to four hours were common experiences and were attended by reasonable success as he baptized persons at frequent intervals, adding steadily to the membership of the Church.

¹Times and Seasons, (Nauvoo, Illinois), March 15, 1845.

Elder Smoot records little in the way of violent open opposition as we have seen in his former missions. However, on Sunday, April 20, he had the opportunity to repulse a critic. At the close of the services, an Esquire Blocker, employed by a priest named Thompson, presented to the congregation, John C. Bennett's book attempting to expose Mormonism. The congregation, becoming disgusted with the attempt of Blocker, left him and turned their attention to Smoot's remarks on the corruption of John C. Bennett; which he said, "I gave with much pleasure."¹

In a letter to the wife of Wilford Woodruff, Margaret Smoot reports that on their mission to Alabama,

The work of the Lord is progressing in this region, many have embraced the Gospel, and many others are investigating the subject. But Mr. Smoot, in the midst of his labors in common with many others, was called to Nauvoo, where we arrived on the 27th of May, and I truly rejoice to return once more to the city of Joseph, and stand in my own door and behold the Temple of the Lord, and attend meetings on the same ground where we have so often heard the voice of the prophet of the Lord.²

On preparing to return to Nauvoo, Elder Smoot gathered around him many of the Saints of the southern region and guided them to Nauvoo. Others, who could not make sufficient preparation, he left to be led westward by Elders John Brown and William Crosby. This body, known as the Mississippi Company of Saints, made the journey by way of the Arkansas valley and joined the main pioneer group at Fort Larami on June 1, 1847.³

Now that he was in Nauvoo, Brother Smoot applied himself to the major problem at hand. He joined in the work to complete the Nauvoo Temple. At the same time, he gave part of his hours to service on the Nauvoo Police Force.

The Temple was sufficiently completed, that under the press of time and threats from their enemies, endowment ordinances were administered, beginning on December 10, 1845. It is not at all surprising to find that Elder Smoot was one of the first to officiate in the Temple. He was assigned by President Young to officiate in the Temple on December 19, 1845. Again he was selected by the Council of the Twelve to labor in the Temple, for the week beginning December 27, 1845.⁴ He states that he officiated in the Temple for about three months.

In this period of temple work he adopted Margaret's boy, William, by power of the Priesthood and from that time on the young man bore the name of

¹Smoot, "Journal," op. cit., April 20, 1845.

²Millennial Star, (London, England), November 1, 1845.

³B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930), III, p. 193, 225.

⁴"Journal History of The Church," 1845 December 19, 27, p. 2.



Emily Hill Smoot

Smoot and was treated as Abraham Smoot's own son.

Another eventful day in the life of A. O. Smoot was January 9, 1846, when he had sealed to him, his second and third wives. The second wife was Sarah Gibbens, born October 20, 1800, in Cumberland County, Kentucky. The third wife was Emily Hill, born November 25, 1816, in Pendleton District, South Carolina, a daughter of John Hill and Martha Carlin.¹

Emily Hill was the widow of Zachariah Harris, by whom she had two children. A person of excellent character and natural refinement, she had joined the Church while on a visit to her sister near Nauvoo in 1842.²

These plural marriages had the full sanction and approval of his first wife, Margaret, who expresses her attitude in the following language: "Myself and husband being thoroughly convinced of the divinity of the Revelation on Plural Marriage, given through Joseph Smith, my husband with my fullest and freest consent here took his first plural wife."³ Margaret Smoot proved to be one of those great women capable of living this principle and her testimony of its divinity remained constant throughout forty odd years of experience with it.

¹Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV (October 1934), p. 155; and Newman, op. cit., p. 172.

²Whitney, op. cit., p. 100.

³Margaret Smoot, "Experiences of a Mormon Wife," op. cit.

CHAPTER IV

FROM NAUVOO TO SALT LAKE VALLEY

In compliance with the demands of their enemies in Illinois, the Church leaders promised the mobs that the Saints would leave the state "as soon as water would run and grass would grow" in the spring. In spite of this promise, the persecution continued. Spurred on by this constant pressure, the Saints made hasty efforts to leave Nauvoo. When the first wagons drew away from Nauvoo onto the ice covered Mississippi, Abraham O. Smoot remained behind, sick with chills and fever. He was not to be detained long, however, for they left Nauvoo in May 1846 with a large company of his southern friends.¹

When Smoot departed from this place, he was separated from his mother who decided against journeying west because of her advanced age. She remained in Illinois with another son, Reed. Reed was an older brother to A. O. Smoot. He had joined the Church with his wife's parents in Calloway County, Kentucky, but did not come westward with the Church.²

A. O. Smoot was accompanied by his wives, Margaret and Emily, but no mention is made of his wife, Sarah, being with the group. His sisters also joined the emigration westward.³

Most of the companies leaving Nauvoo stopped for a time at Sugar Creek, west of Montrose. Smoot no doubt stopped here for further preparation and organization within the company.

Among Smoot's southern friends who traveled in the same company with him was Samuel Turnbow. Turnbow's record preserves for us not only the time of the journey, but also an interesting incident in which Smoot and his wife played an important part.

On November 1833, before he had joined the Church, Turnbow had a vision

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 25.

²Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV (October 1934), p. 154.

³Whitney, op. cit., p. 100.

wherein he saw Joseph Smith preaching and healing the Saints. He was also led into a large white house where he saw people, clothed in white robes, receiving washings and annointings.

He returned from a mission in the south to join the company with Smoot and Wilford Woodruff going through Iowa. He said they left early in the month of June and traveled as far as Mount Pisgah, where one of their children died. After burying the child, they returned to camp with heavy hearts. Abraham and Margaret Smoot felt concerned at the sorrow of their friends and attempted to comfort them. While offering assurances of continued family association in the hereafter, they showed the grieving couple their temple clothing. Brother Turnbow declared, "I did recognize them as those I had seen in the vision in the year 1833. And these Holy raiments were showed unto my wife and she acknowledged that her husband had describ this clothing exactly as they were presented. . . . These things drew away our waight of sorrow at heart and we both felt comforted . . ." ¹

The group in which Abraham O. Smoot traveled reached Council Bluffs sometime before July 17, 1846. On this day at Council Bluffs, Smoot was given another assignment. Several days previous to this, four companies had been organized for service in the Mormon Battalion, and on July 16 they were mustered into the service. As they were to leave within a few days, some provision must be made for the families which these men would leave behind. In a meeting on July 17, Brigham Young proposed that men be selected to act as Bishops and care for the families of the Battalion men. Among those selected was Abraham O. Smoot. ²

Several weeks later Smoot had located on the west side of the Missouri River at what was known as Cutler's Park. The large number of people gathering here necessitated that some organization be effected to direct the activities of the camp. At 7:30 P.M. on August 12, the horn was blown, and the people assembled in the square. Brigham Young organized the people into companies with a foreman at the head of each to direct the labor of building corrals, stacking hay, cutting wood, and keeping the area clean and in order. Abraham O. Smoot was chosen to be the foreman of the tenth company. ³

Brother Smoot has not left us an account of his activities during this difficult winter. He merely states that he spent the winter in building cabins

¹Samuel Turnbow, "Genealogical And Blessing Book Of Samuel Turnbow With A Brief Sketch Of His Life," (Manuscript copied by B. Y. U. Library 1941), p. 41.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1846 July 17.

³Ibid., 1846 August 12.

to shelter the people and in looking after the wants of the poor. The pen of Robert Gardner, who was too young to go with the Battalion, gives us a picture of the intense suffering and hardships at Winter Quarters and perhaps an idea of the activity of Brother Smoot during these trying times.

Houses and wood had to be provided for the family of the men that had gon in the battalion Men that could work had to work nearly night and day, for meny of the older was taken with a disease called balck-leg and was entirely helpless and meny died with it there legs from the knees down would get as black as coal

Because of this sickness, our narrator, Robert Gardner Jr., explains that the work of five families fell upon himself and his brother, Archie.

. . . Meny an evening I have visited the family of men who had gone with the battalion in time of snow storm and found them in open log houses without any chinken and it snowing inside as fast as it was out and nothing but green cottonwood to burn, . . . men was so scarce, and so meny sick and dyeing, that I have had to go and help the sexton bury the dead, Yet the Authorities kept up ther meetings and now and then have a dance to keep up the spirits of the people.¹

In spite of heroic efforts, the winter took a terrible toll in suffering and lives.

One event during the winter, which must have been a source of satisfaction to these good friends, was the ordination of Abraham O. Smoot to the office of Bishop by Wilford Woodruff on January 6, 1847.² These two men enjoyed working together for the next few months as they organized companies for the departure westward. "On February 5, Elder Woodruff reported that his company of one hundred organized; Abraham O. Smoot, captain."³ By appointment, they went about fifteen miles to the Fox branch of Mosquito Creek and organized an immigrating company at Mosquito and Keg Creeks.⁴ Such preparations continued throughout the summer as the various groups left Winter Quarters.

The first group to leave was Brigham Young's group, known as the Pioneer Company. Brigham Young and the Apostles in his company left Winter Quarters on April 14 and joined the Pioneer Company at the Elkhorn River from which point they left on April 16. Among the departing Pioneer Company was W. C. A. Smoot, the nineteen year old son of Margaret Smoot.

The next group of Saints to leave for the west gathered on the southwest bank of the Elkhorn River on June 15, 1847. Apostles Parley P. Pratt and John

¹Robert Gardner Jr., "Biography and Journal," (Typewritten copy from the original manuscript, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), p. 14.

²"Journal History of the Church," 1847 January 6.

³Ibid., 1847 February 5.

⁴Ibid., 1847 February 20.

Taylor were present. Elder Pratt spoke concerning organization and then proceeded to organize them into companies.¹ Brother Smoot's company, which had been partially organized as early as February 5, was completely organized on June 17 with George B. Wallace and Samuel Russell as captains of fifties and also with captains of tens.² It was moved by Parley P. Pratt that they move in hundreds and camp in that order about half a mile apart. He also moved that Daniel Spencer's hundred families be called the First Hundred, John Taylor's group, actually captained by Edward Hunter, the Second Hundred, Jedediah M. Grant's, the Third Hundred, and Abraham O. Smoot's, the fourth Hundred.³ This large body of over five hundred wagons left their camp on the Elkhorn on June 20, 1847.

Elder Smoot did not lightly regard his responsibilities as captain of one hundred families and often counseled them on their conduct. On the morning of June 26, while they were waiting for the other companies to start, "Capt., Smoot called his Hundred together and instructed them to be prayerful, to be faithful in the discharge of their duties."⁴

On July 5, Smoot's company was delayed on account of a broken wheel on one of the wagons. They did not catch up to the main group for several days. A short time after this, the wagons in the lead encountered a large body of Ogallala Indians and word was sent back to Taylor, Grant and Smoot to have their companies catch up to the main body.

Another opportunity to counsel his Hundred came on August 1.

This afternoon Capt. Smoot called a meeting in his company of a Hundred and gave many instructions. He exhorted the brethren to obedience, so that they might be united, and admonished the captains to stand in their places, respect their officers as well as the Priesthood, handle any body who was out of the way with ease and with kindness and in case that was not sufficient, then it was time enough to command them. The brethren should consider this journey a great school to them and that they might expect at some future day to be called upon to lead companies in the same way to Zion; in that event they would expect those companies to be subject to them.⁵

Brother Smoot was respected by those under his direction, and they proceeded in harmony and without any major setbacks. During the latter part of August, the strain of travel under difficult conditions began to tell upon their teams. Some of the animals died from lack of feed and others from poisoning. Captain Grant's company lost about forty head of cattle, and Smoot's company

¹Ibid., 1847 June 15.

²Ibid., 1847 June 17, p. 2.

³Ibid., 1847 June 17, p. 4.

⁴Ibid., 1847 June 26, p. 2.

⁵Ibid., 1847 August 1, p. 5.

lost twelve head of horses. All of the companies began to suffer such losses, and as teams died, it became difficult to proceed. Even the cows were yoked to the wagons. Smoot's company was one of those hard hit. On August 28, a letter was sent to the Presidency in the valley asking that help be sent to aid them on their way.¹

After the Pioneer Company entered the valley and established the colony there, they set out on a return journey to the east so that they could bring their families to the valley the next summer. The returning pioneers met the first of the westbound Saints on September 4. On the following day, Smoot's, Wallace's and Rich's companies camped at Pacific Springs on the Big Sandy, where they met with Brigham Young who addressed them. After this gathering they decided to lay over the next day and hold a meeting.²

Monday morning, September 6, dawned cold and clear. The Twelve held a council in a tent with the officers of the camps. At this meeting, they nominated a President, John Smith, a High Council, and a Marshall of Great Salt Lake City. A. O. Smoot was nominated as a member of the High Council.³

While the men were busy in council, the women were equally busy preparing a feast for their prominent guests. Although this banquet was prepared adjacent to the council tent, it was contrived with such secrecy that it was a complete surprise to the astonished Elders who were led through a small opening in the bushes to a clearing arranged with tables for 130 persons.

Several improvised tables of uncommon length covered with snow white linen, and fast being burdened with glittering tableware, gave evidence that a surprise was in store for the weary Pioneers. Game and fish were prepared in abundance; fruits, jellies and relishes reserved for special occasions were brought out until truly it was a royal feast.⁴

When supper was over and the tables cleared away, out came the fiddles and instruments to provide the music for dancing. Such entertainment mixed with recitations and singing climaxed a memorable day for the desert travelers.

On the next day Smoot's company resumed their march, now eager to see the valley, which had been described to them. On September 9, the Presidency and the Twelve prepared a letter to the Saints setting forth the organization of the Stake in Salt Lake Valley. Their assignment of duties made it clear that these new officers were to serve in a civil as well as a religious capacity.⁵

¹Ibid., 1847 August 28.

²Ibid., 1847 September 5.

³Ibid., 1847 September 6.

⁴Roberts, op. cit., IV, p. 297.

⁵"Journal History of The Church," 1847 September 9, p. 11.

On September 18, Smoot's company camped on the Bear River and on September 24, they completed their journey and entered Salt Lake Valley. This was the largest company of the season and the second after the Pioneer Company to enter the Salt Lake Valley.

As he was about to enter into a new period in his life, Smoot looked back and summarized his years in the Church up to this point.

Thus passed the first twelve years of connection with the Church--twelve years of rough but not unprofitable experience for me, considering the many lessons I had learned and the satisfaction I enjoyed in contemplating my labors. During the period I had become strong and healthy, and through the blessings of God, had been enabled, with the help of my wife and boy, to earn a subsistence and accumulate some property, notwithstanding the many missions I had filled and the losses of property I had sustained.¹

From his past struggles, Abraham O. Smoot again turned to face an uncertain future.

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 25.

CHAPTER V

IN GREAT SALT LAKE VALLEY

1847 TO 1851

Upon their arrival in the valley, they were almost without provisions and of necessity lost little time in utilizing the broad acres which lay before them. They expended a vast amount of labor to bring water upon the land.

But amid all these hardships we were happy beyond expression in our Social relations and union, virtue and chastity were universal in our community and vice and prostitution were things unknown in our society. In every providence we acknowledge the hand of the Almighty, and never lost the faith that our difficulties were but temporary and would quickly pass away, and so long as our Prophet said that Utah was to be our home, we had no desire but to remain, sincerely believing that God's will was revealed to him and obedience to those revelations would vouch safe to us prosperity in the immediate future, and always secure to us the utmost happiness.¹

In this spirit of faith and determination, the Smoot family, along with many others, carved out new lives in the western desert.

Brother Smoot was soon called to assume the responsibility for which he had been nominated in the meeting of September 6, which had selected the officers of the stake. At a conference held on Sunday, October 3, at the Salt Lake Colony, the President and High Council were sustained by the vote of the people.² The new High Council was quick to respond to its duties. On this same date they met in two sessions to settle a number of matters. At the second meeting, Elder Smoot preferred charges against Joseph Thorn for failing to perform rightful blacksmithing duties within the company as they crossed the plains. The final decision was that Thorn should pay for the smithing that had to be done by men hired from the other companies.³

Sometime during the fall of the year, Smoot assisted Wilford Woodruff's father to sow three acres of wheat and two and one half acres of rye. During

¹Margaret T. Smoot, "Experiences of a Mormon Wife," op. cit.

²Roberts, op. cit., III, p. 302-3.

³"Journal History of the Church," 1847 October 5.

this period, he probably sowed some acreage for himself. Wilford Woodruff had left his father in the care of one of the Salt Lake citizens. At the failure of this man to fulfill this responsibility, Brother Smoot spent considerable time looking after the old gentleman. He records spending more than a week with his son, William, looking for the cattle of Brother Woodruff.¹

In the midst of their labors to establish themselves in this land, an event of importance occurred in the life of A. O. Smoot. His first child was born to his wife Emily on November 23, 1847. The baby boy was named Albert.

Spring of the next year found him busy planting crops. In a letter to Wilford Woodruff, he expresses regret at not being able to send him more than one yoke of oxen, but that he is not finished with his spring work.

The same letter of May 22, 1848 tells that a horde of crickets had attacked the grain and garden vegetables. "What will be the result of their visit with us is unknown. I hope however they will not stay long as they are intieraly unwellcom visittors in the valley."² This hope evidently remained unfilled, as a later letter of October 10 describes their fight against the invading horde.

I will observe that our crop turned off quite light in consequence of the crickets amongst the wheat corn and all kinds of garden vegetables. Notwithstanding we as a community like Sampson slew our thousands yet they reinforce I suppose and took more than half of the crops we planted in the valley. . . . They destroyed all my garden and near to 1 third of all other crops I had planted. Which calamity makes grain quite high this year.³

It will be remembered that Brigham Young and the Twelve had returned to Winter Quarters to bring additional emigrants to Salt Lake Valley in the summer of 1848. President Young organized and started out with a large group of nearly four hundred wagons on May 31. As he anticipated that aid from the valley would come to meet them, he was very disappointed when only eighteen wagons, all in need of repair themselves, met them on July 12. In an attempt to stir the Salt Lake colony to greater effort, he sent a letter on July 17, somewhat chastising the people for their small effort and asked for greater aid immediately.

Actually, the Brethren in Salt Lake had expected to send additional aid as soon as they were able. Even at the time of receiving Brigham Young's letter, they were busily preparing wagons and provisions to send east. In the early part of August, A. O. Smoot and Lorenzo D. Young had started out with a wagon train of

¹Letter from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff. (All letters quoted are on file in the Church Historian's Office unless otherwise stated).

²Letter from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff.

³Letter from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff.

supplies to meet the company of President Young. The Journal History of the Church records that on August 20, Smoot and Young arrived in charge of 47 wagons and 124 yokes of oxen that had been sent to assist the west bound Saints. However, Abraham Smoot records the date of meeting on the Sweetwater as August 26, 1848. He declares that exposure on this journey brought on an attack of mountain fever, which continued because of added exposure and cold after returning to the valley.¹

At this same time, Margaret Smoot's health was not the best. Smoot reports it as much the same as when they were in Winter Quarters. His description to Wilford Woodruff does not reveal the brightest of prospects for the coming winter.

I am destitute of means and have a large family to support by the labor of my own hands. We are all destitute of clothes pretty much, & dry goods is from 2 to 500 per cent higher than in the states, hence it will be all I can do to keep the old man (Wilford Woodruff's father) and sister Edwards in provisions if they should lack anything.²

In this letter, Smoot explains that he has no means of getting goods from the east and requests that if the chance arises, Brother Woodruff send him twenty-five pounds of coffee, the same amount of sugar, one box of glass, twenty pounds of nails, five pounds of tea, and five dollars worth of sole and upper leather. Such were some of the needs of these settlers.

As the Saints continued to immigrate to Salt Lake Valley, the population grew until further organization was needed. The First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles, in council with the leading brethren on February 14 and 16, decided to divide Salt Lake City into nineteen wards. Carrying the plan to completion, they met again on February 20 and ordained and set apart Bishops for the city wards. Abraham O. Smoot was set apart as Bishop of the Fifteenth Ward,³ with Nathaniel V. Jones and William Scarce as his counsellors. President Young counseled them to fence off the wards and to gather in the poor and look after them.

A chart printed in the Historical Record shows the members of the Salt Lake City High Council and the time they served. It reveals that at the time Smoot became Bishop of the Fifteenth Ward, he ceased to act as a member of the High Council.⁴

¹Letter from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff.

²Letter from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff.

³Andrew Jenson, The Historical Record, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Andrew Jenson, 1889), VI, p. 281.

⁴Ibid., p. 279.

With the growth of Church organization and activity, came an increase in the civil activity also. On March 12, 1849, a general election was held in the Bowery of the Old Fort for the election of officers for a provisional state government. In addition to the general officers some with local jurisdiction were elected. Among these were magistrates or justices of the peace. To fill these offices, the previously selected bishops were chosen to serve within the same boundaries as their wards encompassed. A. O. Smoot, the Bishop and justice of the peace of the Fifteenth Ward, was the first man to serve as a Justice of the Peace in the Territory of Utah.

The same evening that he was elected justice of the peace, Smoot tried the case of a man who had stolen a pair of boots from one of the immigrants. After finding the man guilty, he sentenced him to pay four fold in return for the boots, pay the man and officers for their trouble, and fined him fifty dollars to be applied on the roads.¹ Clearly, the new justice did not intend to encourage stealing. Often the local courts had to settle disputes involving travelers going through to the west coast. These travelers were generally high in their praise of the local courts and willingly accepted the justice meted out by them.

With the discovery of gold in California and the great increase of travel through the Salt Lake Valley from the east, opportunities for a transportation company appeared favorable. At the suggestion and backing of government leaders, a group of enterprising men banded together to organize such a company. Associated with A. O. Smoot in this venture, were Shadrack Roundy, Jedediah M. Grant, John S. Fullmer, George D. Grant, and Russell Homer. This group sent a communication to the editor of the Frontier Guardian to be published early in 1850. This description of their proposed services was intended to attract business for the spring and summer.

The appeal was made mostly to passengers, expecting that some would desire to journey all the way to California under the appeal of the gold fields, and to merchants who desired to freight merchandise to Salt Lake Valley. Light wagons for the passenger trade would accommodate three passengers and 150 pounds of luggage to a passenger. These wagons would be drawn by four horses or mules, and a sufficient number of loose animals were to be kept at hand to continue the journey in case of an accident. They promised all the comfort possible, but did warn that such a trip was not merely a "play spell to cross the mountains."

¹Hosea Stout, "Diary," (A copy, typed from the original, by the B. Y. U. Library), IV, p. 69.

To insure the best service, one of the proprietors would accompany both the freight and passenger trains. Two or more of the firm would remain in the valley, where they would be able to supply the trains with fresh animals and supplies.

The freight wagons, a type purchased especially for the Great Salt Lake Valley Carrying Company, would be drawn by oxen. Both the freight and passenger service planned to start in the spring as soon as there was sufficient grass to feed the animals. The starting point was eighteen miles from Kanesville on the Missouri River.

For a through ticket to Sutter's Fort on the "Swiftsure Line," the fare was three hundred dollars. Two hundred was to be paid in advance, and one hundred at Salt Lake Valley. The charge for freight to Salt Lake Valley was twelve dollars and fifty cents per hundred pounds, or two hundred and fifty dollars per ton. Two thirds was to be paid in advance.¹

John Taylor, who journeyed east with the first group of representatives of the company, expressed confidence in the ability of the company.

And as their location and knowledge of the route afford them a facility of obtaining horses, mules, etc. to recruit with and as they are men of energy, enterprise and respectability, they are more competent to carry out an enterprise of this kind and establish a cheap, speedy and safe conveyance to and from the diggins than any company that could be organized on this side of the plains.²

In order to carry out their activities as advertised, part of the proprietors journeyed east in the fall of 1849 so that they could prepare to direct the trains west the following spring. On October 19, a party of about thirty-five men met at the mouth of Emigration Canyon with the First Presidency, who organized them for traveling east. There were some missionaries and some going on Church business to help the poor to immigrate to the west. The group was composed of twelve wagons and one carriage.

No wagon train had ever before attempted the trip east this late in the season. The party traveled with all haste until they were beyond the Pass and the Sweetwater Hills, which they feared most. They made good time, passing Fort Bridger on the twenty-sixth.

After meeting four men who had been robbed by the Crows, they took added precautions against Indian raids. They kept a guard of four men about the animals during the night, changing the guard twice each night. This made each man serve

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1849 December 24, p. 2, 3, 4.

²Ibid., 1849 December 11, p. 8.

guard every third night. Although they knew that the Indians were near at hand, their vigilance kept the red men from attacking the party. The Cheyennes, however, ventured once against the party.

Forty-five miles from Fort Laramie, during our noon halt, Nov. 12th, on the bank of the Platte, we were surprised by a war party of about two hundred Cheyennes who were mounted and armed for the Crows. Their descent upon our camp was so precipitous that we had scarcely time to rush our animals behind our wagons and form a line, before they were upon us. But our bold front and display of arms, with which we were well supplied, brought them to a sudden halt. And having no higher object than plunder, they chose to yield to our order and give us the road. Their chief then offered many apologies and wished to shake hands and part in friendship which we accordingly did.¹

During the latter part of the journey, the grain for the animals became so depleted that the men mixed flour with what little grain they had and fed it to the animals.

Although storms fell to the right and to the left, before and behind them, the wagons were wet but twice on the entire trip. For such good fortune and for a safe arrival they acknowledged the hand of the Lord.

Curtis E. Bolton, who was chosen as clerk for the trip, adds important details to the account. He said that on October 27 he lectured to the camp on the principle of faith and promised them that if they would unite their faith, they would be free from snow until they reached the Missouri River. After crossing the river on the ice on December 10, he recalls:

We travelled many hundred miles where the snow had fallen from 8 to 14 inches deep on a level, but it was piled up on both sides of the road, leaving the road naked and clear for us; otherwise our horses must have perished, and though 35 persons made the journey, not one disagreeable word was spoken, intentionally, by any one, but we journeyed in peace, union, harmony and prayer and faith.²

Although the overall success of the Great Salt Lake Valley Carrying Company fell somewhat below their initial expectations, they did establish a ferry and started a good portion of the immigration westward in the spring. Also Smoot captained a train of merchandise to the valley for the firm of Livingston and Kinkade. Its arrival in the fall marked it as the first train of merchandise to ever cross the plains. This was the successful ending of the first of thirteen business trips in which Smoot crossed the plains with ox or mule team.³

¹Ibid., 1849 October 19.

²Ibid., 1849 December 11, p. 21.

³Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 25.

Having left his family well provisioned with the bounteous harvest of 1849, he found them in comfortable circumstances upon his return in 1850. This scene of life was soon to undergo a slight change however, for shortly after the first of the new year, Smoot moved his family some eight or ten miles south, east of the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon.

In this new location, his home became a stopping place where the Church leaders rested on their journeys to the south or on their return to Salt Lake. President Young and his party spent the night at Smoot's home on their way to Fort Utah, and about a week later, they commenced their return journey, they faced a very strong north wind which increased in fury as they approached Salt Lake. Before they finally reached a place of rest, "they were almost perished with the cold and happy to arrive at Abraham O. Smoot's house, as the snow pelted in its pitiless fury. The storm continued all night."¹

Having moved from his former ward, Smoot was at this time without any position in the Church. This condition was soon corrected, as at the annual conference on April 7, he was appointed to be Bishop of the Big Cottonwood Ward.²

Few undertakings of any magnitude were carried on in the valley in these early years without A. O. Smoot being associated. When Brigham Young and a large party of leaders left on April 22 to explore the Sevier Valley and other places in the area for future settlement, A. O. Smoot was in the company. His sound judgement was respected by the leaders, and no one was more responsive to the call of the leaders. His entire life from the time he joined the Church was occupied in service to the Church. His philosophy in the matter was, serve the Church first. One's personal affairs would prosper more in the time left than if you rejected the call to service. The way to get ahead temporally and spiritually was to obey the priesthood.

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1851 March 25.

²Ibid., 1851 April 7.

CHAPTER VI

LEADER OF THE FIRST PERPETUAL EMIGRATING FUND COMPANY

A. O. Smoot was never long without an assignment. At a conference on September 8, he was called with several others to go on missions to England. Six days later, they preached their farewell discourses, and were set apart by the First Presidency.¹

Since there had been no news of the work in England for seven months, President Young was anxious to know the state of affairs there. The group traveled with all possible speed to complete the quickest trip made from the valley to England up to that time.² They reached the Missouri River just forty days after they began the journey.

After several experiences with unsatisfactory transportation, they boarded the "El Paso," bound for St. Louis. By a curious circumstance, they found themselves in the uncongenial company of the runaway officials, Judges Brandenburg and Brocchus, Secretary Harris, and Indian agent Day.³ After leaving St. Louis, a more enjoyable reunion was held in Philadelphia with their faithful friend, Colonel Thomas L. Kane, who insisted on giving them ten dollars to aid on their journey.⁴

From Philadelphia, they continued on to New York in hopes of spending the night with Brother Matthew Hicks. They arrived at his home at eleven o'clock in the evening to find the situation inconvenient for their lodging with Brother Hicks, so they left their trunks at his place and took lodging at a public house near by.⁵

The four missionaries in the group lacked about fifty dollars of the amount needed to pay their passage to England. After trying to obtain assistance

¹Ibid., 1851 September 14.

²Andrew Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901), I, p. 486.

³Samuel W. Richards, "Diary," (Typewritten copy made by B. Y. U. Library, 1950), II, p. 111.

⁴Ibid., p. 113.

⁵Ibid., p. 115.

from one of the brothers in New York, they decided to use some of the money Samuel Richards had been assigned to take to England and attempt to replace it in Liverpool. In this manner, they were able to procure tickets on the British steamer, "America," and sailed for England. After a comfortable passage of eleven and one half days, they landed in Liverpool on December 29, 1851.¹

When Elder Smoot and the other missionaries arrived in England, they found the Mission President, Franklin D. Richards, searching for the solution of a difficult problem.

Before September of 1851, the Church leaders had counseled all immigrants who could reach the Potawattamie country to do so. Now that the entire region of Council Bluffs was to be evacuated, that stopping off place would no longer be available. From this time on, only those with sufficient means to carry them through to the valley were advised to attempt the trip. This change in policy resulted in the problem which confronted Elder Richards. In a letter of February 24, 1852 to Brigham Young, the President of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, he explained the problem.

By your instructions to me dated June 30, 51 I was led to suppose I should send our passengers to Kanessville only, and deliver them to the Co.s agent in that place, in time to cross the plains by the train leaving there on the first of May--a comparatively easy task. I had commenced my arrangements on that plan, to take out the persons called for in your letter of June 30th, and their passages were engaged when yours of Sept. 13th arrived with the instructions to forward only so many as I could send through with the fund in my hands. . . . This last item of your instructions suddenly changed the general character of the whole subject, as the portion of funds in my hands would allow me to send far less to the Valley than it would to Bluffs.

The pressing and extensive demands for teams and all outfitting by our brethren on the Frontier, with the probable scarcity of the same in that region, gave additional complexity and uncertainty to the subject and most apparently reduced the number which the fund would be able to take, provided every arrangement could be well carried out. I felt if there was any failure in the enterprise, it would prove a death blow to the fond hopes of thousands in these conferences, who look forward to deliverance through the fund with the highest degree of pleasure; but if it carried out well, it would tend mightily to promote the confidence of the saints in the Authorities of the Church, and in the fund, and inspire them with renewed diligence in contributing to its increase, which appears to me of great consideration.

After surveying the subject as generally and as minutely as I could I determined to call to the service of the poor the best financial talent at my command, and entrust it with the appropriation of their hard earned pennies. Accordingly I appointed Bro. Abraham O. Smoot to go to the Western States to purchase wagons, oxen, cows, tents and everything necessary to take them over the plains according to the tenor and spirit of your instructions, and then to superintend the journeying of the company to the Valley. . . .

I desire your particular attention to the importance of having a faithful

¹Ibid., p. 115.

man, and one who is somewhat of a financier, to manage the affairs of the company each year, in outfitting the emigrants for the Plains, even though his funds should have to be supplied from this office as in the present instance. By being on the ground, and contracting on the most economical terms for cattle and wagons, it appears to me a man possessing business tact, and a heart devoted to the interests of the fund, might save hundreds of dollars to the company each emigrating season. . . .

I feel a good deal of satisfaction, however, on this head, having such men as Elders A. O. Smoot and Isaac C. Haight to manage the appropriations. Bro. Haight has gone out in charge of the passengers on the "Ellen Maria," and will aid Bro. Smoot in getting the company off for the mountains.¹

Elder Smoot had been in England scarcely two weeks, when he was ready to return to the plains of America to fulfill his new assignment. True western economy delayed his departure from England for a few days. His companion, Elder Samuel W. Richards, records that on January 14 all preparations were made for Smoot to leave. When he went to secure a berth, he could not go without paying first class cabin fare, so he remained in Liverpool awaiting more economical passage.²

On Saturday, January 24, Samuel Richards procured a ticket for Brother Smoot on board the Steamer "Pacific." When it sailed for New York on January 28, Elder Richards accompanied him to the boat to bid him God speed on his journey.³

According to Elder Smoot, only the hand of God enabled them to complete their voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to New York.

On my return from England in 1852, on board the steamer Pacific, we encountered a severe storm, in which the deck was swept clear of rigging, the deck cabin, one of the wheels, both wheel houses and the bulwarks. The steamer was entirely submerged in the sea at one time, and had she not been very well built she would never have come to the surface again. It looked like a precarious time, but I felt an assurance that the vessel would be saved, and in the midst of all the excitement which prevailed among the crew and passengers I felt quite calm. I had seventeen thousand dollars in gold in my possession, and did not even fear that I would lose that. Our preservation, however, was certainly providential, for the vessel was in a terribly dilapidated condition, but we finally arrived safely in New York with the wrecked vessel, after a voyage of sixteen days.⁴

About the time Smoot was completing his hair raising passage of the Atlantic, the ship, "Ellen Maria," sailed from Liverpool on February 10 with 369 converts and missionaries aboard. Among these were 182 Perpetual Emigrating Fund members under the direction of Elder Isaac C. Haight. The ship, "Kennebec," carried additional Emigrating Fund members under Elder John S. Higbee, bringing

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1852 February 24, p. 15-18.

²Richards, op. cit., II, p. 117.

³Ibid., p. 120.

⁴Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 26.

the total of the Fund members to 252. The "Kennebec" traveled ahead of the "Ellen Maria," which sailed into New Orleans on April 7, 1852.

At this time, A. O. Smoot was in St. Louis, where he had purchased supplies for the journey overland. He was just about to go farther up the river and purchase cattle for the company, when Eli B. Kelsey came to him for advice in regard to chartering the "Saluda" to carry an independent company of Saints up the river.

I went with him to examine the boat, and on finding that it was an old hulk of a freight boat, fitted up with a single engine, I strongly advised him against having anything to do with it. He seemed to be influenced in making choice of it entirely by the fact that he could get it cheaper than a better one; but in my opinion it seemed folly, for in addition to the danger of accident, the length of time likely to be occupied in making the journey would more than counterbalance what might be saved in the charge for transit. However, he decided to charter it, and then both he and the captain urged me strongly to take passage with them, offering to carry me free of cost if I would only go, but I could not feel satisfied to do so. I followed a few days afterwards on the Isabella, and overtook them at Lexington, where the Saluda was stopped by the float-ice and was unable to proceed farther. I went on board of her to visit the Saints (who were in charge of D. J. Ross, Eli B. Kelsey having gone ashore to purchase cattle), and left just before the last plank was drawn in, preparatory to attempting to start. I had not walked two hundred yards after leaving the Saluda before the explosion occurred, and on turning to look in the direction of the ill fated boat I saw bodies of many of the unfortunate passengers and various parts of the boat flying in the air in every direction. Fortunately for the Saints on board, they were mostly on the deck of the boat and pretty well towards the stern, and they consequently fared better than those who were below, or in the forepart of the boat, which was blown entirely to pieces. As it was, however, upwards of twenty of the Saints were lost or subsequently died of their wounds. My own preservation I can only attribute to the providence of the Almighty, for if I had remained a moment on the wharf to see the boat start, as would have been very natural for a person to do, I would have been blown into eternity as those were who stood there.

I shall never forget the kindness of the citizens of Lexington in caring for the living and burrying the dead. The Lord certainly inspired them to do all that sympathy and benevolence could suggest in the aid of the afflicted. The city council set apart a piece of ground in which to bury the Saints who had died, . . . and many other prominent citizens did all they could to comfort and help the afflicted survivors. Besides their devoted attention, their contributions in aid of the Saints amounted to thousands of dollars.¹

Brother Smoot remained at Lexington about eight days giving what assistance he could to the unfortunate victims. In a letter to President Young describing the disaster, Smoot states that seventy-five of one hundred and seventy-five passengers were killed in the explosion. When he had rendered all possible aid to the injured and had purchased oxen at the bargain price of fifty dollars per

¹Ibid., p. 26-27.

yoke, he returned to St. Louis to conduct his company of Saints up the river.

The company laid over a few days at Kansas City while they waited for their wagons, which were being specially constructed at St. Louis. The wagons proved to be of such fine type that the following year Brigham Young advised the emigrants to procure wagons of the same kind and from the same company as Brother Smoot did last year.

While staying near Kansas City, the company was stricken with cholera, which attacked about forty persons and proved fatal to more than fifteen of them. Brother Smoot said that some of them, even though apparently near death's door, were healed almost instantly through administration by the Elders. Emigrant Isaac Brockbank describes the scene.

This was a very sad affair. Here was a company of several hundred Saints, temporarily located among a people who were hostile to the whole Mormon Community, and who had assisted in driving the Saints across the river some years before and that they were on hand to go thro the same performance again. But as the scourge in the camp increased, and the brethren and sisters dying off, alarm spread thro the surrounding country and the result was that Indignation Meetings were held, and propositions made to have the Saints removed. But as the scourge continued, they were afraid to go near the camp. . . . Rude boxes of any kind were made use of and dead laid away without much ceremony.¹

On June 1 when the afflicted persons had recovered sufficiently to travel, Smoot led his inexperienced band toward their western home. Few companies had been as green as this group of English immigrants. For a detailed description of the journey, we are indebted to James Thomas Wilson, a young immigrant, who kept a careful journal during the trip.

It took some two weeks to get ready. Brother Smoot hired one American ox teamster, who drove the commissery waggon drawn by six yoke of oxen. There was 33 waggons in the company, and if any of us ever seen a yoke of oxen before our arrivel at Kansas City, I am not aware of it, for we knew no more about cattle than cattle knew about us. There was considerable manauvoring in getting every one to know just what to do, but Brother Smoot and C. Layton had to use a great deal of patience while showing us what to do and how to yoke up the cattle. They were all unbroke except a few yoke which he purchased for leaders.

One brother a Welshman tried to yoke up his team with the bows in the yoke, it was a yoke of Texas cattle. They had extra long horns. He tried till he was pettered out endeavoring to put the heads of his cattle through the bows in the yoke without taking them out. It is useless to say that he was unsuccessful. He then went to Brother Smoot and asked him if he had a saw. He asked what he wanted to do with a saw. The teamster replied innocently in broken Welsh that he was going to cut off the horns of his oxen, but Brother Smoot did not reprove him but simpley said take the bows out of the yoke. . . .

All now being ready - a meeting was called for the purpose of organizing

¹Isaack Brockbank, "Autobiography," (Microfilmed from a typewritten manuscript, film is on file in the B. Y. U. Library), p. 7.

our company according to the pattern led down by our great prophet Joseph Smith All voted for A. O. Smoot, the Captain was sustained by a unanimous vote. Christopher Layton, Captain of fifty was sustained by a unanimous vote. Thomas Smith, Captain of Second fifty was sustained by a unanimous vote. . . . There was ten persons to each waggon and a captain over each ten. One cow and one tent to each ten, and each ten were only allowed 10 lbs of flour per day on the fronteers and three or four weeks after starting we were allowed some sugar, bacon, and fish - so we got along very well till those were no longer to be had. There were also men and boys appointed to drive the loose stock through the day and among this number I was selected, and all had to walk except our worthy captain. He had three animals, 2 mules and 1 horse and a young man by the name of Weeks had charge of the horse. . . . I think it was on the 15th day of May we struck tents and headed to the west.¹

Captain Smoot was to have more serious problems to contend with than directing untrained immigrants. After the last person had recovered from the cholera, Smoot was stricken with the same disease. His condition became so critical that he was not expected to recover. One of the company records that Brother Smoot himself felt so impressed about it, that he made out his will. Smoot's account states that:

The train was stopped and the whole company fasted and prayed for two days for my recovery, but I continued growing worse until my limbs and the lower part of my body were apparently dead, but then the faith of the Saints and the power of the Almighty prevailed in my behalf and I recovered. I had, however, lost seventy-five pounds in weight within a few days.²

As the journey continued, young Wilson describes Smoot's efforts in behalf of the camp.

Captain Smoot went ahead of the train both in the fore and afternoon in order to find feed, water and fuel for our nooning and campings at night. Our present journey was his fifth trip across the plains, but he did not loiter with the camp and depend upon his knowledge of the route for feed and water, but he generally started some after the camp was in motion and went ahead in quest of the needfull to see where our teams could do the best. Everybody loved our Captain. He was both thoughtful, polite, considerate and although our waggons were loaded to the bows, when he would see any of the company lagging as they trudged wearily along with stick in hand to aid them in their locomotive powers and he was convinced they were not putting it on, he would tell them to ride. The rule was that all able bodied men, women, and youth should walk, There was to be no favourites who rode just when they pleased, while some who were more deserving had to trudge on. . . .

An interesting scene in camp life.

To see our train in motion was quite interesting at least to the tutored American - who well understands the ha and the gee - and knows just how to crack a whip. But to see a long train in motion and from 3 to 4 men to each team, one having a long whipstock and 15 foot lash, the others each with a long stick or club, and when any of the oxen would show signs of flying the

¹James Thomas Wilson, "Journal," (Microfilm copy in B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), p. 44-45.

²Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 28.

track, a slash from the whip or a blow from a club sometimes would teach them to remain on the road. At other times in spite of all they could do, a team and sometimes several would run out on the prairie, the men running as hard as they could fly on both sides endeavoring to stop them. It was laughable to see men with a big club on his shoulder, a heavy coat on and a stiff stove pipe hat on, his coat tails in mid air. Then the man with the whip slashing at them and in place of striking the team he would get it tangled around his head and neck, then stop to undo it and after them again, the team running at full speed, making circles and semi circles in quick time, the men puffing and blowing like a purpose.¹

This summer saw the heaviest emigration from Council Bluffs. Nearly ten thousand Saints left there that year. After they reached the Platte River, Smoot's company traveled along on the south side while the Bluff Saints traveled on the north side of the river. Occasionally the captains of companies would cross the river to inquire after the welfare of the other company and to congratulate each other on their progress. With so many Saints on the trail, they no longer felt alone.

After about two weeks, they reached Fort Kearney at which point sugar, coffee, bacon, and fish began to disappear from the bill of fare. In another week, their main food consisted of milk and flour.² The Indians often came alongside the company attempting to trade for bread or flour, but as the supply was so low little trading was done.

During the trek, an incident took place which might have been disastrous. John Calvin obtained permission from Smoot to ride one of his mules back to their last camping spot in search of his shepherd dog, which had strayed behind. As he rejoined the wagon train, his good spirits at finding his dog could no longer be suppressed. Urging the mule to his top speed, he dashed into the center of the wagons whooping and yelling, hat in hand. In truth he created quite a sensation,

. . . for no sooner had he reached the center of the train than 9 of the teams quick as thought (began) running helter skelter as if driven by a cyclone and it was with the greatest difficulty that all of the teams were kept from following suit. It happened to be on a beautiful plain or else it might have ended in a sad calamity. There was some women and children in the stampede, but as God would have it, no person was hurt. They all run in one direction pell mell among one another and over each other, and sometimes it seemed as if it would end in a general wreck, but with the exception of a few disabled wheels and broken tongues and a few cattle coming out of the scrape minus their horns, all was soon brought to a peaceable conclusion, at the incipency of the flight. There was some very narrow escapes in order to steer clear of the maddened bovines, and as far as I am concerned, I never want to

¹Wilson, op. cit., p. 46-47.

²Ibid., p. 47.

see another stampede.¹

The damages necessitated a layover of one day to complete repairs. The ladies took advantage of this unexpected rest from travel and did their washing.

Captain Smoot would not travel on Sunday, except in cases of emergency when they needed to find forage for the teams. On the Sabbath when they were not traveling, the company always held worship services. The sacrament would be administered to the people, and Brother Smoot would instruct the Saints in relation to their duties.²

After crossing the North Platte, the company encountered large herds of buffalo, which sometimes straggled right through their camp. Soon the supply of grass and forage for the cattle became scant. Many other wagon trains on the trail that summer had depleted the supply. This not only weakened the teams, which by now were somewhat jaded from their travel, but also caused the supply of milk to diminish. All members of the camp felt this loss, but the little children suffered the most as milk had formed a larger part of their diet. However, through careful distribution and husbanding of their supplies, the camp managed to get along all right. The camp members recognized the distribution under Captain Smoot to be fair and just.³

Two incidents occurred during the crossing of the plains which brought gloom to the camp. One of the young men drowned while bathing in the river, and the day after they had passed through Fort Laramie, a woman strayed from camp and was never seen again. She had not wanted to leave her home in England and was never in full sympathy with the trip. As her spirits became more and more depressed, she finally strayed from the camp, leaving her unweaned baby without a mother's care.⁴

After crossing Green River, the wagons had to be pulled through heavy stretches of sand. To add needed power to the teams, cows were now hitched along with the oxen.

From the time the company arrived at Fort Bridger until it reached the valley, the people were continually encouraged by meeting friends from the valley who often brought with them supplies to help the company along the way. The scenery was now greener, and each day the miles seemed to fall behind more quickly than at the beginning of the journey. Captain Smoot arrived in the valley on

¹Ibid., p. 48.

²Ibid., p. 48.

³Ibid., p. 49.

⁴Brockbank, op. cit., p. 10.

August 30 in advance of the company, but returned to join the company and lead it into the valley.

On September 2, as they descended into the valley, the teamsters locked all four wheels and used ropes to ease the wagons down the steep slopes. When the company had camped for the evening, they feasted on a fine beef sent out by President Young and then danced until a late hour, happy in the thoughts of entering the city the next day.¹

September 3 was a beautiful autumn day, bright and clear, as nature joined in to make it a truly joyful occasion. The sisters brought out their finest apparel and except for their tanned complexions resembled the ladies of an old English fair. They proceeded in advance of the wagons in order to keep out of the dust and also to gain a better view of the valley.

Some were so overjoyed that they were unable to concentrate on the problems of travel. One Welshman, a bit unbalanced by the occasion, yoked up his team with the yoke below their necks. He did not even realize his mistake until Captain Smoot called his attention to it. After he reversed the yoke, the company rolled out from their last camp site of the trip.²

Considerable importance had been attached to this first company to travel under the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. It seemed that the entire population of Salt Lake City had turned out to welcome the company to their new home. People came on foot, on horseback, and some in carriages to swell the numbers as the multitude coming up from the valley met the new arrivals descending from the mountains. Many shed tears of happiness at such a demonstration or at meeting with family or friends.

Pitt's band met the group at the mouth of Emigration Canyon to add strains of music to the joyous welcome. The First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles were on hand as well as civil and military officials. As the procession progressed down Emigration Street, now lined with spectators, it could truly be called the Perpetual Emigration Fund Grand March. Young Wilson's reaction was, "that the interest manifested towards us in all my experience has been unparalleled in the history of this people."³

During the passage of the company from the mouth of the canyon to the city, Captain Smoot moved about on horseback directing the progress of the company. When he led them by Temple Square, a salute of nine rounds of artillery was fired

¹Wilson, op. cit., p. 54.

²Ibid., p. 53.

³Ibid., p. 53.

in their honor. The fine condition of the cattle and the general appearance of the whole train spoke well for the wise and skillful management of Captain Smoot, who received much praise from the leaders for his accomplishment. Among those who were especially pleased at the successful completion of the undertaking, was Franklin D. Richards who had selected Smoot for this assignment.

They had been reported in the Valley, by the emigrants who had passed them upon the plains, as being the most orderly company they had passed on the entire journey. No disturbance nor confusion among them, but all moved along in perfect union, and great blessings had attended them while journeying over the plains.¹

The members of the company were grateful to Captain Smoot for the fine service he had given them in his leadership of the company. During the journey, they had picked up a number of stray cows which had been left behind by immigrants. These were given to Captain Smoot as a token of the esteem in which he was held by the company as well as the leaders in Salt Lake.

When the company had formed on Union Square, a bounteous meal was spread before them as part of their welcome. Only the description of one who enjoyed the meal could do it justice.

. . . and it was nothing less than huge piles of light bread waiting to be distributed. When the camp had become quiet, it was the sisters who furnished this the staff of life and this was a treat of itself and the sweetest food I ever eat, and if anyone doubts my word let him go through 7 months of my experience and I think he will be convinced as to the truth of what I say, but it was not alone bread in great abundance, but all of the general productions of the climate; potatoes, corn, mellons, squash, tomatos and etc. things dealt out not by the pound, as had been the custom heretofore, but by the bushel. Then the sisters stood around with baskets full of manney choice and delicious pastereys which they divided without stint.²

When the meal was over, President Young addressed the people, saying to the new arrivals,

We have prayed for you continually; thousands of prayers have been offered up for you, day by day, to Him who has commanded us to gather Israel. . .

I will say to this company, they have had the honor of being escorted into the city by some of the most distinguished individuals of our society, and a band of music, accompanied with a salutation of cannon. Other companies have not had this mark of respect shown to them; . . .³

An interesting sidelight on the trip was that the company traveled the entire distance with the remains of two missionaries who had died in England.

A. O. Smoot says, the remains of L. D. Barnes were taken up by the direction of Elder F. D. Richards, and brought to his room in Liverpool. A case

¹Millenial Star, (London, England), November 13, 1852.

²Wilson, op. cit., p. 54-55.

³Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), September 18, 1852.

of zinc was made for them; they were then encased in a square oak box, iron bound, and labelled "Machinery." When landed in New Orleans, paid duty as machinery, under the charge of Isaac C. Haight; then came up the river to St. Louis, when A. O. Smoot took charge and brought them up the Missouri River & paid on them & then brought them over the plains.

When they arrived at Salt Lake Sept 3rd 1852. The zinc was worn through Burton's case; it leaked & smelt rather offensively. Not a person knew they were along. On the 4th of Sept they were delivered up to Mrs Burton. Bishop Hunter took charge of Barnes remains. The Driver Ewing slept on the boxes all the way & was not attacked with cholera.¹

As the group began to disperse to their several destinations, Smoot, knowing that his young companion, James Wilson, had no place to go, asked if the young man would like to stay at his place and work for him. Upon the young man's acceptance, they started out for Smoot's home about four o'clock Saturday afternoon. By the time they arrived it was dark, but Wilson was able to see that he was in a small log house with two rooms. "This with a small farm with little improvements, just peeping out of the sage brush. A team and a few horned stock made up the sum total of all his property. He had no time to work for himself being almost constantly kept laboring for the interest of the church."² The young man was much disappointed the next day at having to herd cows on the Lord's appointed day of rest. He was so disturbed in mind that when Smoot went to town on Monday, the young man returned with him to the city, thus ending his service with A. O. Smoot.

James Wilson had a strong desire to bring his father's family to Salt Lake Valley. When Brother Daniel H. Wells, a complete stranger, approached him and asked him if he would like a steady job, and also opened the way to bring Wilson's family to the valley, it came as a complete surprise. Although he never found out, Wilson always thought that A. O. Smoot had been the agent that opened these possibilities to him.

While Smoot and his company were pushing their way across the plains, other companies were just starting out. Among them was the company of Phillip De LaMare which had left Ft. Leavenworth on July 4, heavily loaded with the precious machinery to be used in making sugar. This company encountered almost insurmountable difficulties. Their rations became short; their oxen weakened and died, or in some cases strayed off, while others were eaten for food. Upon receiving news of this sad plight, the Church leaders quickly dispatched A. O. Smoot with twenty-three yoke of oxen and a load of flour, which at that time was selling at fifty dollars per ton. Brother Smoot with his oxen and supplies must

¹Manuscript on file in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

²Wilson, op. cit., p. 56.

have been a welcome sight indeed to the weary company of LaMare as it arrived at Fort Bridger.¹

In May of 1853, Brother Smoot met with a serious accident, in which he narrowly escaped serious permanent injury. He gave a detailed account of the experience.

I was emptying a small keg of powder and standing in a stooping position right over it, and as it did not run out very freely I shook the keg, when it exploded. The staves and pieces of hoops were scattered in every direction, some pieces being afterwards found at least eight rods distant. I was blown into the air and my face and hands most terribly burned. It was a marvel that the staves of the keg were not driven through my body, but it did not appear that a single one had struck me. The whole of the skin came from my face and hands, yet, wonderful to relate, there is not now a mark of powder about my face, and my eyesight, the loss of which I was most fearful of, was not at all impaired by it.²

His family were greatly disturbed by the accident and feared dangerous complications. In such a state, Margaret wrote to President Young seeking advice, which could be brought back by Willie Smoot who bore the letter. She adds the details that it was a six pound keg of powder, and that his face was swelled shut so that he could not open his eyes at all. In the letter, Brother Smoot requested that he be prayed for in the circle of Apostles and by the people in public.³ His complete recovery, without any ill affects, he attributed to the blessings of the Almighty.

The fall of 1853 found Smoot busy as the Bishop of the South Cottonwood ward. At the conference on October 8, he represented the ward as its Bishop and gave a report of their activities for the past six months.

¹Fred G. Taylor, A Saga of Sugar, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah Idaho Sugar Company, 1944), p. 41.

²Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 28-29.

³Letter on file in The Church Historian's Office.

CHAPTER VII

CONTINUED PROMINENCE IN SALT LAKE CITY 1854 TO 1868

The machinery which had been hauled in by de LaMare in the fall of 1852 was set up on Temple Square that winter, but the attempt to produce sugar was unsuccessful. Another unsuccessful attempt followed in Provo when the machinery was moved there in 1853. During that same year, Brigham Young and others selected a site on Parleys or Canyon Creek to erect a permanent building to house the machinery. Plans and preliminary work for the erection of this factory were completed.

A. O. Smoot was called by Brigham Young from his farm on Cottonwood Creek to move to Parleys Creek. He became construction superintendent of the sugar factory and manager of the Forest Farm newly acquired by Brigham Young. We know that Smoot had moved to his new home by March 14, 1854, for on that date a new Bishop was selected for the South Cottonwood Ward since Elder Smoot had removed to the Sugar House Ward.¹

In reality, no ward existed until April 23, 1854. On this date A. O. Smoot was selected as Bishop of the new ward with Ira Eldredge as his First Counselor and Henry Wilde as Second Counselor. At the organization, the question of a name for the new ward arose. Margaret Smoot suggested that the ward be named Sugar House Ward after the sugar house then being constructed. Some wanted the ward named Kanyon Creek and others desired Parleys, but when the matter was put to a vote Sugar House Ward was the name given.

An item in the Sugar House Bulletin of May 1937 says that in 1853 Smoot and Ira Eldredge built the second school house in Sugar House on the site of the present Irving School. Although this date may be correct, since Smoot was still the Bishop of Cottonwood ward as late as October 8, 1853, it seems more likely that the school was erected in 1854.

¹Jenson, The Historical Record, op. cit., VI, p. 334.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), November 27, 1920, section 4, p. 4.



The Cabin of A. O. Smoot at Sugar House, from a painting by John Hafen
Reproduced through the courtesy of Allie Smoot Coleman, Provo, Utah

This adobe building, sixty-three feet long by thirty-two feet wide, served children from Ninth to Twenty-seventh South and from Mountain Dell to the Jordan River. The seats were rough board benches, used for both school and church. Sawdust was sprinkled on the floor during the school days and taken up on the week ends for social functions.¹

These were days of varied activity for A. O. Smoot. He continued as the manager of Brigham Young's Forest Farm, which covered an area bounded by the present streets of Fifth East on the west to Eleventh East on the east and by Twenty-first South on the north to Twenty-seventh South on the south.

While he was directing the activity on this farm, he was also directing the construction of the sugar factory. On May 4, 1854, he showed Thomas Bullock the dam, the mill race, the waste gate, and the foundation. Smoot directed the formation and use of the largest adobes which had been used in the valley up to that time. When the building was torn down in 1928, these adobes were still in a solid firm condition. An item in the Deseret News of October 26, 1845 stated that the Sugar Works would be ready to operate in from four to six weeks.

Since a part of the machinery was missing, sugar was not successfully produced. In 1855, it became clear that sugar would never be produced in the mill on a commercial scale. In the fall of 1855, a quantity of molasses was produced.

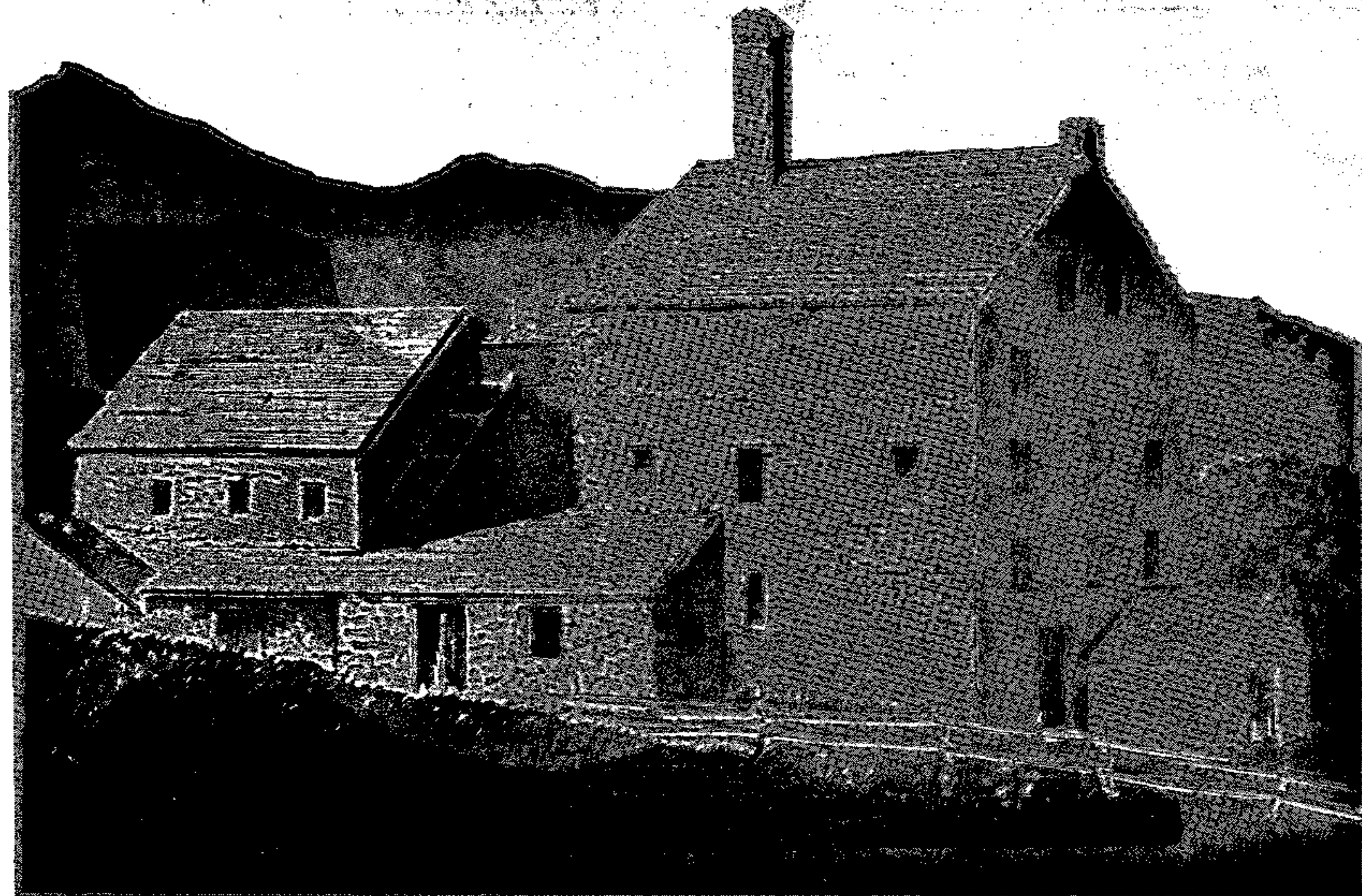
Although the factory failed as a sugar producer, it did play an important role in the early industrial life of the area. The old factory, located on the southeast corner of the intersection of the present Highland Drive and Twenty-first South streets, served many purposes. It was used at various times to produce paper, flooring, buckets, tubs, and barrels.

In this venture the Church lost an estimated \$100,000.00, but opened up the way for an immense agricultural and industrial activity. Abraham O. Smoot must be recognized as one who played an important role in this development.

Among the other contributions of A. O. Smoot to the progress of the community was the erection of the first nail factory west of the Mississippi River. It was built where the Hygeia Ice plant now stands. The nails were cut from rolled sheets of iron while they were still in a state of red heat. A special mechanical knife was used to accomplish the process.²

¹Sugar House Bulletin, (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 7, 1937.

²Deseret News Telegram, (Salt Lake City, Utah), April 27, 1954, Section 5H, p. 12.



AT THE ...

Sugar Factory Erected at Sugar House

THE DESERT NEWS AND TELEGRAM

To his already busy schedule of activities, Smoot now added the roll of civil servant. In a meeting on September 9, 1854, it was moved and carried that A. O. Smoot be appointed by the City Council to fill the vacancy of Alderman from the Sugar House District of the First Municipal Ward.¹

His civil servant status continued on a more secure basis when on March 5, 1855 he was elected to the position as Alderman. On the same day, he was appointed as a City Supervisor of Streets and placed on several other committees.²

An event of great importance in Smoot's life occurred on May 6, 1855. He married Diana Tanner Eldredge who was born March 28, 1837 in Warren, Marion County, Indiana. She was the daughter of Ira Eldredge, Smoot's counselor in the Bishopric, and Nancy Black.³ This increased the number of his wives to three. His second wife, Sarah Gibbens, had been separated from him for several years. She did not make the journey west with him in the summer of 1847 and on January 20, 1852 "filed her account against Abraham O. Smoot who had left a divorce for her."⁴

During September, Alderman Smoot obtained the approval of the Council to improve the county road that ran through his district. Smoot was to see that the work was done and report to the Council the progress made.

The fall of the year found him making a short trip east to bring additional men and animals to aid the company of Captain Allred. He delivered this assistance to Allred on the Green River and returned to the valley⁵ in time to preach at the forenoon session in the Tabernacle on November 18.

Although Smoot had only been a member of the City Council for a brief time, when Mayor Grant was absent from the City, Smoot was the man usually appointed Mayor, pro tem, to fill the vacancy.

In February 1856, Brother Smoot married his fifth and last wife. She was Anna Kirstine Morrison, born December 19, 1833 in Norway, a daughter of Morris Oversen and Anna Maline Sorensen.⁶

As a young girl of eighteen, she had been converted to the Gospel in Norway. In spite of the pleading and desperate attempts of her mother to keep

¹"Minutes of The City Council of Great Salt Lake City," Sept. 9, 1854.

²Ibid., March 5, 1855.

³Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV (October 1934), p. 156.

⁴"Journal History of The Church," 1852 January 20.

⁵Ibid., 1855 November 7.

⁶Bennett, "The Smoot Family," op. cit., XXV (October 1934), p. 156.

her in Norway, she immigrated to America and made her way to Utah. Hearing of the kindness of "Ma" Smoot, as Margaret Smoot was affectionately known, she sought her out. As "Ma" was in ill health and had heard of the skill of the young Norwegian convert in artistic weaving, she readily invited the young lady to stay in their home and help with the household duties. A strong attachment soon grew up between the two ladies, and "Ma" asked, "Annie, if when Owen comes home he loves you like I do, will you stay in the family?" When Owen returned from a trip east he soon asked the same question, and Anna became one of the family.¹

Bishop Smoot and his counselors were ever attentive to the needs of their ward members. One of the ward family, Elder J. V. Vernon, attested to the efficacy of Brother Smoot's administration. In an address given Sunday morning, March 16, at the tabernacle Brother Vernon told of a recent experience.

Whilst engaged in office business one evening, I experienced a mysterious attack which shortly took away all consciousness. Bishop Smoot took me in his arms, and arrested the complaint by the power of the Priesthood, or mortality might have ensued before morning, but I was preserved alive; and I cannot help acknowledging the vigilant kindness of Bishop Smoot and Mrs. Smoot, and counselor Henry Wilde, who watched over me with the tenderest care during the night.²

During the fore part of April 1856, Smoot prepared for a trip east to bring back immigrating converts and also supplies left on the route the season before. If possible he would bring machinery for the erection of a woolen factory which was planned by Brigham Young.

The group which traveled east met at the mouth of Emigration Canyon on April 22, for the purpose of organizing. In the sizeable company were Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, Ezra T. Benson, and Erastus Snow of the Twelve, in addition to other prominent Church leaders and civil officials desiring to make the eastern journey. The remainder of the group was made up of missionaries departing for their fields of labor and others going east on business.

President Young met with the group on that day and organized them, with A. O. Smoot as the captain; Elder Benson, chaplain; William Miller, captain of the guard; and James Ure as clerk. After giving them parting instructions and a blessing, he left the group and returned to the city.³ The selection of A. O. Smoot to lead such a distinguished company was a high tribute to his

¹Personal interview with Ida Smoot Dusenberry, the daughter of A. O. Smoot and Anna Morrison Smoot.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1856 March 16, p. 3.

³Ibid., 1856 April 22.

ability and a sign of the confidence which the brethren had in him.

On the morning of April 23, the company commenced what proved to be a most difficult journey. The afternoon of the twenty-fifth, they faced a violent wind which drove the cold and snow into their faces, making it impossible to keep warm. Buffalo robes and blankets were wrapped tightly around cold bodies.

In a letter of April 28 to the Editor of the Deseret News, George A. Smith describes their journey as cold and difficult. They arrived on the evening of the twenty-sixth at Fort Bridger and laid over there for the remainder of the company to catch up. Time was also needed to procure additional animals and to repair the wagons which had been roughly used in crossing the Wasatch Mountains. During the afternoon, the local inhabitants gathered in a meeting, to be addressed by Apostle Orson Pratt, Captain Smoot, Marshall Heywood, and George A. Smith.¹

As they commenced their journey on the twenty-eighth, some of the brethren were troubled with sore feet. They had walked all the way in order to save the animals. On that day two horses were lost and several of the company tried to find them. The next day "Old Reliable," Porter Rockwell, brought them in. In an evening council, it was decided that fire arms would be kept in readiness in case of an Indian attack.

James Ure, the clerk of the camp, recorded interesting details of the journey. He recalled one incident which reveals the firm but fair character of Captain Smoot. At the crossing of Ham's Fork, one of the men harnessed a third animal which had been trailing behind the wagon. When he attempted to hitch it with the other animals, it began to rear up on its hind feet. The teamster failed to quiet the animal and struck a blow with an axe which killed the animal almost instantly. On arriving at Green River, Captain Smoot informed the man that he could not travel with their company.²

Another letter of Brother Smith to the News Editor stated that on May 2, the company was twenty miles west of South Pass with Health excellent, appetite extraordinary, but the condition of the animals was somewhat weakened after much hard work and scarce feed.

At the high altitude of South Pass, the company encountered real trouble. Between ten and eleven on the evening of May 3, wind and snow commenced to blow through the camp. At daybreak, the whole camp was aroused by the guard shouting, "Arise, take care of your animals, for they are freezing to death." At

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 7, 1856.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1856 June 8, p. 6.

this cry of alarm, the men took their robes and blankets and covered the horses, leaving themselves exposed to the storm.

The storm continued through the next day, and as the camp was now without firewood or shelter, a new camp site was sought. When the new location was selected, many of the men put the harnesses on over the robes and blankets to keep the animals covered. Although it seemed impossible for either men or animals to face the storm, the men succeeded by leading the animals, in traveling two miles. Captain Smoot, Ezra T. Benson, Orson Pratt, Erastus Snow could be seen breasting the storm and calling encouragement to the rest of the file. George A. Smith, being a large man weighing about 250 pounds, was laid up from riding horseback and could not leave his wagon to aid in the struggle. They finally camped in a hollow close to Sweetwater, not far from Rocky Ridge.¹

James Ure continues the account:

In the evening all of us were destitute of bed clothes, as we had taken all our buffalo robes, quilts and blankets to cover our animals. So that we were obliged to sit all night, exposed to a pitiless northeast storm of wind and snow without any covering.

Monday May 5th. This morning the storm abated, having snowed with a strong wind more than 30 hours. One of Judge Kinney's horses died today. Our animals appeared to be feeble and we had to feed them with our bread-stuff. In the afternoon we attempted to start, but the storm had commenced again, and it was thought impossible for us to find the road. Our teams were turned out and we remained here another night.

Tuesday May 6th. This morning a horse belonging to Brother James Taylor died. My horse was put in the team in its place. It was a very cold morning. We started at 8 o'clock a. m. We had not traveled far when the horses began to sink to their girths and fall in the snow, they had to be unharnessed and the wagons hauled by men through large snow drifts, by means of ropes, we were called to walk on foot, with all the loose animals in front of the train, in order to make a track and in many places we had to walk over the snow two or three times before the strongest of our teams could pass, the snow on the level being from 12 to 18 inches, and other places from 3 to 5 feet deep. We traveled over some old snow, depth unknown, we continued our labor, making about one and a half miles per hour. . . .

Our eyes and faces were very sore, being scorched by the sun, and our eyes much injured by its reflection upon the snow.

Wednesday 7th. It was a mild morning. Elder Orson Pratt nearly blind, Geo. A. Smith, Ezra T. Benson and Erastus Snow laid hands upon him that his eyes might be healed. Many others in the camp were much afflicted in their eyes and face. About 8 o'clock our camp was on the move and we commenced our labor of treading the snow to break a road for the teams, with our faces covered with our handkerchiefs to protect our eyes from the brightness of the snow. Many of us were nearly blind. . . . turned our animals to feed; they looked very feeble.²

Elder George A. Smith adds that during the storm none of the men got any

¹Ibid., 1856 June 8, p. 7.

²Ibid., 1856 June 8, p. 8.

sleep. Strong winds kept them busy seeing that the robes and blankets did not blow from the animals. During this crisis, they fed biscuits and flour to the animals to keep them alive. He says that in addition to Orson Pratt also Elder Thomas King and Orrin Porter Rockwell were stricken blind and suffered the most excruciating torture for several days.¹

This change from stormy to hot weather was like coming suddenly from the frigid zone into the torrid zone. On the tenth of May, it was impossible to keep the men cool. They even crept under their wagons to hide from the searching rays of the sun. However, Captain Smoot's troubles were not over yet. That same night, while camped on Greasewood Creek, a storm covered the ground with a foot of snow. The following day was so cold that again the men wrapped themselves in their robes to keep warm.

Brother Smith paid tribute to the efforts of Captain Smoot during these extreme situations. "Captain Smoot exerts every energy in his power to facilitate the movements of the company, which have been retarded beyond all our expectations by the storms and the want of feed."²

The camp clerk also included in his record various tributes to the wisdom and skill of Captain Smoot's direction. He records that on May 15 the company approached a creek with the water running high enough to threaten a crossing. We, "Raised our wagon beds and under the wise and judicious management of Capt. Smoot, we crossed all the teams with ease and safety." In the afternoon the high waters of a stream named LaPrile blocked their progress. It appeared impossible to cross.

Lieutenant Dudley made a choice of one place for crossing and after flourishing around and making a great noise, succeeded in crossing one government team, that had accompanied him from the fort. But our Captain made a better selection of a place to ford and the teams all crossed easily, and without any noise whatever.³

From the time the company crossed the Platte, the supply of grass to feed the animals was plentiful, the animals steadily improved in condition, and the progress speeded up. On May 19, they were ten miles east of Laramie and with smooth traveling from that point on, they reached Mormon Grove on Sunday, June 8.

In a meeting there, the men expressed their feelings about the journey.

Ezra T. Benson said he had crossed the plains seven times, but never enjoyed himself as well as he had with this company of missionaries, and

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), June 11, 1856.

²Ibid., June 11, 1856.

³"Journal History of The Church," 1856 June 8, p. 11.

felt pleased with the good feelings which existed among them.

Abraham O. Smoot said, we had been greatly blessed in our journey and had arrived at this place ten days sooner than he anticipated when in the snow storm.

Porter Rockwell observed that Judge Kinney said that none but Mormon horses could travel as ours had done; for he had fed his all the way with corn and other grain and yet could not keep up.

The next day Captain Smoot's company of forty-five persons arrived at Atchison, where they divided and went their separate ways. Smoot and some of the group sailed on down the Missouri arriving at St. Louis on June 12.²

One of the purposes of Smoot's journey had been to purchase supplies for the Church. To pay for these goods, he was expecting remittances from the Liverpool office, but their funds had been drained by the heavy immigration of the poor during that season. In order to obtain the supplies needed Brother Smoot had to be personally responsible, which he did and thus obtained the merchandise.³

His company was organized with eighty-eight persons, forty-two wagons, two hundred eighty-five oxen, six cows, fifteen mules and horses, and one carriage.⁴ The train was well loaded down with the steam boiler and machinery for President Young. In addition, it carried books and dry goods from England, and other articles which had been cached or stored away in previous years.⁵

On the afternoon of September 15, Franklin D. Richards and Daniel Spencer visited with Smoot's company about twenty miles west of Ash Hollow. At the time, they found the company to have provisions enough to last only twenty-three days. Captain Smoot lacked drivers, having only thirty-three men fit for duty. Although the animals were in good condition, the loads were heavy and some assistance would be needed to reach the valley in safety.⁶

By October 4, Elders Richards and Spencer had arrived in the valley. They immediately sought President Young to deliver Smoot's request for aid and to consider what should be done to alleviate the situation. At the meeting in the Historian's Office, President Young listened to Smoot's letter and then asked for a restatement of just what Brother Smoot requested. The list included one ton of flour, forty yoke of cattle, twenty good teamsters, 304 beeves, and

¹ Ibid., 1856 June 8, p. 17.

² Ibid., 1856 June 17.

³ Jenson, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, op. cit., I, p. 487.

⁴ "Journal History of The Church," 1856 October 4.

⁵ Ibid., 1856 October 17 and 28.

⁶ Ibid., 1856 October 4.

six good wagons.¹

In the meeting, it was mentioned that the merchandise train of Gilbert and Gerrish with seventeen wagons and eighteen men was traveling along with Smoot's company. Brother Richards explained, "Gilbert and Gerrish are hanging on to Smoot; they think when they are with him they are safe, and will keep along."²

In response to the call sounded on October 5, a group of volunteers started on October 7 with aid to Smoot's company as well as others which were in greater need than his. On October 13, the "rescue" party camped with A. O. Smoot on Black's Fork, two days in advance of Smoot's main company. He then led the party with fresh teams and provisions back to his company, which they met on the Big Sandy, ten miles from Little Sandy, and one hundred miles from Bridger.³

Smoot went on ahead of the body of his company to obtain still more fresh teams from Fort Bridger and Fort Supply. When he brought the body of the company to Fort Bridger and Fort Supply he left much of his freight and the weakest of the cattle. Freed of these impediments, he pushed on toward the valley with the people and the ablest of the cattle.

Moving with all possible haste, the company arrived at Big Mountain on November 7. Brother Joseph A. Peck and a Brother Maxfield hurried into the valley on that day with a request that teams be sent to carry out feed for his cattle. Brothers Peck and Maxfield took back two wagon loads of corn for the hungry animals.

At three p. m. on November 9, Captain Smoot's train of Church goods and James G. Willie's hand cart company entered the valley. A great many people had gone out to meet the companies, and many had found relatives and friends whom they took to their homes. The Bishops had also prepared houses to shelter the new arrivals. Another entry in the Journal History states that on November 10, "Bro. Abraham O. Smoot brought in the Church goods." A. O. Smoot had completed another assignment.

The death of Mayor Jedediah M. Grant on December 1, 1856, was to place new responsibility on the shoulders of A. O. Smoot. With S. W. Richards and A. H. Raleigh he composed a committee which drafted resolutions of respect for the departed and sympathy for the family. Also he was selected with seven other members of the City Council to serve as a pallbearer at the funeral,

¹Ibid., 1856 October 4, p. 2.

²Ibid., 1856 October 4, p. 3.

³Oliver B. Huntington, "Diary," (B. Y. U. Library), II, p. 105.

which was held on December 4, 1856.

At the next meeting of the City Council of Great Salt Lake City on January 2, 1857, it was moved, seconded, and carried that A. O. Smoot be appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mayor Grant.² At the next regular election on April 6, 1857, the people of the city expressed their approval of A. O. Smoot by electing him to be the Mayor. This position he continued to hold by re-election until 1866, when he declined the nomination. Few persons rendered such unselfish service to their city as did A. O. Smoot.

. . . as a public servant he labored without pay. For his ten years of faithful and efficient service as Mayor of Salt Lake City, when he frequently worked from six o'clock in the morning until ten and eleven at night, imperiling health and life for the common weal, he accepted not a dollar of compensation; and the same is true of his career as Mayor of Provo.³

At the same time Smoot served as Mayor, his other interests continued. Brigham Young had formed the Brigham Young Express Company, or the Y. X. Company which took over the contract to carry the mails. When Brigham Young embarked on an enterprise, he very often turned to A. O. Smoot for wise assistance. Smoot was to direct the efforts of a large group of men in locating and building mail stations along the route between Kansas City and Salt Lake City. He had already located a number of the stations when he left Salt Lake on June 2 with a company of fifteen men and three mule teams and wagons to deliver the June mail in the east.

In a letter to Orson Pratt and Ezra T. Benson, Brigham Young says of the venture:

The Express Company is prospering finely. I have dispatched A. O. Smoot and N. V. Jones to locate permanent stations in the black hills; they have eighty men with them and it is my intention to furnish them with sufficient provision to enable several hundred persons to winter there in case of such emergency as occurred last fall.⁴

Near Fort Laramie, A. O. Smoot met Feramorz Little, a mail carrier traveling west. Little had startling news. At Independence, he had talked with various contractors who were supplying a government expedition bound for the west. Between Fort Laramie and Fort Kearney, Smoot encountered a body of United States cavalry who claimed to be reconnoitering for hostile Indians. He next met several heavy freight trains who were very secretive about their

¹"Minutes of the City Council of Great Salt Lake City," December 2, 1856.

²Ibid., January 2, 1857.

³Whitney, op. cit., IV, p. 101.

⁴"Journal History of The Church," 1857 June 30.

destination. Two days later he arrived at Kansas City, where he joined with Nicholas Groesbeck who was in charge of Y. X. Company business at that end of the route. Together they went to see William W. Russell and learned that he was supplying the freight trains which carried supplies for an expedition to Utah. The government had indeed ordered troops to Utah. Brigham Young had been superseded as governor, and a new set of officials would accompany the troops west.¹ Smoot and Groesbeck then went to the Post Office at Independence to pick up the mail, but the Postmaster refused to turn over the return mail, stating that he had instructions from Washington to deliver no more Salt Lake City mail.

An interesting reversal of this situation occurred ninety years later when a grandson of A. O. Smoot was elected President of the National Postmasters' Association. Eight thousand postmasters gathered in a three day convention in San Francisco, 1947. Isaac A. Smoot, the Postmaster of Salt Lake City, was a candidate against Joseph Gallagher of Philadelphia for the office of president. Strong support from W. H. McCarthy of San Francisco helped to elect Mr. Smoot to the national presidency. An interesting fact was that Mr. Smoot succeeded in this office the Postmaster from Kansas City, the place where his grandfather had been refused the mail.²

After being refused the mail, Smoot and Groesbeck concluded the reports they had received were true. Smoot with the aid of Judson Stoddard who had brought the April mail, proceeded to disband the mail stations and send the men and supplies westward. They moved slowly while gathering up the company property, until they reached Fort Laramie. At this point, they decided that part of the company should travel with all possible speed to deliver the news of the approaching army to the Saints in Salt Lake Valley.

Porter Rockwell, carrying the July mail east, had returned with Smoot to Laramie when he heard the news. He now joined A. O. Smoot and Judson Stoddard in the dash for the valley. They hitched up two span of their best animals to a light spring wagon and struck out on the evening of July 18. Just five days and three hours later, they arrived in Salt Lake City having covered the phenomenal distance of 513 miles.³

The next day, July 24, was the occasion for a grand celebration commemorating the anniversary of the Pioneers entering the valley. Nearly twenty-

¹Whitney, op. cit., I, p. 597-598.

²Personal interview with Isaac Albert Smoot, Salt Lake City, Utah.

³Ibid., p. 598-599.

six hundred persons were gathered in Big Cottonwood Canyon for the event, when four men rode into camp and sought Brigham Young. Elias Smith, the Postmaster from Salt Lake City, had joined the dusty, travel stained trio to bring the news of the approaching army.¹

The news that the army was on the march did not create much excitement among the people gathered to celebrate. They were used to being driven out from their homes and they also had a faith in God to sustain them. Two days later, however, when the Saints were assembled in the Bowery, Elder Smoot reported his journey and attitude about the approaching army with considerable feeling.

He likened his stay among the people in the east to a visit to the regions of the Devil. The people there breathed out threats against the Mormons, declaring they would come up and destroy them from off the face of the earth. Not only are they bitter against the Mormons, but they are bitter among themselves, "for they are truly like the cats that eat themselves all up except their tails, and then the tails continued the war." He thought that the priests kindled the fire, the editors blow the flame, and all had forgotten God. The real reason of all the trouble is that Israel is united and strong, about to build a temple. "That has caused the Devil to be up and on the march, and to howl most lustily; he gives forth some splendid howling."²

As he moved about among the people in the east for eight days, all manner of threats were hurled against him, but he said, "I cared not for that, for I felt that God was with me and that they had not power to destroy me; and I did not think that they really felt so disposed."³

He reported that a reaction to all the excitement had begun to set in, and people were beginning to count the cost of the expedition and question what it would accomplish.

. . . and they found that it would cost one third of the revenue of the United States to send out 2500 troops to fight the 'Mormons,' and that when they got here they would not be a breakfast spell for our women and children, that we could whip them out and then go out and do our day's work. They well understand that such a job would not detain us from our peaceful avocations for even one day. And if that number of soldiers is going to cost them one third of the revenue, and that for a number which our women and children can easily whip, what will it cost them to send an army large enough to whip out our men.

Several inquired of me how many men we could raise, able to go into

¹Ibid., p. 604.

²"Journal History of The Church," 1857 July 26, p. 6.

³Ibid., 1857 July 26, p. 6.

the field and do good service. I told them that we were a weak small people, and that I could not readily give a correct guess. "Well, could you raise so many?" Yes. "So many?" Yes. "Well, how many do you suppose at a rough guess, that you could raise, good efficient warriors." I told them that I thought we could raise fifty or sixty thousand, more or less, but with me it was only a rough guess. However I spoke candidly and believed all I said, and they also believed it.¹

Brother Smoot certainly talked a good fight, and his expression of confidence no doubt encouraged the people. When we realize, however, that even after they had scraped the bottom of the barrel, they only raised 800 men, we must brand such brave talk as "whistling in the dark."

Brother Smoot had made a careful investigation in the east and learned that the army men as a whole were not in favor of the campaign. He said that many of them were already deserting, and had declared they would not fight against their own people. He also discovered that up to the fourth of July no officer had received any direct orders to come here, and no soldiers had yet started for this place. Some foot companies were expected to start on July 15. He even thought it might be necessary in the spring to send teams and drivers out to help the heavy freight wagons to the valley.

His closing admonition was to place their trust in God.

All the fears that we need have is that we do not live our religion close enough, for if we do, all will be right, at least I feel so. . . .

We have no cause to fear or to be excited, if we will only move straight along. If we serve our God, keep his commandments and do as we are told, we shall be all right and enjoy the blessings suited to our probation.²

On January 16, 1858, a mass meeting of citizens met in the Tabernacle in Great Salt Lake City to prepare a petition and a resolution setting forth the true state of affairs in Utah. A. O. Smoot was sustained as chairman of the meeting.

At first the attitude of the people and the leaders was fight. Later they decided on an opposite course, flight. On Sunday, March 21, the citizens of Salt Lake City and the settlements to the north agreed to abandon their homes and move south.

In spite of this decision, improvements went on in the hope that ultimately they would retain their city and their homes. The city council, under the direction of Mayor Smoot, pushed to completion the erection of a new city hall. On April 5, 1858 it was dedicated, with Elder Orsen Hyde offering the prayer. Among the leaders who addressed the assembly was Mayor Smoot.

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), August 5, 1857.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), August 5, 1857.

The Mayor said he had been well pleased with the dedicatory prayer offered up and with what had been said tonight. He felt to respond, "O God, so might it be." As a council we have enjoyed ourselves first rate and he believed that the Lord has been with this Quorum. In our deliberations for the interests of this City there has never been a feeling to equivocate or contend; but all our actions have been characterized with union and good feeling. He believed that the Lord had been with us this evening and had accepted this dedicatory prayer; he should not have felt the hall had been so acceptable to this people had we not dedicated the stones, the adobies and all the materials; and now if we have to let it go, all is right, but he hoped the Lord will never suffer it to be polluted by the ungodly. He would hate to have the reflection that the hell-hounds were holding their drunken orgies and revelling in this place. He rejoiced that though we had not wine to feast ourselves on as is usual on these occasions that the Hall was dedicated.¹

During the month of May, the contemplated evacuation to the south actually took place. Only a token force remained behind to set the torch to the city rather than have it fall into the hands of their enemies. Smoot not only had to see to the removal of his own families, but also to direct the removal of city property and records.

In his typically thorough manner, he prepared for the move. Beneath the floor, at strategic spots around the foundation, he placed kegs of powder, thinking that, "if there should prove treachery on the part of the soldiers, his house would burn quicker and easier with the assistance of five kegs of powder, so he placed it handy. Upon his return, he forgot about the powder and neglected to remove it. Ten years later, he sold the house to James Sharp and moved to Provo. After another twelve years, Brother Sharp began some remodeling, and discovered the five kegs still in place. Considerably startled, he inquired of Smoot and learned the reason for the powder and also that he had been living over a powder magazine for the last twelve years."²

During the exile from Salt Lake, the government was set up in Provo. Smoot and his families stayed at Salem or "Pond Town" a bit further south. While at Salem the family grew. Both Diana and Anna bore baby daughters in the shelter of covered wagons on the same day, June 8, 1858. When the army passed peacefully through the city and camped in Cedar Valley, the Saints began to return. By July 1, the leaders returned to their homes in the city, and soon all of the people followed.

The calm wisdom of A. O. Smoot stands out in a meeting of the City Council on August 20, 1858. The subject of taxing merchants was introduced. The merchants were taxed on the property listed on their invoices. They objected

¹"Minutes of The City Council of Great Salt Lake City," April 5, 1858.

²J. E. Booth, "A History of The Provo Fourth Ward," (Manuscript typed from the original by B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), p. 71.

to being taxed more than once a year and also that the tax was too high. They were willing to pay 50 per cent of what they had been paying in the past.

Different members of the council spoke expressing the opinion that the tax was not too high, but that the merchants exacted too high prices from the people to whom they sold. Each member who spoke was in favor of sustaining the ordinance as it now stood. Mayor Smoot said that he also entertained feelings similar to the Council, but this was a day of compromises. From calm reflection, in his judgement, the best course for this council to adopt, under present emergencies would be to reduce the assessment for the present year to 50 per cent. The council recognized the wisdom of such a policy and voted accordingly.¹

The period during and after the arrival of the soldiers and their encampment in Cedar Valley was a difficult one for the civil officers of the city. Rowdiness increased, and with it the problems of the city government. More murders were committed in the eight months after the army arrived than in all the eleven years previous.

President Young was also concerned with the problem, and a special meeting of the City Council was called at which he was present. He presented the idea of adding two hundred men to the Salt Lake City Police Force. The Council approved the idea, and the next day in Brigham Young's office many of the men were sworn in. On this occasion, Mayor Smoot addressed the new police officers.

He expressed gratitude at seeing so many men assembled who desired good government. He desired to see all of the ordinances of the city lived up to, "but men will get drunk and swear, and the reins will have to be drawn easily over them and we shall have to teach them." Concerning the supposedly good Mormons who felt they could mingle with this element and partake of their habits, he advised the policemen, "put the bit on them and then they will quit it."²

Perhaps the charge that aroused most antagonism and brought the army to Utah was the charge of Judge Drummond that the territorial records had been destroyed. A group of men later published a letter in the San Francisco Bulletin to the same effect. On October 27, 1858, Orson Hyde and A. O. Smoot visited President Young's office.

Bro. Smoot said that Gov. Cummings told him that he had made Sec.

¹"Minutes of the City Council of Great Salt Lake City," August 20, 1858.

²Ibid., September 15, 1858.

Hartnett, Kirk Anderson, Judge Sinclair, Mr. Dotson and S. A. Gilbert acknowledge that the letter published in the San Francisco Bulletin of September 30, was false, and that our records were better than those of any other young territory that they ever knew anything about.¹

Occuring several years later, but a part of this tension between the Saints and outsiders on both a personal and official level was an incident in March 1863.

Fortunately for those concerned, Elder A. O. Smoot and not some mad fanatic, was mayor of the city of the Saints in those troublesome times. The Grand Jury had presented Camp Douglas as a "nuisance," and, following the municipal law, it should have been "abated." The camp annoyed Brigham, for he could never look out of his door without seeing it growing larger and larger, every day more permanent. In the wrath of the moment he ordered the mayor to "move Connor and his men" out of the city limits. But Mayor Smoot is a sober, calculating, brave man. He counted the cost of the task; and after he had estimated how many men he would require, he informed the Prophet that he had sufficient, and that his plans were complete. Brigham's second thought had come, and his temper had passed away. He made no answer; and the good sense of Abraham O. Smoot saved Mormonism.

Had the camp been attacked by the Saints and blood spilled the wrath of the nation would have been directed against the Saints.²

After he returned from Salem until he moved to Provo, Smoot was involved in a multitude of business and civil activities. Not all of the ventures grew to the scale anticipated by the men who envisioned them, but they do reveal a spirit of growth and progress which motivated these men.

On January 29, 1859 Smoot with several other prominent men formed a company to raise sugar cane. On May 2, he met with Brigham Young and others to discuss the possibility of starting a mercantile establishment to bring goods to the consumer at a reduced cost. Perhaps lack of interest and support on the part of the merchants prevented success in the venture, but it was later successful in Provo.

Under the superintendency of A. O. Smoot, assisted by others, a general cattle round up was conducted on the West Jordan range in April 1861.

On May 15, Smoot left with Brigham Young's party on a tour of the southern area as far south as Washington County. Smoot traveled as a representative of the Bishops and also of the agricultural interests of Salt Lake Valley. He spoke at many of the cities on the route. He returned on June 8 having traveled 728 miles.

On January 6, 1862, he was made a member of a committee to draft a petition to congress for admission of Utah as a state of the Union. Again on

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1858 October 27.

²T. B. Stenhouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), p. 608-609.

January 20, he was named as a member of a committee to form ordinances for the proposed state.

Sorrow struck the family on June 22, 1863. A son, Albert A. O. Smoot, drowned while bathing in the Jordan River. President Young in his remarks to the family said:

I can say to Bro. Smoot and family that they have not the thousandth part the reason to regret or grieve in this bereavement that other parents have who have forward sons. . . .

I have heard that Brother Smoot regretted that his son had not received his endowments. We are the very people that can give our children their blessings. No other people can. This should be a source of contentment to us. . . . Bro Smoot is perhaps a better man than most of us. His trials remind him that he is still in a land of sorrow and troubles.¹

During the month of March, stern Smoot justice was meted out by the Mayor, to two of Salt Lake's offenders. He fined a man named Burrows seventy-five dollars and a boy named Cuthbert twenty-five dollars for selling liquor to Indians. "The Mayor has but one rule--the fine, or public labor on the streets with the chain and ball. It works well."²

Still associated with agricultural advancement, Smoot was elected as one of eleven directors of The Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society. Editorial comment praised the organization as a power for service to the community.

A brief but striking incident catches our attention in May 1864. Elder Woodruff visited Brother Smoot whom he found sick in bed not expecting to live. Elder Woodruff tells the story:

I laid my hands upon him, together with Dr. Clinton and prayed for him. His family was discouraged about him thinking he would die. On my return to the office I spoke to Pres. Young about his condition. The President said that Bro Smoot would be around again in a few days, for he had seen him in a dream the previous night and thought he would soon get well.³

His recovery seems to have been rapid and complete for we soon find him involved in another project to develop the community. An artesian well company was formed with Smoot at the head. On the east bench directly north of the Twentieth Ward School House, they dug a shaft to a depth of 130 feet. When no water was struck by this depth, Smoot suspended the digging as he considered it unsafe to go further. They intended to start boring from that depth on. Brigham Young thought the development of such water sources would

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1863 June 22, p. 1, 2.

²Ibid., 1863 March 23.

³Ibid., 1864 May 6.

benefit the city greatly.¹

A. O. Smoot played a strong role in one of the more ambitious projects proposed by the leaders. The citizens of Salt Lake City met in a mass meeting in the Tabernacle on November 26, 1864. Among the subjects considered was construction of a dam on the Jordan River and building of a canal to carry irrigation water and freight. A. O. Smoot was named on a committee of seven to draft resolutions expressing the sentiment of the meeting. It was then moved, seconded, and carried that Brigham Young be the president and A. O. Smoot be the secretary of the company.²

A bill chartering the Deseret Irrigation and Navigation Canal Company was vetoed by the governor in February of the following year, but steps were taken to organize the company under a previous bill. The incorporation was not completed until January of 1867. Section two of the articles of incorporation describes the proposed program of the company.

Sec. 2.--The objects of said Corporation are hereby declared to be the construction of suitable canals for the irrigation of the land lying below their level, and to afford additional water to town lots and other improved lands, and to open navigable communication from Utah Lake by way of Great Salt Lake City, and estimated to reclaim seventeen thousand acres of desert.³

By the end of another year Smoot had been called to Provo and was spared close contact with the failure of the plan. No one can deny that these hardy pioneers possessed imagination and courage to try.

In the meantime the duties of the Mayor's office made frequent demands upon Smoot's time. In January of 1865 the military decided to build a hospital at Warm Springs, half a mile north of the city. They had already proceeded with the erection of the building, when Mayor Smoot ordered the Marshall of the city to remove all obstructions to the spring as they were considered a public nuisance. The public had long been accustomed to bathing at the spring, and under Smoot's quick action were not deprived of the privilege for long.⁴

In June of 1865, Smoot was a member of a party which met with the Indians at Spanish Fork to complete a treaty under which the Indians would be removed to the Uintah Basin.

With the growth of the city came the need for a larger city hall. Under Mayor Smoot's administration the new City Hall was ready for dedication on

¹Ibid., 1864 November 18, p. 2.

²Ibid., 1864 November 26, p. 2.

³Ibid., 1867 January 18.

⁴Ibid., 1865 January 16.

January 8, 1866. At 11 o'clock Mayor Smoot called the meeting to order and after speeches by leaders representing various groups, the hall was dedicated by George Q. Cannon. The newspaper report declared that, "His Honor Mayor Smoot and the City Council have much reason to be satisfied with their labors on the new City Hall; and we have no doubt that our citizens, all of them, appreciate the integrity and high character of the City Fathers. . . ." ¹

The completion of the City Hall was to be the last major service rendered by Smoot in the capacity of Mayor. After serving ten years he declined the nomination for another term. At the installation of his successor, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and George Q. Cannon all spoke in congratulatory terms of the administration of Mayor Smoot. Brother Smoot expressed his continued interest in the welfare of the city and a willingness to be of service wherever he could. ²

The police force of the city gave a fine party in honor of the retiring Mayor on March 5, 1866. Most of the prominent citizens were present. After dancing until 10 P. M., the police captain offered an address in honor of Mayor Smoot and presented him with a plaque signed by all the members of the force, expressing "their high regard and esteem for the ability, wisdom and dignity and faithfulness that had characterized his Honor's course during the ten years of his official career." Brigham Young, Smoot, and his successor, Daniel H. Wells, made brief speeches and supper was then dispatched in hearty style. Dancing continued until three o'clock when the guests dispersed. ³

Smoot's next affiliation was as a director of the Utah Produce Company. The object of the company was to trade in flour and other articles of produce and prevent the excessive fluctuation in prices and also provide proper remuneration to the producers for their surplus produce. The company was organized March 3, 1866.

When Dr. John King Robinson was lured from his home on the pretense that his professional services were desired and then cruelly murdered, the citizenry was much aroused. A. O. Smoot pledged one hundred dollars for the capture of the guilty person or persons.

On March 21, 1867 the stockholders of the Deseret Telegraph Company met in the Historian's Office and organized with Brigham Young as president. A. O. Smoot was elected to be a director.

¹Ibid., 1866 January 8, p. 2.

²"Minutes of the City Council of Great Salt Lake City," February 13, 1866.

³Letter on file in The Church Historian's Office. Also "Journal History of The Church," 1866 March 5.

During 1867 Smoot entered into a business which proved, over the years, to be a very profitable venture. At the suggestion of Brigham Young he went into business with John Sharp and Robert T. Bruton in establishing a small woolen mill on the bank of Big Canyon Creek.¹ This company, known as Wasatch Woolen Mills, was one of the first three woolen mills in Utah.

As the year 1867 drew to a close, an important period in the life of Brother Smoot also drew to a close. He had rendered conspicuous public service and earned the respect of the people. He had increased in property and influence, and had played a prominent role in the development of Salt Lake City. He was comfortably and securely situated in his home, a solid structure on South Temple Street at the site of the present Pacific National Life Assurance Company offices. All this he was to leave at the call of his chief.

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), January 1, 1868.

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE AND DEVELOPE PROVO

The leaders of the Church had considerable faith in Provo as a potentially strong religious and economic center. For some time both the religious and civil governments had been in a disturbed and weakened condition. This disunity reached a high point in the circulation and presentation to the legislature of a petition to divide the county into two separate counties. Speaking in March 1870, Smoot said, "This petition was the life spring of my being here."¹ In a determined move to correct these undesirable conditions a set of strong leaders were selected to take over the reins and direct the activities in that place. When Brigham Young looked about for a leader it is not at all surprising that he called A. O. Smoot for the job.

Naturally before any public announcements were made Smoot was sounded out. When Brigham Young called Smoot in he announced. "I've called you here to tell you that I am going to call you on a mission. There are three places all on a par. One is as good as the other. They are Provo, Hell, or Texas. You can take your choice." Smoot's answer was, "I would sooner go to Hell than to Provo."²

His remark was not entirely in jest. A. O. Smoot had no personal desire to move to Provo. Whatever his desire, it was subordinated to the call of duty. The desire of the leaders became his desire. No more loyal supporter ever assisted the Church cause. Some have even declared with conviction, when illustrating his loyalty, that if Brigham Young had requested him to cut off his right arm, he would have cut first and questioned second.

With Smoot's personal acceptance assured, the next move was a discussion of the matter in the School of the Prophets, which met in the Fourteenth Ward

¹"Record of the Business Meeting of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," (Handwritten minute book on file in The Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), March 12, 1870.

²Personal interviews with Ida Smoot Dusenberry and Horace Alma Smoot, children of A. O. Smoot.

School House on January 31, 1868. The First Presidency, the entire Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and enough other important leaders to fill out a 'Mormon Who's Who' were assembled. After the expected speech making, "President Young nominated Abraham O. Smoot to go to Provo to act as President, Mayor and Bishop of that place, and John Taylor to go there as Judge and a number of others as City Councilors."¹

In addition to those already mentioned, Apostle Wilford Woodruff and Joseph F. Smith, Bishop E. F. Sheets, George G. Bywater and others were to make the move to Provo. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball intended to build homes in Provo and live there part of the time.

The initial acceptance of the proposed changes being received in the School of The Prophet's meeting, President Young and a large party left Salt Lake City at 7 A. M. February 7 to hold two days of meetings in Provo. The day of the meetings and the importance of the occasion had evidently been well announced, for at American Fork another sizeable group of prominent leaders joined the company. When the company arrived at Provo between 4 and 5 P. M., they were met at Provo River by citizens on horseback, in carriages, and many on foot. Led by Bishop Miller, they extended a hearty welcome to the President and his friends. Many of the company stayed at Bishop Miller's home and others were distributed among the citizens.²

On the next day, the meeting was called to order at 10 A. M. by Bishop Miller. In the audience were many who had come from Salt Lake in advance of President Young's party, and also people from the cities around Provo who had flocked to the city to be in attendance. In the morning meeting, Elder George A. Smith discoursed upon oneness, Brigham Young upon conforming to the counsels of the Spirit, and Heber C. Kimball upon humanity, showing how Gods blessings will flow unto the humble, faithful, and obedient.

After such an outpouring, the people were cooperative and obedient to the desires of their leaders. At the mass meeting, held at one o'clock, Bishop Miller stated they had met to nominate candidates for the City Council and to give the people an opportunity to express their views. The ticket, which had been previously published, was then presented and the gentlemen named were nominated.³ In a short speech thanking the people for the nomination, Smoot gave his politics, "The Kingdom of God."

¹"Journal History of The Church," 1868 January 31.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 19, 1868.

³Ibid., February 19, 1868.

After the Sunday meetings, at which Smoot addressed the people, they turned to the business of elections. On Monday, February 10, an election was held resulting in the following officers being elected: for Mayor, Abraham O. Smoot; for Aldermen, Elijah F. Sheets, William Miller, and Myron Tanner; for Councillors, Wilford Woodruff, Joseph F. Smith, Alexander F. Macdonald, George F. Bywater, and David Cluff.¹

There was certainly no loss of time on the part of the new officers, as they held the first meeting of the new City Council on the afternoon of the day they were elected. Offices were turned over, the new men sworn in, and a short address delivered by Mayor Smoot.

If anything the avenues of activity increased in the life of A. O. Smoot after he moved to Provo. He was the head of the Church, the government, mercantile interests, industrial interests, and financial interests. It would be difficult to find an activity of major importance which he did not head personally or exercise great influence upon. He truly was the father of Utah Valley development.

Shortly after he arrived in Provo, activity increased. His eye was quick to see the need, and his voice was urgent in its call to action. At a meeting of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood on April 2, 1868, he strongly advocated the building of the Provo Canyon Road and urged the Bishops to use their influence in opening it up. Recognizing the importance of an artery between Provo and Heber city, he declared, "There is no one thing that I can see that would tend more to the real interest and benefit of Provo, if no toll was collected thereon at all. Still there would be, and yet become a profitable investment. The Bps and teachers can do much in the matter."²

Also, at this meeting, Brother Smoot called upon the people for aid in bringing the Saints from foreign lands. He felt that it was a duty to bring the Saints, not only this year but as long as there was a Saint to come. The allotment of twelve teams, four thousand pounds of flour and two thousand pounds of meat was one that Provo could easily meet, and he called for these supplies to be brought in by the next Saturday morning. "Don't plead poverty, when we plead poverty we are poor, or rather poor devils."

Perhaps Brother Smoot's association with the first company of Perpetual Emigration Fund Saints endeared their cause to his heart. At any rate, he never forgot their needs. Often he urged the people to lend their aid. When an

¹"Minutes of The Provo City Council," (Handwritten minute book on file in the City Recorder's Office), February 10, 1868.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," April 2, 1868.

attempt was being made to collect from those able persons who had been helped by the Fund in earlier years, President Smoot was straight forward in his instructions.

Each Bishop will be furnished with a copy of this indebtedness and it will be their duty to hunt up the debtors or their heirs and collect the amts due: men owing this Fund able to pay should be required to do so on pain of loosing their fellowship it was not designed crowd the poor but to collect the debt from those able to pay.¹

At General Conference in 1880, many debts and back donations were cancelled. Later President Smoot referred to the matter, "There are many worthy poor who cannot pay their indebtedness to the P. E. Fund. It is a sacred debt and should be paid by those who are able."²

President Smoot's plan was not only to build up the physical capacities of Provo and Utah County, but to raise the moral and spiritual tone as well. To aid in this, he began a more complete organization of Church groups. In both the forenoon and afternoon of April 12 he spoke on the necessity and value of the Relief Society. He emphasized not only the service they could render, but also the increased time the Bishops would have because of the ladies services. One month later, he instructed the Bishops to organize Female Relief Societies at once.³

The men were not to be neglected in this attempt at rejuvenation. Brother Smoot had been a regular attendant of The School of the Prophets in Salt Lake and was anxious to have the same influence exerted upon the Saints in Utah County. At the organization on April 15, 1868, he was elected to be the President of the School. Its membership included the leading Brethren in Utah County.

At their weekly meetings, President Smoot would usually speak upon some subject which he thought was of importance to the people at that time. The subject might vary from a religious nature to one of practical everyday problems such as raising better breeds of cattle or planting only pure seeds to insure better crops.

Occasionally he would suggest a topic and leave it up to the members of the School to develop the discussion, or at times he left the matter of discussion entirely up to the members, much as in our testimony meetings.

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," (Handwritten minute book on file in The Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), November 3, 1877.

²"Record of Sunday Services, Provo, Utah," (Handwritten minute book on file in The Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), April 25, 1880.

³"Early History of Provo," (Microfilm of handwritten minute book, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), May 10, 1868.

When President Smoot desired to launch an important project in the Provo area, he usually first presented it to the School of the Prophets. In their meetings, the members frequently expressed their satisfaction and enjoyment of the discussions in the School.

It undoubtedly was an uplifting force in the life of early Provo. Some members became slack in their attendance, and President Smoot often warned that the tree would have to be pruned. When he felt that enemies had infiltrated their way into the School so that a free feeling of trust and comradeship no longer existed, President Smoot discontinued the School. The last meeting was held on August 6, 1872.¹

When we return to the subject of immediate physical expansion, we find that, here too, A. O. Smoot played a part. The month of May 1868 found Bishops Smoot and Elijah Sheets erecting a store building for Kimball and Lawrence, the Salt Lake City firm.² This addition to Provo's enterprises cost the then considerable sum of \$10,400, and was the first of many buildings which Smoot was to erect in Provo.

At the same time, Smoot was lending his support to another development which was to aid not only Provo, but the entire intermountain area. This was the completion of the railroad to the west coast. Enemies had declared that the Mormons would not let the railroads pass through their territory. Quite the opposite was true. Not only did they let it pass through, but they actively assisted in its completion. Brigham Young took a contract with the Union Pacific to complete an important section of the track. As the leader in Utah County, Smoot organized the people and sent out bands to work on the road. He declared that we must not fail in the fulfillment of the contract. In a Priesthood meeting on May 28, 1868 he said:

In relation to the Railroad we will do our part but must not neglect our fields, for they are the wealth of Israel, it is the duty of men to consult their Bishops before leaving, then all that can be spared, may go out on the road and all who do so ought to organize in companies.³

So completely did he rally his people to the task that during the month of October most of the male population was at work on the railroad.

When the Utah Southern Railroad was organized and tracks were pushed south from Salt Lake in 1871, Smoot led the struggle to get the line extended

¹"Record of the School of the Prophets," (Handwritten minute book on file in The Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), August 6, 1872.

²Millennial Star, (London, England), June 27, 1868.

³"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," May 28, 1868.

beyond Lehi. He urged the people to buy all the shares they could, paying for the shares by labor in laying rails, building grade, and whatever was needed. He felt that it would be a reflection on the people of Provo to fail in performing their proportion of work in completing the track to their city. In response to his call twenty-five teams turned out to complete the work near Provo City during the month of September.¹

Also during this period, he lent his influence as the Mayor of Provo, and in the meetings of the City Council helped determine the best route for entrance into the city. In addition, the council tendered their best wishes for success to the railroad and with it their influence for its speedy construction.

With a decade of experience as Mayor of Salt Lake City to guide him, A. O. Smoot recognized that one of the difficult problems of city government was control of liquor sales. His policy was to eliminate the sale and consumption as much as possible. In the City Council meeting of June 6, 1868, he suggested that the city obtain a small amount of liquor and dispense the same for medicinal purposes only. After discussion by the council, it was decided that Mayor Smoot should obtain a small quantity and deposit it with the A. H. Noon & Company Drug Store for disposal as medicine. They were to be required to keep a record of the amounts sold and to whom sold, and this was to be subject to the inspection of the City Council at any time.²

As might be expected, the "medicinal privilege" was somewhat abused, and the consumption would indicate that Provo had an unusual number of sick citizens, or that they had unusual faith in the "cure."

If Provo residents were not aware of the constant faith and unquestioned devotion of A. O. Smoot to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to His restored Church, they soon had ample opportunity to observe it. From the first, his public utterances were filled with this spirit.

He declared that, "Our greatest exertion should be to gain Eternal Life which is the greatest gift of God." This called for daily appreciation and activity on our part. We should never cease to learn throughout all eternity. All other considerations should be secondary to service in the Church. In a priesthood meeting on October 1, 1868 he declared, "My resolution is, God assisting, that no business of mine shall ever interfere with me in my duty in the

¹Odell E. Scott, "Economic History of Provo, Utah, 1849-1900," (Masters Thesis, Brigham Young University), p. 218.

²"Minutes of the Provo City Council," June 6, 1868.

priesthood."¹ A survey of his life readily reveals that he lived in just that fashion.

He frequently emphasized the importance of the office of the Bishops. They should spend all their time, if necessary, to tend to the duties of this office. He promised them that if they followed this course, they would gain greater material prosperity than if they devoted their time to material gain. "This is true, and proven in my experience for twenty years past. I want to say that your duties stand first, brethren, and unless attended to, you will go into the dark."² If there was a Bishop or man who could not work, President Smoot desired him to resign, for he wanted the Priesthood to be united and ready to work.

Further stressing the responsibility of the Bishop's position, Brother Smoot stated that a Mayorship as an office was a mere honorary calling, and not to be compared with the office of a Bishop or other priesthood offices.

Bishops ought to pray for ability to perform their duties, especially in the important and delicate matter of human relationships. "Bishops and all rulers in Israel who sit in judgement without the influence of the Holy Ghost must not expect to please God."³

Abraham O. Smoot was not one to just sit back and give counsel. He had always been active. In 1869, after years on the firing line, he said he had been a missionary in the Church of Jesus Christ for thirty-five years, and they were pleasant years. "I can't say that I ever had any trials in the Gospel although I have been mobbed and driven from all I possessed in the midst of this I rejoice in the knowledge of God."⁴

Perhaps his many years of missionary service made Brother Smoot feel keenly about such a call. When one of the brothers, in his farewell remarks before departing for the mission field, referred to expressions of others saying they would not go, President Smoot exclaimed,

Bro Cluff has been called to do a good work. I want the man who said that he would not go on such a mission to give me back his ticket, (a card of membership in the School of the Prophets) as I will not associate in the School of the Prophets with such individuals.⁵

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," October 1, 1868.

²Ibid., September 10, 1868.

³"Early History of Provo," December 25, 1870.

⁴Ibid., April 24, 1870.

⁵Ibid., November 21, 1869.

Brother Smoot could not understand how anyone could refuse any call made by the leaders of the Church. To him a call by those in authority was a call from God. He never felt that we were justified in making excuses, even if we felt that the call would end in failure. Our duty was to respond; then the project would not fail. Such was his faith in the leaders.

As the President of the stake, he repeated the call of the First Presidency for settlers to go to St. Johns, Arizona and made the following explanation:

There need none of the Brethren go to Arizona if they will take the responsibility upon themselves of staying at home; but do not ask for the blessings of the Priesthood in the House of the Lord.¹

Having such a testimony of the truth of the Gospel, he had little sympathy with those who allowed themselves to arrive at a full state of apostasy. In fact, he felt that apostate movements served an important purpose in leading away corrupt members and purifying the Church. When a Methodist minister, William Lyford, was preaching in Provo, Smoot said he had no objection to the old folks going to hear him preach, but did not wish the children to be placed under his teaching. "Would that he would take some of the old whiners out of the way in order that the atmosphere of Mormonism here might be more clear."²

A month later he advised the Bishops,

In regard to this Apostacy I am not discouraged but the idea is to mark the sheep that they may be known and the more of these old hypocrites that go the better I feel about it. Keep our Boys and Girls separate from those that are rotten our children are drifting into ruin and will do so if we do not use our exertions to oppose it.³

We should not think that President Smoot was happy in seeing people stray from the Church. He frequently admonished them to attend to their duties and their meetings that they might keep the spirit and remain strong in the faith. He carefully pointed out the road to apostacy, so that the Saints might be fore warned.

Apostacy begins at our firesides in finding fault perhaps with our teacher, our neighbor or the priesthood. If this spirit is fostered we drive from us the spirit of prophecy, and a spirit of infidelity seizes upon us and we doubt religion and Jesus and do not know whether he was the Son of God or not we should keep a double guard over the tongue. What we write goes down as a witness against us. Those who once held the priesthood

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," April 19, 1884.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," August 27, 1872.

³Ibid., September 24, 1872.

and then turn from it becomes perfect Devils.¹

He constantly kept an eye out for any influence that might lead the Saints away from the Church. After he attended a rather riotous New Years Eve dance in January of 1872, he discussed the matter with the Priesthood on January 2. "When we make dances for the sake of a little speculation and invite all Hell I seriously object." In allowing their daughters to attend such dances, they placed them in the hands of men who would destroy their virtue in a second. Such dances ought to cease. If the people desired to dance, they should increase the price of the ticket so that sufficient police strength could be hired to keep order. The brethren assembled voted that the dances be discontinued for the present.²

In cases of serious violation of Church law or doctrine, President Smoot did not hesitate to apply the knife to cut away the cancerous growth. His decisions, backed by years of experience, were quick and seldom questioned. A question arose in the Stake Monthly Priesthood Meeting at Provo about a couple who had been married in the Endowment House, and the sister had a baby three months after marriage. President Smoot declared that they both ought to be out of the Church.³

In a serious case brought before the High Council, the defendant, a physician, asked that the trial be held at a later date as he was then attending a patient and could not be present. President Smoot ruled that the case could go on. The testimony was given and the case discussed. Then Brother H. H. Cluff, Isaack Bullock, and James E. Talmage each expressed the idea that the decision should be deferred until the accused could be present to defend himself. "But the President gave us a scouring, and then rendered a decision, 'That the accused be cut off from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.'"⁴

Although President Smoot was often severe and sometimes autocratic in his judgements, he was also long suffering and patient in his efforts to keep errant souls in the Church. It all depended on the degree to which the person had strayed. He had no fellowship with those who persisted in disobedience. Officers in Utah Stake were to use all moral persuasions with the Saints to

¹"Early History of Provo," September 24, 1871.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood in Provo City," January 2, 1872.

³Oliver B. Huntington, "Diary," Part II, page 188.

⁴"Autobiography of Harvey Harris Cluff," (Microfilm of the original, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), part I p. 255-256.

overcome the evils into which they had slipped. He had personally labored in a quiet manner with some of the brethren who were going astray, with the result that they had promised to reform. The Bishops were not to merely make a public call for repentance. They were to labor privately and individually with the offenders to bring them back to an accepted standing in the Church.

This patience and understanding is revealed in his answer about excommunicating people from the Church.

It would not be well for the husbandman to allow his tree to bear many dead branches and if not properly pruned it would be of great material damage to the health of the tree. There was no fear of cutting off these dead branches because like the salt spoken of by the Saviour they had lost their savor and were good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of man and there was no fear to be entertained. Not to be too fast in pruning - but know that the limb has gone beyond redemption first (,) then it was our duty to sever. Justice must not be robbed but must be served. . . . it requires a wise acute mind to know where to strike. . . . Every circumstance should be skillfully weighed and when men and women are thoughtfully weighed then prune them off that the tree may not be encombed.¹

Such was a part of the philosophy which directed the life of Abraham O. Smoot.

Lending personal support to his program for the advancement of Provo City, President Smoot commenced building a new home in Provo. The correspondent who reported this activity examined the work with others and found it to be of the most substantial character. In keeping with his character, President Smoot had turned to a solid concrete construction which he found to be only fifteen per cent more expensive, but infinitely stronger.²

As one views the home today, he cannot fail to be impressed with the solid character of the structure. A picture of commodius genteel living impresses itself upon the mind.

A new project was now in the making. Brigham Young had long envisioned the establishment of a co-operative mercantile institution. To accomplish this objective, a group of important leaders met in Salt Lake City on October 9, 1868. After a lengthy discussion, they decided to organize such a store. The matter was to be presented to the people immediately, with Elder A. O. Smoot and Joseph F. Smith presenting the plan to the people of Utah Stake.³ Elder Smith reported on October 27 that they were almost through with the visits, and on

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," August 4, 1874.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), September 23, 1868.

³Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), October 10, 1868.

October 31, Elder Smoot reported that all the settlements with one or two exceptions had been visited. The matter of co-operation had been well received, with many subscribing for shares.¹

When the merchants in Salt Lake could not bury their petty jealousies and unite in organizing such a co-op, President Smoot took the reins in hand and determined to establish it in Provo. He called a meeting of the citizens of Provo to be held in the basement of the Meeting House on December 4, 1868. President Smoot called the meeting to order and after a prayer by Bishop E. F. Sheets, stated that the object of the meeting was to consider the propriety of joining in a co-operative in Provo City. After several of the leading brethren spoke in favor of the proposition, President Smoot suggested that the brethren pay off their debts before investing in the organization. A preliminary organization was then formed with A. O. Smoot as President; Myron Tanner, Vice President; and Peter Stubbs, Elijah F. Sheets, A. H. Scott, S. S. Jones, and A. F. Macdonald, Directors; L. John Nuttall Secretary; and Myron Tanner, as Treasurer. Some thirty persons subscribed the amount of \$4,850.00, and the meeting was adjourned until December 29.²

At the meeting on December 29, President Smoot said, "He has settled in his mind that this Society will be started, and thought we would commence in merchandising, but doubted the propriety of starting during this winter." It was then decided to raise means during the winter and start business early in the spring. Twenty-six persons enrolled and subscribed twelve hundred dollars.³ Upon motion of L. John Nuttall in the meeting of January 5, 1869, the organization was named Provo Co-operative Institution.

For the next few weeks, Smoot's attention was turned away from the co-operative and towards governmental affairs. He had announced that he would be occupied in the legislative assembly at Salt Lake for the next forty days. He was the representative from Wasatch and Utah Counties on the legislative council and held that position for the next twelve years. On January 11, the opening day of the session in 1869, he was appointed on the following committees: Judiciary, Revenue, Elections, Education, Library, Agriculture Trade and Manufactures, Municipal Corporations and Town Sites, Private Corporations and Telegraph Companies, Penitentiary, Indian Affairs, and Revision.⁴

¹"Utah Stake Manuscript History," (Typewritten manuscript in the Church Historian's Office), 1868 October 31.

²"Minutes of the Provo Co-operative Institution," (Handwritten manuscript in the Church Historian's Office), December 4, 1868.

³Ibid., December 29, 1868.

⁴"Journal History of the Church," 1869 January 11, p. 3-4.

He returned his attention to the co-operative matter on February 8, when an important meeting of the stockholders and directors met in the basement of the Meeting House. Brigham Young, Joseph Young, F. D. Richards, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith were there from Salt Lake City. After the constitution was read and adopted, Smoot and the officers were sustained in their offices. Section two of the Co-op constitution describes its purposes as follows:

The objects of this institution are to establish and carry on in Provo City and such other places as may be hereafter determined by the Board the business of General Merchandising, Manufacturing and such other branches of Industry beneficial to the Interests of the Institution.¹

President Young was greatly pleased at the establishment of this movement which he had long advocated.

This is one step in the right direction to bring us to our legitimate position before God. This step is safe and will serve to unite the brethren together, and will enlarge our minds and our capacities for doing business. If this is good in one man's hand it is good in a company. This co-operative system I think will win. If it does not we will be set back quite a number of years. Joseph tried to establish this in his day, but did not accomplish it. When this company is once established I want the brethren to stop trading at Salt Lake, but to trade at their own store in Provo. Goods can be brought down from the City, and sold cheaper than you can buy in Salt Lake. It may leave our merchants out but if it does we cannot help it. We have given them the opportunity for years, but they will not do it. So if they are left out in the cold it is their own fault. We will not plead with our little merchants here to join us, nor dont you. I understand how to get the goods here,² that we want, from New York and have arrangements made so as to do this.

After the stockholders meeting was concluded, the directors met in a special meeting. President Smoot stated that he had held a conversation with H. W. Lawrence relative to purchasing the store and stock of good belonging to Kimball & Lawrence in Provo City. He introduced Mr. Lawrence who then proposed selling the business to the Co-op, with three thousand dollars of the purchase price to be stock in the Co-op. Brigham Young moved that the proposition be accepted. It was seconded and carried, and the organization was in business.³ Under the steady hand of A. O. Smoot, it was soon a thriving business.

Spurred on by the activity in Provo, Z. C. M. I. in Salt Lake opened its doors for business on March 1, 1869.

Brigham Young and those leaders assisting him had plans for the co-

¹"Minutes of the Provo Co-operative Institution," February 8, 1869.

²Ibid., February 8, 1869.

³Ibid., February 8, 1869.

operative movement which encompassed far more than mercantile establishments. Perhaps the most ambitious project and certainly the largest in Provo, was the establishment of a woolen mill. Both Brigham Young and A. O. Smoot had been successful operators of woolen mills in Salt Lake for several years.

At the same meeting in which Brigham Young extolled the advantages of a co-operative store to the stockholders of the Co-op, he also announced to them intentions to build a factory in Provo. The spirit of Provo citizens was right, the country was ideal for sheep raising, and the natural facilities favored building a woolen mill there. Provo citizens and the Co-op would be invited to join in the enterprise if they desired to do so. Shares could be purchased by labor.

No one was more enthusiastic than A. O. Smoot in advocating home industry to maintain their economic independence. He declared that the Lord wishes us to be clothed with the work of our own hands. He back up his words with action. From the time he entered the valley until his death, he wore only clothing made by hand or on machinery in Utah. His house hold furnishings were the product of home labor as far as possible.¹

In addressing the Bishops and members of the lesser Priesthood on February 23, he described home industry and co-operation as a stepping stone to the law of consecration. Co-operation should spread to all the products they needed to sustain themselves. Brigham Young had the plan, but Smoot had doubts about the people and himself. However he intended to support the principle, "and if I fail it will be the fault of the brain and not of the heart." He thought that it was utter folly to send all their money out of the territory to import goods and remain idle at home. They should import machinery and thus be able to produce at home. Even though home products sold at a higher price for a season, the money would simply change hands and still be kept in their midst. In a forcible illustration he condemned the present practice.

How strange the furs of our land are sent to England to be manufactured and imported back to us with heavy cost, but it seems we cannot be satisfied without smelling hell or gentilism, for while we have good hatters here still we prefer a gentile hat made in England and Paris! Branded in the crown which is a trick of the devil. We cannot get a better wearing hat than is made by our hatters but they are discouraged because of the lack of patronage.²

Speaking on the same principle in a later meeting, he called for support of the woolen mill, which would be a great blessing to them. They had all the elements for successful manufacture, including craftsmen, but they must remain

¹Anon., "Biograph of Abraham Owen Smoot," (a brief sketch of his life, typed manuscript loaned by a grand-daughter, Mrs. C. W. Love, of Provo), p. 4.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," February 23, 1869.

idle for lack of work. He strongly urged a change in their labor, trade, and commerce, that they might export instead of import. "Our present policy has been suicidal, and we will be poor worlds without end if it continues."¹

Essential in the manufacture of high grade woolen goods, is high grade wool. Brother Smoot had always been an advocate of raising superior types of sheep and livestock. In anticipation of the need of the best wool to supply the factory, the Board of Directors of the Deseret Agricultural Society appointed Smoot as an agent to go east and expend five thousand dollars in the purchase of an improved breed of sheep to be imported to this country. In announcing his appointment the Deseret News stated:

Bro. Smoot, we are informed, will take means from any of our farmers or others, to be invested in Ayershire milch cows or any other kind of stock. He intends visiting the best stock marts in the East and will take pains to select specimens from the best breeds; and being a man of experience in such matters, we hope that all who can avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded will do so, as the improvement of our breeds of cattle and sheep is an item of great importance to the future prosperity and development of our people and Territory.

While Smoot was absent on his trip east, the Deseret News carried an editorial on the importance of developing woolen manufacture in the west. It recognized the inferiority of the wool producing animals then in the area, but sounded a hopeful note.

. . . still from the efforts of President Young, A. O. Smoot Esq., and other gentlemen interested in woolen manufactures we fully expect to see this evil remedied and to have shortly a very improved class of wool³ producing animals filling the valleys and hill sides of this Territory.

Upon his arrival, President Smoot reported not only the purchase of the animals, but also of a safe which he had procured for the use of the Co-op store. The directors of the institution were happy to purchase the safe for the use of the store, which in his absence had expanded to include a new unit, the West Branch, managed by the Relief Society.

His zeal for the co-operative cause and his determination for its success were as strong as ever. In a Sunday service on May 30, he urged the people to support the co-operative movement. "The devil is urging many to fight against co-operation. Pres. B. Young is determined to make a success of this and those who fight it should be cut off from the church."⁴

¹"Early History of Provo," August 1, 1869.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 10, 1869.

³Ibid., April 29, 1869.

⁴"Early History of Provo," May 30, 1869.

After establishing the Co-op Store, he continually urged the people to lend their support to it. He thought those who traded with the gentile merchants should give an accounting of their actions. His own support of co-operation and dealing among his own people went further than that. He refused to sell, even at a greater advantage, to gentiles. When questioned about selling property to gentiles, his answer was:

If we were Mormons dyed in the wool we should be able to answer in our own hearts if it would be right to sell our heritage to the Gentiles. I answered them that I had a piece of property in Salt Lake City to dispose of. I have been offered some \$20,000.00 by Gentiles for it but it was not for sale then and have since offered it to Presdt Young and John Sharp for \$16,000.00.¹

June 1, 1869 must have been a day filled with promise in the mind of A. O. Smoot. At the School of the Prophets on this day, it was resolved to build the factory by co-operation. The Timpanogos Manufacturing Company was formed with a capital of one million dollars and shares of one hundred dollars each. Brigham Young was to be the president and A. O. Smoot the vice president. At the close of the meeting, the ground was laid out and the corners set.²

In addition to the special projects such as the Co-op Store and the Woolen Mills, President Smoot faced the constant problem of the upkeep and supplies for the Meeting House. On June 27, he called upon the carpenters and the sisters to fix up the seats in a comfortable manner. He also thought that Provo, the second largest stake, should delay no longer in providing a proper room for conducting a prayer circle. They had done without the benefits of this institution too long already.

As Mayor, he called the attention of the City Council to the need for providing suitable buildings for quarantine purposes in the event of an outbreak of contagious disease. They favored the propositions and immediately sought a site for the erection of such buildings. Later on, special clothing was provided for such cases.³

By August 31, Smoot had the plan of the factory, but could do nothing more toward building it until they obtained more of the necessary materials. He also asked the Bishops to help raise the means to build the grist mill while they were assembling materials for the factory. During the fall and winter months, teams turned out from Provo and Springville to haul lumber from the

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," November 12, 1872.

²"Journal History of the Church," 1869, June 1.

³"Minutes of the Provo City Council," August 7, 1869.

nearby canyons.

On September 18, 1869, a meeting was held in Heber City to instruct the people on better methods of soil cultivation and stock raising. A. O. Smoot spoke on stock raising. The Deseret News account of the affair reported, "We do not recollect ever listening with greater pleasure to addresses of this character than we did that evening. They were eminently practicable, well adapted to the audience and, withal, humorous. We wished all the people in the entire Territory could have heard them."

To arrive at Heber, the party traveled through the canyon on the Provo Canyon Road. The same newspaper account paid tribute to the builders of the road. "The road up Provo Canyon is a very excellent one, and when the rugged nature of the country, through which it passes, and the violent character of the stream on whose edge it is built is considered, it is a credit to its builders."¹

In spite of the praise for their past efforts in building the Provo Canyon Road, President Smoot thought there was much yet to be done in improvement and upkeep. Maintaining interest in the road was not an easy matter. Some were unwilling to pay on the road, and others had complained to President Smoot against performing any more labor because some had refused to do anything at all. Smoot proposed a solution to the problem.

I think the plan can be reached by which all can be got out or their means. The Bps decide who should stay at home and those who stay at home should make the pay their labor would be worth. . . . Those who say they will stay rather than work I should be close after them and get the pay or give them their proper name. I do not feel it safe for my health to go but I wish to spend two or three days and set stakes so that men can work to the grade. As to wages I do not care what you call them \$1.00 or \$5.00 all we want is the road.²

In December of the same year, he followed up the matter by declaring that the delinquents on the Provo Canyon Road should be made known.

Brother Smoot's address on stock raising had been well accepted by the people of Heber. He demonstrated his knowledge of the subject in a more practical manner at the County Fair in Provo on October 1 and 2. For his entries in the fair he received first prizes on a short horned Alderney cow and an Ayrshire yearling.³

The members of his family recall that he always loved horses and cattle.

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), September 21, 1869.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," September 28, 1869.

³Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), October 5, 1869.

His son Alma and his grand son Clark Newell remember that he brought into Utah County the first Ayrshires and Holsteins they had seen. Also, at the same time George Q. Cannon and John T. Caine imported Jersey cows, Smoot imported a car-load of Jersey stock. Alma said his father kept twenty or thirty milch cows when all he needed was two or three. Plentifully supplied by this oversized herd, he gave much milk to the needy.

Bryant S. Hinckley remembers that he used to select a fine steer and fatten it for his family to eat.

Nothing but the finest in livestock would do to be kept on his place. He constantly admonished the cattle raisers to import and raise better stock. His beef animals always brought a few cents more per pound because of the finer quality.

This example had its influence on his family. Today his son Alma, and Alma's sons and grandsons, own and manage the Smoot Brothers Dairy in Center-ville, Utah. Their magnificent herd of Jerseys is one of the four finest herds in America.

During the summer and fall months, the Co-op store continued to do a good business. President Smoot and R. R. Hopkins were appointed by the board as agents to act upon an offer by the firm of Stubbs and Kirkwood to sell their stock of merchandise to the Co-op. After examination of the goods, President Smoot reported that the items would not sell conveniently, so they had offered to take the merchandise and pay for it when it was sold.

In August he proposed adding a butcher shop to the store and made the necessary preliminary arrangements. When another firm opened a shop in the city, he considered it wise to wait until spring.

As the President of the Board of Directors, he presented the financial condition to the stockholders in a meeting on November 30, 1869. Their original purchases and expenditures to start the business had placed them twelve thousand dollars in debt. Much of their stock had dropped in value, yet after less than one year of operation, they had paid off a large portion of that indebtedness so that they now owed only \$4,456.94.¹ The business was forging ahead, but on the question of paying a dividend President Smoot thought they had "better pay our old debt before we contract new ones."

As the summer months faded away, the problem of preparing the Meeting House for comfortable winter use became more pressing. The attempts at heating the house had been a complete failure the previous winter. President Smoot

¹"Minutes of the Provo Co-op," November 30, 1869.

recommended use of a system of flues such as they had seen in the east.

The Meeting House Tax which had been assessed to take care of such matters was slow coming in. Some of the wards had furnished oil for lighting the house, but that supply was now exhausted. When the custodian asked about lighting the room, Brother Smoot directed him to leave it dark until more adequate provisions had been made to keep them from borrowing supplies. He explained to the assembled Priesthood that a crisis had to come, and it had just as well be now. He had frequently paid bills from his own pocket. It grieved him more to have to call on the people than to pay such small bills. He did not wish to find fault, but felt he would be remiss in his duty if he did not place their responsibilities squarely upon their shoulders. To do otherwise would be to lead the people into a state of stupor.¹

Several Weeks later when many were still delinquent in paying the Meeting House Tax, President Smoot suggested making public the names of those who refused to pay their share.

It is time we know these scallawags and drop them from the Church. If I was a Bishop of a Ward I would tickle their ears with tax till they would hear me with all patience and if I₂ could not impress them to pay I would not drag them along but drop them.²

After his return from the legislature, President Smoot found that some laxity still existed in the matter of the tax. He explained that all of their property was liable to taxation, and that he regarded the tax as perfectly just. "I am in favor of men paying the Tax or knowing the reason why, and those who will not, do not merit a standing in the Church." He thought that there was no rest for the faithful Elder in Israel. We have to continue our labors and respond to all the calls made upon us. After hearing this admonition to the people, Bishop Follett indicated his pleasure at the instruction, and thought that it seemed natural to have President Smoot among them again, "snubbing our ears and stirring us up to our duties."³

From the reports of observers, the efforts of President Smoot to improve the lot of the people proved highly successful. Brother George G. Bywater of Provo called in at the Deseret News office to report on Provo conditions.

The people are improving, and feel first rate under the judicious guidance of Elder A. O. Smoot. . . . Between thirty and forty elders, in companies of two and three, are deputed each week to visit and preach to the

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," December 31, 1869.

²Ibid., December 31, 1869.

³Ibid., March 1, 1870.

people of the various settlements every Sunday, and it is believed that the people of Utah County were never so united or felt so well as they do at present.¹

Bishop Harrington of American Fork also reported to the Deseret News offices that these missionaries under the direction of President Smoot had created a good spirit and greatly benefited the people.

During that winter, President Smoot also traveled about the stake speaking to the people of the settlements. As a public speaker, he had trained in the school of experience. He regretted that his duties as a public servant occupied so much of his time that he had little time to gain wisdom from study and reading good books. He confessed that like most people, he would prefer to listen, but had always been called upon to speak in public. Because of these frequent calls, he wished that he had more time to prepare for such speech making. He declared that he delighted in plainness, and his public utterances were marked for their frank straight forward style.

Bryant S. Hincley is one of those who remembers President Smoot's public discourses. Brother Hinckley describes the leader as a "really majestic character, a really impressive speaker who never minced words." Both Mr. Hinckley and Walter Taylor of Provo recalled that President Smoot stuttered slightly. However Mr. Taylor said that you never noticed the defect when he got warmed up, and considered Brother Smoot to be an interesting speaker.

Whatever his talents, one fact stands out, that both his heart and talents were devoted to the service of his Church.

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 16, 1870.

CHAPTER IX

BUILDING THE WOOLEN MILL AND CONTINUING THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

We have seen President Smoot's staunch advocacy of the co-operative movement. Likewise we have already noted his strong interest in cattle and livestock. It was almost inevitable that he would soon blend the two in a call for a co-operative stock herd. He had long thought that they were failing to realize their possibilities in producing dairy products. He lamented the fact that not one bit of cheese was being produced in the valley.

In a Bishop's meeting on March 12, 1870, he severely condemned the practice of selling off their cattle, especially the young calves. The farmers should build up their herds, not sell them. He thought the solution would be a co-op herd cared for by older men who were steady and responsible.

One month later, he brought the subject up again before the same group. He declared that stock was one of the greatest sources of wealth before the people. The best method of raising fine stock was to seed ground and feed at home.¹ A. O. Smoot was years ahead of his time in advocating a practice which is now generally recognized.

However with an abundance of good feed around, he felt that a co-operative herd should be established to take advantage of these opportunities. He again stressed the fact that the most capable and responsible type of person must be selected as herdsman. He was ready to put his stock into such a co-operative herd as soon as it could be established. At the next meeting of April 26, the committee appointed reported that most of the men had already made arrangements for their stock for that year, so that the co-operative stock herd did not reach very great proportions that year.

In order that they might not be too late the following year, President Smoot organized committees in December to arrange for co-operative sheep and cattle herds in the county. On January 31, 1871, he pointed out the advantages to the farmers of being able to send their young calves out with the herd and

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," April 12, 1870.

not have to worry about them through the summer. He claimed that stock had always paid him 50 per cent even though he always regarded them as about half tended. He wanted the Bishops and teachers to understand the whole matter so that they could lay it before the people. At an organizational meeting on February 28, he instructed Bishop Johnson to put his name down for sixty shares. If he could find all of his stock on the range, he would double his subscription.

President Smoot's judgement in the matter was proved when in 1872, the second year of operation, the Utah County Co-operative Stock Association declared a dividend of thirty-five per cent. In 1877, the assets totaled \$60,788 with a gain of \$5,217.50 for that year.¹

During the winter months, President Smoot trained watchful eyes on the preparations for erecting the woolen factory. When one group failed to bring the timber from the mountains as contracted, he quickly set another group at the task so that the construction might not be delayed in the spring. He searched about for stone at the most reasonable prices so that the building could be constructed from this more durable material. He warned the brethren that in planning for their crops and spring work, they should not lose sight of the responsibility to erect the factory.

As proof of his faith in the factory, he made frequent investments in it. In February 1870, he reported another such investment. "I have put \$2,000 in the Factory this week and I hope to put every loose thing I have into it. I feel to turn every thing into the factory. I regard it as a mission."²

By the first of May, Smoot had pushed to completion the grist mill which was built in connection with the factory. On May 28, 1870 the great day arrived. Materials for construction were gathered, and the corner stone was laid. L. John Nuttall recorded in his diary:

Saturday, May 28, 1870. The southeast corner stone of the Provo Co-operative Woolen Factory was laid at half past 9 o'clock a. m. by President A. O. Smoot. Upon the corner stone being laid, President Smoot offered prayer, . . . President Smoot prophesied that this corner stone shall remain steadfast and sure.³

Immediately, much attention was focused on the building. Skilled workmen came from all over the territory to aid in the construction of the factory.

¹Scott, op. cit., p. 141.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," February 15, 1870.

³"History of Provo City," Tullidges Quarterly Magazine, III, (1885), p. 256.

The Salt Lake Herald of June 16 reports that a large force of workmen is engaged on the factory which is progressing rapidly.

The Deseret News describes the scene on June 22.

The site of the New Co-operative factory, now in course of erection, presents a busy scene. Crowds of workmen are there, busy as bees, and the huge foundation is visible at some distance from the place. The people here speak highly of the energy evinced by Bishop Smoot in superintending the erection of the building; and the settlements generally throughout the country are taking hold with a vim in assisting the work.¹

After a visit from A. O. Smoot, the Salt Lake Herald printed a column in the paper describing the bright prospects at Provo and particularly the progress of the factory.

The new co-operative factory at Provo is being pushed forward, over fifty men being engaged on it. The main building is 145 x 65 feet, four stories high with two adjoining buildings, one 134 x 33 feet, and one 75 x 33 feet, each two stories high. The company expects to run 2400 to 2600 spindles. This looks like manufacturing woolen cloth on a large sized scale, and will heavily reduce importations. There is also a shoe factory worked on the Co-operative principle by the same company, and doing a profitable business; and the company has started running a fine new grist mill, which is doing well. In fact co-operation is a flourishing thing in Provo and the City is also flourishing.²

The focus of attention was suddenly shifted from the woolen mills on the night of September 22, 1870. A group of soldiers from nearby Camp Rawlings, well lubricated with liquor, rolled into Provo on a spree. Mayor Smoot summarized the event in a letter to the Deseret News. The soldiers entered the city between 12 and 2 o'clock. They entered houses, broke down windows and doors, took some of the citizens as prisoners, smashed the front of several stores, and completely ransacked several houses. They severely beat several of the citizens. Mayor Smoot and several aldermen spent the afternoon of the 26th with General R. De Trobriand of Ft. Douglas checking the damage.

In services held on the following Sunday, President Smoot declared that "the drunken hell hounds" were not responsible for what they did, but the responsibility rested upon Governor Shaffer and some of the citizens in their midst who had petitioned for the presence of troops. He advised the brethren to obey the Governor's proclamation and leave their arms at home, but added, "I now warn the sisters to arm themselves and defend their homes as the proclamation does not reach them."¹

As the excitement subsided, attention shifted back to the rapidly rising

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), June 25, 1870.

²Salt Lake Herald, (Salt Lake City, Utah), June 28, 1870.

³"Early History of Provo," September 25, 1870.

factory. A Deseret News correspondent, writing from Provo on October 5 sends an account of progress which speaks well for the management of A. O. Smoot.

At two o'clock p. m. to-day I enjoyed the opportunity of being present at a meeting of the Masons and workmen of the Provo Co-operative Woolen Factory, held on the completion of the walls of the building, to celebrate the completion of the rock-work. . . . and we must say that we have never seen a body of men manifest better feelings toward each other; while all were joyful that the walls of the building were completed. . . .

Wm. W. Allen, one of the Masons, in a short speech, stated that he was glad that the work was so far advanced, and that he had never seen workmen move with greater union, the work having never stopped one working day since it was commenced; he felt that truly the hand of God was in it.

Bishop Scott expressed the good feelings of Superintendent A. O. Smoot, for the faithful labor performed, and the success of the work, . . .

Hearty cheers were offered for Brigham Young, the projector of the building, A. O. Smoot, superintendent,¹ Bishop Scott, his assistant and others who have aided in its erection.¹

Praise for the factory was not just a matter of the local people expressing satisfaction for their own efforts; outsiders were also impressed. An agent for one of the largest machinery manufacturing companies in the west visited the factory and declared that there were no factory buildings west of the Allegheny Mountains equal to those of Provo. "There may be some larger, but for solidity and strength there is no better in any country."² One would expect A. O. Smoot to build no other type.

In the meantime the people of Provo were to see still more of the soldiers from Camp Rawlings. Major Osborne, commanding, had requested permission to quarter his troops within the city proper during the winter months. When Mayor Smoot presented the matter before the City Council, they authorized him to negotiate with Major Osborne according to his best judgement. He also brought the matter up for the consideration of the Bishops on November 8.

In respect to the soldiers moving onto our lower square, I think it will be best if they conclude to move in as I think we can take care of them better there than over in the brush. If they conclude to move in we shall want lumber 14 feet long any width for the fencing of the square. I wish the Brethren to take care of the sisters and keep them away³ from the soldiers. Use the Soldiers kindly and they will respect you.

President Smoot cautioned kindly treatment for the soldiers. In such a situation, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. He stressed the importance of vigilant guarding to forestall difficulties that might otherwise

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), October 8, 1870.

²Ibid., October 27, 1870.

³"Record of the Business Meeting of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," November 8, 1870.

arise. Referring to those who could not see the necessity of guarding, he proclaimed:

Bishops, tell them they are disfellowshipped until they repent. Such men are blind. I believe I stood more hours on guard than any other I know. I never faltered. I believe I stood years without the pay of a cent. A vigilant guard has many times averted the shedding of blood, and now whenever the marshall wishes me to guard I am on hand any hour. A man that has the Priesthood and cannot see the importance of guarding is not worthy of a place in the School of the Prophets and I would say to the Marshall and Captain of Police that a whiner is not to be trusted he might sell and betray you. Would rather have six faithful men than a regiment of whiners.¹

Later, in answer to a question about selling produce to the soldiers in the square, he answered, "Sell them what they want, but take it yourselves, and keep your wives and daughters away from them as it was not a fit place for them."²

Perhaps the presence of the soldiers prompted Mayor Smoot, or perhaps the need already existed, but at any rate in December 14 meeting of the City Council he proposed the matter of building a jail in connection with the county. The matter was approved and provisions made for the fulfillment of the proposal.

In the month of December Smoot continued to show his interest and faith in the Co-operative store by joining with E. F. Sheets to purchase three thousand dollars worth of stock from Henry W. Lawrence of Salt Lake.

By the spring of 1871, considerable means and effort had been expended on the woolen mill. Many failed to catch the spirit of home production. They were still shipping their wool east and then importing cloth from the east. In Meetings on May 11 and 12, both Brigham Young and A. O. Smoot urged the people to keep their wool here and thus avoid paying the freight both ways as they had been doing. The manufacturers and wool growers were urged to work in close co-operation.¹

One month later, President Smoot brought the matter up again, and a year later when people were still shipping wool out of the territory, he severely condemned such lack of support for our home industries. One man had promised to let him, as the manager of the Provo Woolen Mills have his wool, and then sold it to eastern buyers. Smoot thought that persons who so disregarded the heavy expenditure to build up home manufacture ought to be cut off from the Church.²

¹"Utah Stake Manuscript History," 1871 May 11.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," April 7, 1872.

Sufficient importance was connected to the erection of the factory that on May 27, 1871 President Smoot and the workmen on the factory assembled with the people from Provo and Springville to celebrate the anniversary of laying the cornerstone. Feasting, speeches, and music from the brass band enlivened the spirit of the day.

As he encouraged the people to invest in the Woolen Mill, President Smoot gave a bit of counsel on how to gain financial security. He had always tried to invest his means in something that would produce an income.

My Woolen Factory investment in Salt Lake County was prophesied as a failure but it did not turn out so but is a source of income. By this means of planting a nest egg at an early day I am able to give my time to the public. I have lived close and dressed plain and every dollar I have invested in something that would bring an income but many cannot see that plan. Such are the men who wish to sell out their shares in the Factory. We must lay plans for an income or it will be dig and work all the time for a living. It seems that some men are destined to be poor and live from hand to mouth. There is not a man among you but that by economy and planning¹ for an income can raise himself above this continued drag of poverty.

When the factory progressed to the point that machinery was installed, he regretted the fact that they had to hire a gentile. None of their own people were trained sufficiently to do the job. He called for two or three young men who could be placed in the factory and learn the business so that they could be independent of "Gentile aid" thereafter.²

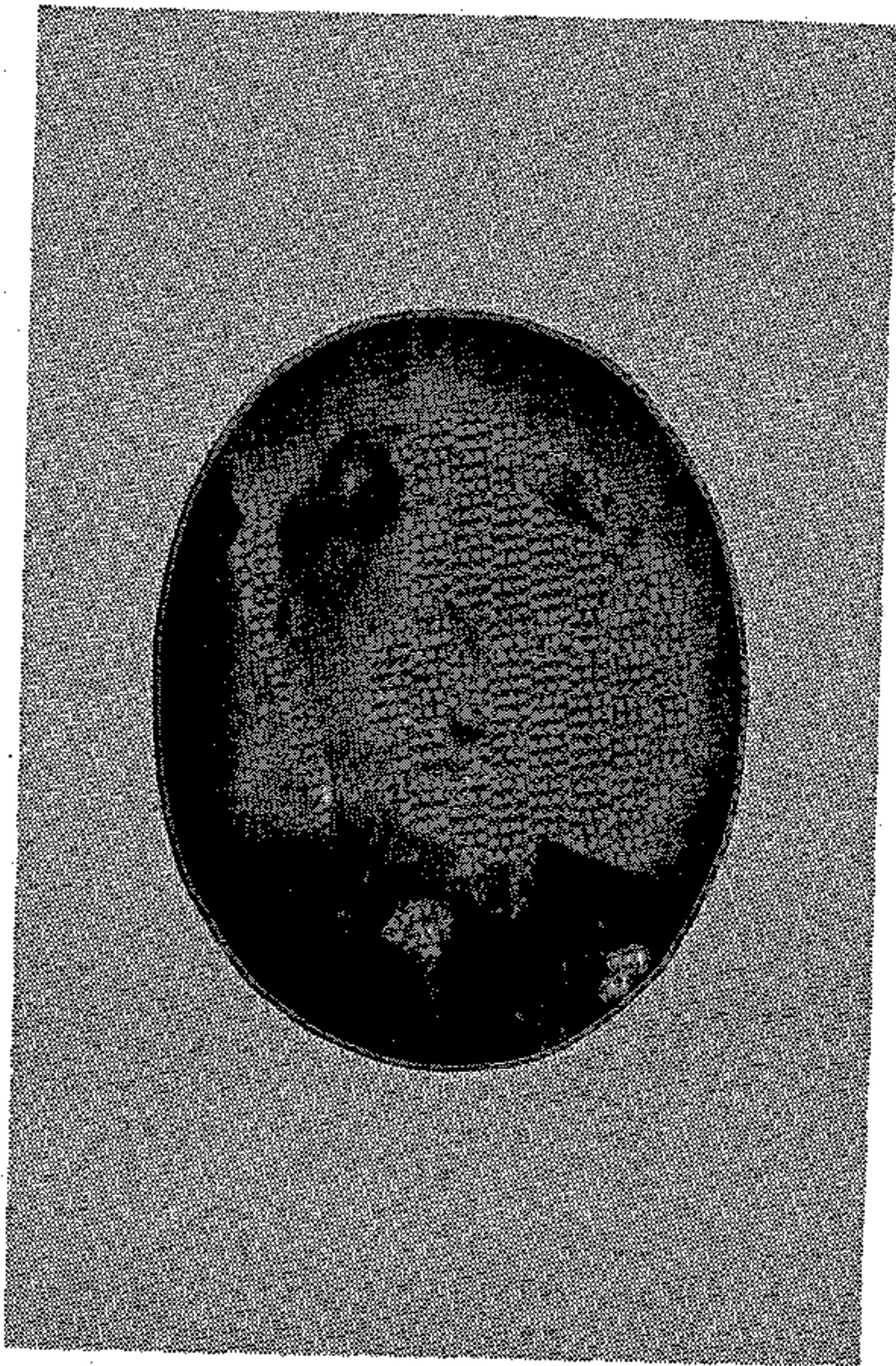
The fall of 1871 was a busy one for the Co-op Store. President Smoot was closely associated with expansion measures including building of a granary, an ice house, and purchasing of the store and stock of Bishop William Miller to be added to the operation of the Co-op store. He also proposed erecting buildings to carry on a wholesale merchandising trade. The response was favorable, but the buildings were never erected. The store prospered however, and continued to pay about 20 per cent dividends on the investment.

In the 1870's, polygamy grew to be more of an issue. As we have already seen, Smoot entered into the order of plural marriage back in 1838. He and John Taylor both made a public declaration that Joseph Smith was the first person who taught them the doctrine of a plurality of wives.³ From the time of that teaching, he believed it to be a divine principle. After the public announcement of the principle in 1853, opposition had increased, and in 1871 had reached

¹Ibid., June 20, 1871.

²Ibid., September 26, 1871.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," February 27, 1881.



Diana Tanner Eldredge Smoot

the point where the Saints had to combat it in organized fashion. Law suits were brought against the leading brethren who lived polygamous lives. In priesthood meeting on October 24, 1871, he instructed the teachers to call upon the people and give them the opportunity to contribute to a general fund to help defray court costs. It was a rightful responsibility of the people to assist in this expense. Provo should raise at least one thousand dollars. Although many of them were under no danger at the moment, let the prominent men be convicted and their enemies would be after the last one who bears the Priesthood.¹

After many years of experience in the order of plural marriage, the testimony of A. O. Smoot was that the Lord blesses those who righteously accepted the commandment. It was not necessary to wait until one became rich to live the law. He had begun while young and had been blessed in it. He did not, however, think that it was an easy principle to live. A person could be damned quicker in it than out of it. He questioned whether the Saints were then qualified for the practical observance of it. Men should not enter into the order without thought and then find themselves unprepared to meet the trials which it presented. He instructed the Bishops to send only those of the highest integrity to the Stake President when they sought recommends for plural marriage.

Much of the credit for a happy polygamous relationship in the families of A. O. Smoot must go to his fine wives. His first wife lovingly accepted the later wives of her husband as they entered the family. During many of those years, they lived under the same roof in wonderful harmony. Ma Smoot, in speaking of the other wives, said:

I have helped to raise, foster, and educate their children, and hold them as a part and portion of our family, being as devoted and exercised about their welfare as though I had born them myself.

His wives I know to be good and virtuous women as ever lived, who have worked in unison with me and my husband, and whose character is above reproach.²

In return, each of the wives felt a deep respect and love for Ma Smoot. In her last days as she was confined to her home with illness, the third wife, Diana, came to the home and cared for her. Alma Smoot, Diana's son, remembers the feeling of love which existed among the wives and their children. "There was never a night," he said, "but what his mother sent each of the children to the bedroom of Ma Smoot to kiss her goodnight."

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," October 24, 1871.

²Margaret Smoot, "Experiences of a Mormon Wife," op. cit.

During the later years in Provo, each of the wives had her own home. Ma Smoot's home, which was the largest and most pretentious of the four, possessed an air of solid comfort. It is located at 192 South First East. Emily's home is located immediately to the north at 160 South First East. Anna's home is immediately to the west of Ma's home at 65 East Second South. Diana's home is across the city at 136 West Fifth North. Each of these solid structures stands today as a testimony to the enduring manner in which A. O. Smoot built.

Since Smoot had both a strong testimony of the divinity of the law of plural marriage and a happy experience in it, it is not surprising that one of the unflinching character of A. O. Smoot became a staunch defender of the principle. While attending the legislative session of 1872, he detected some calls for sympathy from the outside world, but the terms for such treatment would be that the Saints relinquish polygamy. His response was, "The whispering of the Priesthood in our own hearts are that the laws of God must be supreme. The more we reflect upon it the firmer we are in the resolve that it is better to serve God than man."¹

The question of polygamy came up when Smoot served on a committee with William Fitch. With a solicitous feeling for the Saint's welfare, Mr. Fitch suggested that they need not say it was not right, but abandon it for the present while feeling was so high. To this Smoot could not agree.

I brought up a figure of a vineyard with a particular fig tree in the midst much favored with a very fruitful branch and if perchance a servant of mine should cut down that particular tree I would discharge him quicker than lightening. I told him Polygamy was that bough, that it was the most fruitful bough of Mormonism. It would run over the wall. In it was the choicest gift from God to this people. He acknowledged that it was so. I think that all our Gentile friends are convinced that all their attempts at getting us to relinquish a point of our religion are abortive.²

In a later defense of the principle, he denied that it was the source of persecution to the Church. If we gave up that principle, they would want us to give up the Book of Mormon, then one thing after another. In pinpointing the real cause of the persecution he explained,

We were more persecuted before we practiced polygamy than we have been since. The foundation of all the opposition and persecutions against the Latter Day Saints is because they receive revelations from God.³

His report of other activities at the legislature is quite amusing and shows his typical disdain at involved parliamentary procedure and a desire to

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," February 28, 1872.

²Ibid., February 28, 1872.

³"Record of Sunday Services, Provo, Utah," January 23, 1876.

complete matters with more dispatch.

We may get through in a short time with the Convention, but they are full of gas and they think that a Constitution got up in a week Congress would not notice. . . . A Mormon Convention would have met there and got up a better Constitution signed and ready for Congress in two days, but in order to gratify this Gentile Element we will have to take six weeks probably.¹

As early as December 24, 1869, President Smoot had talked about building a new court house, since the old one was too small for the needs of the city. Also the woolen mills would need such a building as the old one for offices. He discussed the matter again in Bishops meeting on March 12, 1870, and as the factory was nearing completion, he presented the matter to the City Council on March 16, 1872. He first presented proposals for a joint city and county court house, a matter which he had previously discussed with county officials. The council then voted to appropriate four thousand dollars, which would represent their share or one sixth of the total cost of the joint building.²

Unusually high water from the spring runoff came in the month of June 1872. On June 5, President Smoot rallied one hundred men and twenty five teams to haul brush and rock in an effort to save the Provo Bridge located on the State Road. The Busy leader was in the midst of the scene directing the efforts. Again on June 17, when the Meeting House Bell rang to warn the citizens of danger to the bridge, President Smoot arrived on the ground to give directions for securing the approach.³

Indian hostilities added to the excitement that year. When the Indians commenced hostilities in August, General Morrow arranged councils with them to be held on August 20, 21, and 22. He requested President Smoot and others from the Provo area to attend the conferences with him in Springville and Spanish Fork. Successful peace was attained.

In 1869, the Timpanogos Manufacturing Company had been organized, but in 1872 the first year of actual operation it was incorporated. Brigham Young was the President; A. O. Smoot, the Vice President; Myron Tanner, William Bringhurst, O. Simons, Joseph S. Tanner, and A. H. Scott were Directors. H. A. Dixon was Secretary and L. John Nuttall was Treasurer. In October of that year, the factory produced woolen yarn.

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," February 28, 1872.

²"Minutes of the Provo City Council," March 16, 1872.

³"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," page containing historical data for 1872.

⁴"History of Provo City," Tullidges Quarterly Magazine, III, (1885) p. 256.

In the fall of 1872, President Smoot was determined that they would not go through the winter with an inadequate heating system for the Meeting House. He thought it was the duty of the Priesthood to make it comfortable for the people. The Meeting House ought to be carpeted and cushioned, but that could come after they had forced Jack Frost out. On November 26, he announced that he had seen suitable heating equipment in Salt Lake and had ordered it from Z. C. M. I. On February 4, he reported that the equipment had arrived, but that they were short sixty or sixty-five dollars of the one thousand dollars which was needed.

Brother Smoot had paid various telegraph bills for the wards over the past months. When James Hardy brought up the matter of the wards debt to him, Brother Smoot said he had not intended to bring the matter up, but now stated that he had paid the telegraph operators a considerable amount for which he had not been reimbursed. If the wards desired to pay him, all well, if not, it was all right with him.¹

As a city official and as a church leader, A. O. Smoot had always encouraged the people to beautify their surroundings. He had frequently requested the Bishops to teach the people to clean up their sheds and their outbuildings, repair their sidewalks and their fences, straighten their ditches, and plant shade trees and gardens. Make things attractive to the passer by. Such beautification he taught, "not only has an enlivening effect on the inner man but it makes our religion dearer to us and makes us approximate nearer to our Heavenly Father. The slovenly and filthy rarely enjoy the spirit of the Lord or their religion."²

As Mayor, he succeeded in passing an ordinance prohibiting livestock from running loose on the city streets. He asked the co-operation of the Priesthood members in supporting the ordinance. Habit is hard to break, and such changes are usually wrought only over a period of time. After tolerating a year of continued violation, President Smoot raised the matter in Sunday services.

The speaker said he would like to know the sentiments of the people of Provo, whether they intended to keep this town as a cattle ranch or whether they intend to make it a beautiful city; ordinances heretofore have been passed and they have been trampled upon with impunity; we are going to set out some shade trees around the public blocks and we want the people to assist in taking care of the same as well as their cattle, and begin to

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," February 18, 1873.

²Ibid., May 10, 1870.

ornament their homes, beautify their surroundings and improve their sidewalks.¹

As some were still slow in complying with the law, he instructed the police to clear the streets of cattle. When objections were raised to this action, he explained that the old custom of considering the fields free and open after the crops were gathered was not fair to the farmer who wished to improve his land. We have no right to trespass on our neighbor's land and should not desire to do so. The righteous man is as jealous of his neighbor's rights as of his own.

Attention was regularly turned back to the woolen mill. Although yarn had been produced in the factory, it was not in full operation. Efforts were constantly made to realize full operations. On April 15, 1873, President Smoot thanked a group of workers for hauling factory machinery from Lehi to Provo. He also sounded the call for volunteers to turn out on the following Monday to finish the factory mill race,

. . . that we may have the Machinery in motion and show the public our Cloth as an inducement to help hold the wool of the County. Our true interest is to push this Factory to completion that the capital there invested may bring a return. Not only financially are we bound to push this work but by our religious faith to show our readiness to obey the counsel of the Priesthood who proposed the erection of the Building.²

When the additional machinery had been placed in operation, L. John Nuttall wrote a letter to the Deseret News on June 5 describing the busy scene and paying tribute to the efforts of President Smoot, "who has been indefatigable in his exertions for the welfare and success of the enterprise."

Abraham Owen Smoot had been honored with calls to many positions. To these offices was added one which seemed to blend admirably with his fatherly concern for his flock. At the close of a meeting in Provo on May 31, 1873, several of the venerable High Priests were ordained Patriarchs, A. O. Smoot under the hand of Brigham Young.³

The years of planning and pioneer effort were beginning to bear fruit. President Smoot's desire to see the railroad extended to Provo was now fulfilled. As Mayor, he called the City Council together to plan for the celebration when the first train should arrive. The Council approved the necessary expense for the celebration and appointed Mayor Smoot to deliver the welcoming address.

¹Provo Tri-Weekly Times, (Provo, Utah), April 14, 1874.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," April 15, 1873.

³"Utah Stake Manuscript History," 1873 May 31.

The first train of the Utah Southern Railroad left Salt Lake and arrived in Provo at twenty minutes to eleven. Several thousand people were gathered in the depot to celebrate the occasion. Among them were the First Presidency, and members of the Twelve living in Provo, the Mayor and other civil officials. After a selection by the brass band, the Mayor delivered the following address of welcome.

Mr. President, Board of Directors and Stockholders of the U. S. R. R., and friends of progress in internal improvements.

Ladies and Gentlemen.-- It is with profound feelings of gratitude to the Dispenser of all blessings that I have the honor to welcome the advent of the iron horse to our hitherto comparatively isolated city. In doing so I cannot but commend the energy displayed by you in pushing the road to its completion to Provo during a period of financial depression resulting disastrously to so many roads. I have personally witnessed the indefatigable labors and energy of your construction agent and his very efficient corps of assistants and workmen, whose labors have been highly commendable.

On behalf of the citizens of Provo, as its executive officer, I tender your our congratulations and thanks that our city is now linked by bands of iron to the metropolis of our Territory and the leading cities of the nation, and that through the agency of steam, produced from the two devouring elements by the hand of science, the distance between us in point of time is materially lessened, and as our intercourse with each other will necessarily increase and our commercial relations be more fully developed, it is reasonable to hope that our fraternal feelings with our sister cities will be proportionately increased. It is pleasing to notice that the other end of yonder rail, pointing southward, as with the finger of prophecy, indicates that at no distant day the southern cities, towns, and villages of our Territory will enjoy the blessings we have now met to celebrate, and that the whole of the settlements of wide spread Territory will very shortly be brought into closer proximity.

Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to offer you a hearty welcome.¹

Such improvements did not come easily. The Brass band that provided music at the celebration is a good example. It cost considerable in worry and in exhortation from the leaders. When the subject of organizing such a band was presented in Bishop's Meeting in May 1872, President Smoot was in favor of it and anything that would add to the refinement of the city. He offered to pay as much as any man on donations for the band, but did not want to shoulder the responsibility of it.

The committee appointed reported the cost of instruments, and although they did not have enough money, they ordered the instruments, trusting upon the city fathers and the brethren to pay for them when they arrived. President Smoot said it was a matter for them when they arrived. After they had made a loan with Brother Nuttall for the money to pay for the instruments and the interest continued to mount up, President Smoot advised the brethren that the

¹"Journal History of the Church," 1873 November 25, p. 2.

best method was to have the cash in hand and then place the order. He thought that the committee were able to care for the matter and should pay off the money and keep the interest from mounting up.

A year later when the bill was still unpaid and kept coming up in Bishop's Meeting, Brother Smoot could refrain no longer. Bishop Follett had referred to this and other bills and said that the people were asleep. President Smoot followed and declared:

Not only the people but the Teachers and the Bps, are asleep and the Devil is wide awake. The trouble is the people of Provo do not have half enough to do. My advice to Bro Allen is, if the people do not pay him for the Band Instruments take the Instruments and sell them and get out of debt. I also say to the committy on Organ do not take one step unless you have means on hand to pay for what you order. Felt ashamed of the Quo for allowing these debts to keep coming forward with no provision made to meet them destroying the good spirit of the meetings, . . . If this Quo does not wake up it will be left in the rear. Teachers, Elders, and High Priests asleep, I have done my duty and shall shoulder none of the darkness of the people. . . . Take heed, God will not be mocked, our Meeting House is not finished, the Priesthood themselves do not attend. The Circles are neglected by men holding the High Priesthood of Israel, the spirit of worship and devotion is leaving the people. I would like to live with men who will be up to their callings and duties, shoulder to shoulder. I calculate to discharge my duties, I want this Quo to discharge their duties or resign at once from their positions. I will raise a warning voice as I feel anxious that the blood of the people shall not be found in my skirts. I feel anxious for the welfare of the people and many hours I reflect upon the Priesthood of this place and pray for them that they may awaken from their lethargy.¹

After that unburdening no more was heard about debts for brass band instruments.

For many years, the people of the Church had anticipated re-entering the United Order. The leaders throughout the Church had been preaching co-operation and home industry, all of which tended to unite the people so that the order could be established. The success of the recent co-operative ventures no doubt convinced the leaders that now was the time to attempt the broader program of the United Order. Brigham Young selected St. George as the most suitable place to make the initial attempt, and in the winter of 1874 he organized the first units in that city. Other communities in the southern part of the state were organized, and when he came back to Salt Lake City in the spring, President Young was ready to introduce the order throughout the Church.

On Sunday, April 26, 1874, at a meeting in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, President Young spoke for one hour and twenty minutes on the subject of

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," March 3, 1874.

the United Order. It was announced that the order would be organized in ward after ward and settlement after settlement.

Meetings were held in Provo on the same day. In the morning the Bishops and Elders met to select officers for the organization. This was followed by a general meeting in the afternoon at which the people were organized into the order. About three fourths of the assembly voted to join the order. The people sustained officers for two organizations: The Central Board of Utah County, Utah Territory of the United Order, and the Provo Branch, Utah County, Utah Territory of the United Order. A. O. Smoot was the president of both organizations.¹

To the mind of A. O. Smoot, the United Order was a further unfoldment of the Gospel, blessing the lives of the people. He was an ardent supporter of the program. He envisioned its growth until the Church members were all united into one big happy family, independent of the outside world.

On May 12, he called for a report from the Bishops as to the progress of the order in the wards. He thought the Bishops should not totally discard the honest outsider from the order. Those people who had lived among them for years and had proved themselves to be worthy of our confidence ought to be permitted to enjoy the blessings of the United Order.

He continued to explain the order to the Saints. It was not a panacea for all ills, but required intelligent labor. The order itself would not furnish every needed thing. The members were the order, and would have to provide for for their needs. He doubted that the people were qualified for the order in which he hoped to live and die. He vowed if he could find six men to stand with, he would go on with the business.²

From the outset the United Order path was fraught with difficulties. The constitution of the order had to be revised to comply with the laws of the land and give the members full protection. Many of the people in the Church hesitated to enter. People in the larger centers lived among many outsiders, and this lack of homogeneity added to the difficulties. Smoot must have had some of these difficulties in mind when he said:

During the last six months I have greatly felt this responsibility in our efforts to establish the United Order. I can readily see why Enoch had to labor so long in order to establish this order, but we have not 300 years in which to establish it, and yet it must be established.³

¹"Journal History of the Church," 1874 April 26.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," August 18, 1874.

³"Record of Sunday Services, Provo, Utah," Nov. 1, 1874.

In spite of President Smoot's faith and efforts to vitalize this order in the lives of the people, it never attained the proportions anticipated by the leaders. The people were just not ready to live the law. At the death of President Young in 1877, the United Order died also. Some few isolated settlements in the southern part of the state continued for a number of years, but they too were eventually dissolved.

In September 1874, President Smoot called for volunteers to work on the St. George Temple during the winter. Those who did not labor on the building should be willing to furnish supplies and provisions to see the workmen through the winter in a comfortable manner. "I would be pleased to go myself and labor there that I might return rested, for I am being worn out with this excessive brain labor."¹

At the same time the United Order struggled to gain acceptance, the woolen mill forged rapidly ahead. At a reorganization on October 15, 1873, Myron Tanner succeeded A. O. Smoot as superintendent. President Smoot continued as vice president and was the real force behind the company. In a visit to the offices of the Deseret News on November 2 he reported on the healthy state of the woolen mill. The sales in recent months had exceeded the production by about 25 per cent so that a surplus of manufactured goods had been reduced by eighteen thousand dollars. The factory was currently turning out nine hundred yards of material daily, and the demand was increasing all the time. Steps had been taken to meet this rising demand. A 6 per cent assessment on stock would raise thirty thousand dollars, half of which was for the purchase of raw material and half for additional machinery, which would bring the mill up to its full capacity. Brother Smoot was soon to go east to make the purchases.²

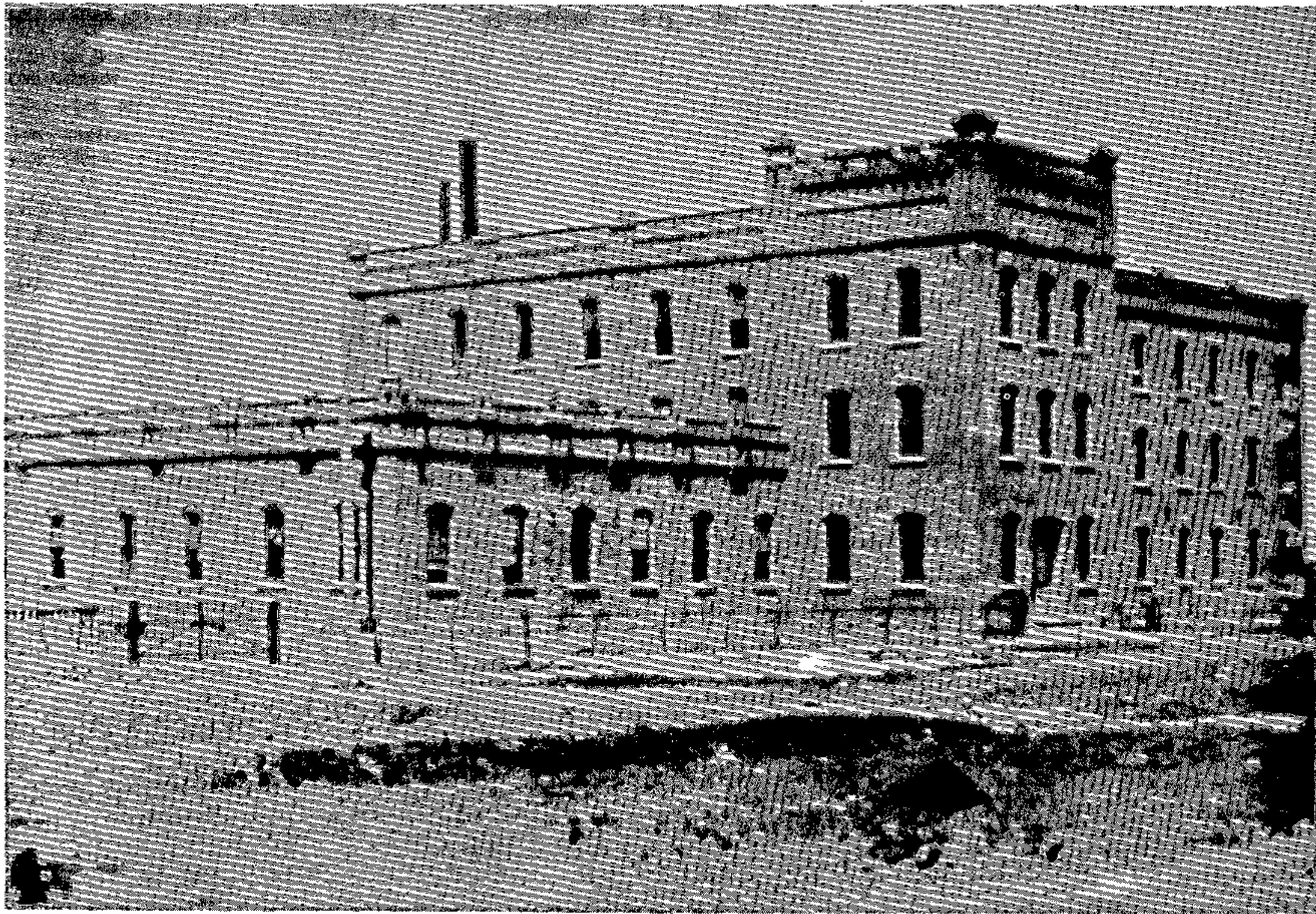
Just before leaving for the east, President Smoot desired to pronounce blessings upon the heads of his family and accordingly exercised his calling as a Patriarch and his right as a father in Israel. Albert Jones, who acted as clerk on the occasion, describes the scene.

I enjoyed the scene very much to see the numerous family bowing one by one and under the hands of their husband and father receiving a blessing by the power of the priesthood. The number of blessings to be given occasioned the use of two Evenings and on the second Evening being the 22nd of November 1874 Myself and wives being present we received the following Patriarchal Blessings under the hands of Prest A. O. Smoot³

¹Ibid., September 6, 1874.

²Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), November 7, 1874.

³Albert Jones, "Autobiography of Albert Jones," (Microfilm of the original, 1881, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), p. 100.



The Provo Woolen Mill

Upon returning from the east, President Smoot reported a successful trip. He had visited the leading factories in the New England States and had purchased the desired equipment part of which was already in transit and the rest scheduled to arrive within two months.

His zeal for an expanded co-operative system to care for all the needs of the people still burned brightly. In an explanation to the directors of the Co-op Store, he said,

His platform was to incorporate every Branch of Manufacture with our Co-op Institution that the people's interest might be guarded and all built up together. For the stronger Institution to help the weak until the whole system of manufactures needed by us as a people was embraced and consolidated in one Institution.¹

In an effort to realize this aim, President Smoot presented to the board of the Co-op the proposal to enlarge the tailoring activities of the store. In this activity the store would be united with the factory which would furnish the material to be made into clothing. Smoot reported that a number of inquiries had already been made by citizens of Salt Lake for suits made of Provo cloth. Action was taken by the board to carry out the proposal.²

The fine progress made by the woolen factory was related by President Smoot in a letter sent to L. John Nuttall on April 1, 1875. He stated that in the annual directors meeting of the day previous the business report showed a net gain since the factory started of \$53,900.00 which he considered not bad for a beginning.³

The Deseret News column carrying Smoot's November 7 report of the factory progress contained additional comments of its own.

The surmisings and assertions that have sometimes been indulged in by some persons, that the Provo factory was too huge a concern for this Territory, are now proved to have been fallacious, as the trade has kept steadily increasing since it started in operation until now the demand exceeds the supply, and the stock on hand continues to be reduced. We, in common with all sensible citizens of Utah, are highly gratified with this triumph of home manufacture, because it is now demonstrated beyond doubt, that the Provo and some other factories of the Territory need not have fears about the competition of outside markets, as they can successfully compete therewith in point of prices for the same quality of goods.⁴

The historian, Tullidge, shows that the Provo factory performed a great service in leading the way for other home manufacturing projects. The

¹"Minutes of the Provo Co-operative Institution," February 18, 1875.

²Ibid., May 14, 1875.

³Millennial Star, (London, England), May 3, 1875.

⁴Deseret Evening News, November 7, 1874.

railroad had laid at the doors of the people all manner of goods at low prices and had destroyed much of the incentive for home production.

But the Provo Woolen Factory, which was started soon after the completion of the railroad, restored confidence to our home manufacturing industries. Indeed, it will be marked in the history of this Territory that it was the Provo Woolen Mills that brought Utah manufactures from a primitive condition to a commercial status, placing our home made fabrics on the market side by side with imported goods, competing with them in quality and price, which was necessary to be done before home manufactures could possibly become a decided success. . . . Thus considered, the Provo Woolen Mills will stand as the first monument in the manufacturing history of our Territory.¹

Although Brigham Young had been the president of the company, Smoot had been more actively concerned with it and must be credited with its progress. At the death of Brigham Young in 1877, A. O. Smoot became the president and remained so until his death. The company enjoyed its best years in about 1890 and was hardest hit in 1894 when other such companies were forced to close.

Even though his mind was much occupied with sizeable projects such as the woolen mill, President Smoot also kept his mind alerted to the needs of the people in smaller matters. One such need he recognized to be a baptismal font where the Saints could more conveniently carry out this ordinance. At the Bishop's Meeting on March 16, 1875, he introduced the idea of a font in order that the proper privacy might be secured when performing this sacred rite. He would like to rebaptize all of his family if a suitable place could be obtained.

When it was mentioned that some would oppose the plan and whine about it, President Smoot replied that the whiners were the one group who had no right to say anything about it, because they had not one cent invested in it.

At the March 30 meeting, the committee reported on the costs and plans were laid to complete the building during the present summer. By July, workmen were on the ground and construction was going ahead. Again Brother Smoot had helped to fill an important need of the people.

¹"History of Provo City," Tullidges Quarterly Magazine, III, (1885) p. 255.

CHAPTER X

BEGINNING THE BRIGHAM YOUNG ACADEMY AND THE UTAH STAKE TABERNACLE

A. O. Smoot was a staunch advocate of proper training for young people. This included religious and social training, to help them to live harmoniously with society, and occupational training to make them useful citizens in society.

When the boys profaned and stole a bit of the early ripe fruit, he directed that a check be put upon this "that our mountains may not be filled with Gadianton Robbers." Parents should take charge of their children during meeting. The Elders too, should correct the children who committed improper acts. He wished them to correct his children whenever the need arose. When some one mentioned that his family did not observe the Sabbath day by attendance at meetings, he answered, "I want all Israel to know that I teach them better, both by precept and example."¹

To gain the benefits of true principles, you had to live those principles. There was no middle ground. Such a steadfast course marked him as a strict person. His large frame and over two hundred pounds of weight coupled with a fearless attitude impressed both men and children.

His grandson, Clark Newell, describes Smoot as a serious man.

'He spent most of his time in the bank,' said Clark. 'He drove back and forth from the bank with his horse and buggy. When he came into the yard, we sat up pretty straight. There would be no more playing around. One of his own boys swallowed a cigarette rather than let his father see him smoking it.'²

Another grand child, Allie Smoot Coleman, remembers him as firm, but kind. "There was no card playing when he was around. When we were playing a game of hearts and heard his cane coming down the hall, we hurriedly put the cards away."³

¹"Record of Sunday Services, Provo, Utah," November 23, 1879.

²Interview with Clark Newell, Provo, Utah.

³Interview with Allie Smoot Coleman, Provo, Utah.

His concern for his children exceeded mere giving of instruction. His daughter, Ida Smoot Dusenberry, said, "that she could not remember a night when her father was home that he did not come to each home to see if all the children were all right."¹

Naturally, with an appreciation of the value of education, Smoot would desire that it be conducted in an organized fashion for the most effective results. At a time when many parents kept their children home from school to work, President Smoot not only sent his children to school, but also urged parents to send their children regularly the whole year, not just spasmodically during the season.

When Warren Dusenberry proposed opening a school, President Smoot urged the support of the people, especially during the early period when it was gaining a foothold.

In anticipation of the school term commencing in the fall of 1871, President Smoot called upon the people to support the school. Although it might be difficult for the poor to pay their school bill, they should set their hearts upon it. It would be very unwise for the people of the town to let the interest in the school lag. "I watch this School with a jealous eye as I feel a deep interest in it."²

As with the woolen factory, when Brigham Young desired to establish a school, he turned his attention to Provo as the most favorable location. He had provided the building, rent free, in which the Dusenberry brothers held their school. He had spoken several times to Brother Smoot about establishing an academy in Provo and said he would deed the building over for that purpose. When the two leaders discussed the names of those to be trustees, President Young desired that a woman be on the board to safeguard the interests of the women.³

For the purpose of endowing the school, to be known as the Brigham Young Academy, President Young made out a deed of trust on October 16, 1875, deeding property to seven trustees to use in establishing the academy.⁴ On the four lots designated by the deed, stood the Lewis building, which was to house the academy.

¹Interview with Ida Smoot Dusenberry, Provo, Utah.

²"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," April 23, 1871.

³Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 434.

⁴"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," (Microfilm of the original minute book, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), p. 1.

The first step in carrying out the purposes of the deed was a meeting of the trustees on November 22. After accepting the deed, they organized into a board by electing A. O. Smoot as president, W. H. Dusenberry as secretary, and H. H. Cluff as treasurer. Committees were also appointed by President Smoot to form rules and regulations for the academy. Warren N. Dusenberry, who had been the Principal of the Timpanogos Branch of the Deseret University, was elected to be principal of the academy.¹

In one of their early conversations about the academy, President Young had requested his faithful friend to "take hold of the school, help it with his influence, and call upon the people to patronize it."² One of his first experiences with the academy required him to take hold and literally use his influence. The building had been badly neglected and required an expenditure of several hundred dollars to get it in a suitable condition to commence school. President Smoot quietly donated the necessary funds.³

After teaching one term, Principal Dusenberry resigned, necessitating the selection of another principal. In looking about for the right man to head the school, Brother Smoot remembered his former acquaintance in the Twentieth Ward in Salt Lake, Karl G. Maeser. With the approval of President Young, Brother Smoot presented Maeser's name to the Board on April 15, 1876. Maeser was elected to be the new principal, at a salary of \$1200 for the first year.

It was decided that Brother Maeser would hold a preliminary session to begin April 24. At the first student assembly, it was announced that school would commence each morning at the unheard of hour of 8:45 A. M. A number of objections were raised to this and other new fangled ideas.

Nothing short of the potent spell attending the magic name of Brigham Young, backed by the iron will of the President of the Board, Abraham O. Smoot, could have induced the people to accept the revolutionary methods introduced by this new Principal.⁴

The success of this experimental term was a confirmation of the wisdom of President Smoot in his suggestion of the new principal. After the formal opening of the Academy in August 27, 1876, President Young visited the school but twice, being escorted on the first of these visits by A. O. Smoot.

That President Young was well pleased with the conduct and prospects of the Academy is shown by his plans to further endow the institution.

¹Ibid., p. 5.

²Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 435.

³Ibid., III, p. 435.

⁴Reinhard Maeser, Karl G. Maeser, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1928), p. 81.

During the last winter of President Young's life, while in St. George, he addressed a letter to Brother Smoot, desiring him to buy out the property adjoining the Academy building on the east owned by Brother Peter Stubbs and to "value or appraise the lot across the street from the Academy, which belonged to the Church. The Stubbs house, a two story brick structure-- was to be converted into a boarding house, while the property across the street, a quarter of a block in all, was to be used as a site for the erection of machine and trade shops.¹

On his return from St. George, President Young spent the night in Provo where he and Brother Smoot held a lengthy discussion about plans for the Academy. He repeated his intention to erect workshops and boarding house and directed Smoot to complete the purchase of the Stubb's property. His unfortunate death prevented the completion of this purchase. In a final charge to his faithful supporter he said, "I desire you, Brother Smoot, to turn your influence and energies to the building up of that Academy. And in so doing you'll be blessed and the Lord will prosper you."² History testifies to the faithful manner in which that charge was accepted and carried out.

To further endow the Academy, President Young deeded additional property to the institution on June 1, 1877. This property, three and one tenth acres in block 28, Plot B, was in the block immediately to the north of the present City and County Building Block.³

President Young also ordered deeds prepared which would convey forty thousand dollars in property and bonds to the academy. On the day Brother Young became ill, his secretary, Elder George Reynolds, placed the papers on his desk. His death on August 29, 1877 occurred before the papers were signed. "The Academy was thrown, like an unweaned babe upon the care and protection of its foster-father, Abraham O. Smoot."⁴

At the same time his duties as a Church official and civic leader increased, his business interests expanded also. As early as 1870 he and William Paxman had started a small lumber yard to meet the need for lumber in conveniently useable sizes. President Smoot had pointed out the need for this service and as no one ventured to enter into the business, he launched forth himself. His offer in November of 1875 to combine the business with the Co-op store had been rejected. In 1878 David John bought into the company and it became known as Smoot, John and Company. On April 19, 1879, the company was expanded and

¹Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 435.

²Ibid., III, p. 436.

³J. Marinus Jensen and others, "History of Brigham Young University," (typed manuscript in B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah, 1942), p. 12.

⁴Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 436.

incorporated as the Provo Lumber, Manufacturing and Building Company, with a capital stock of forty thousand dollars. A. O. Smoot was still the president of the company.¹

Besides carrying on an extensive lumber trade, the company dominated the building business in Provo until 1900. They erected most of Provo's important buildings.

Still standing are the Asylum, The Tabernacle, The First National Bank (now Hedquist Drug) many other structures on Provo's older Business blocks, and numerous residences.²

President Smoot often used his business to provide employment for the needy. One such incident is related by Walter P. Whitehead of Provo. Brother Whitehead's father had often befriended A. O. Smoot Jr. who had been on a mission in England. After the elder Whitehead had emigrated from England, he chanced to meet his missionary friend on the streets of Provo.

In the course of the conversation, Mr. Smoot, the missionary, asked my father what he was working at and father said he was looking for work. He immediately said: 'Come with me.' He took my father to meet his father, President A. O. Smoot, and introduced him to President Smoot as 'Brother Whitehead, his English father.' He then said that Brother Whitehead was looking for work. President Smoot was pleased to meet my father and said that he would see what could be done for father.

Elder Smoot, the missionary, said that my father could not wait for looking around as he had a wife and five children to feed. President Smoot at once then told my father to go to the home of President Smoot and he would find something else a little later.

My father was there a few weeks and was then told by President Smoot to go to the Smoot Lumber Yard the next morning and a job was waiting for him. My father never looked for another job after that and followed the lumber business the rest of his life in Provo.³

We have seen that throughout his life A. O. Smoot obeyed, almost without question, those in authority over him. An incident of August 1878 disclosed that he expected that same kind of obedience in others.

John E. Booth had been appointed Commissioner on stock taking for the Co-op store, but on his appearance at the premises of the East Store, Superintendent S. S. Jones refused to allow Booth to perform his duties. He stated that Booth not only was not qualified, but acted in matters beyond his authority. He refused to serve if Booth was retained. Booth submitted his resignation at a Board Meeting on August 20, and the matter was held for further discussion.

President Smoot was present at the next meeting and objected to Jones'

¹"History of Provo," Tullidges Quarterly Magazine, III, (1885), p. 258.

²Scott, op. cit., p. 65.

³Letter from Walter P. Whitehead, Provo, Utah, July 19, 1954.

action. He felt that by such action Mr. Jones had "shown a disrespect to the official appointment of the Commissioner: therefore was prepared to receive the Resignation of Mr. S. S. Jones."¹ There was no place in his make up for disobedience.

Discussion has often centered around the question of negroes holding the Priesthood. A. O. Smoot made a significant contribution to this subject. President John Taylor, Elders Brigham Young, Abraham O. Smoot, Zebedee Coltrin and L. John Nuttall were gathered at the home of Brother Smoot in Provo on the afternoon of May 31, 1879. During the discussion about ordaining negroes to the Priesthood, Elder Smoot said:

D. W. Patten, Warren Parrish and Thomas B. Marsh were laboring in the southern States in 1835 and 1836. There were negroes who made application for baptism. And the question arose with them whether Negroes were entitled to hold the Priesthood. And by these brethren it was decided they would not confer the Priesthood until they had consulted the Prophet Joseph, and subsequently they communicated with him. His decision, as I understand was, They were not entitled to the Priesthood, nor yet to be baptised without the consent of their Masters.

In after years when I became acquainted with Joseph myself in the Far West, about the year 1838, I received from Brother Joseph substantially the same instructions. It was on my application to him, what should be done with the Negro in the south, as I was preaching to them? He said I could baptize them by the consent of their Masters, but not to confer the Priesthood upon them.²

One of President Smoot's most pressing concerns was support for the Brigham Young Academy. He pointed out that if President Young had continued to live, he would have sustained the school, but now its principal support was from tuition fees. If the fees were raised, many of the young people would be driven to sectarian schools. Many times he had stressed the importance of teachers being trained within the Church and being anchored with a solid testimony. The only answer was for people to contribute to the support of the school. He had given a few hundred dollars besides tuition fees already.

On April 3, 1880 in Sunday Services, he referred to an assessment he had made to the various wards for the aid of the Academy. He said that this was merely in the form of a suggestion and not a levy upon the wards, but he urged the brethren to visit the school, see an examination in progress and become convinced of the importance of sustaining the institution.³

After years in the harness, our busy leader became a bit weary with the

¹"Minutes of the Provo Co-operative Institution," August 24, 1878.

²Document on file in the Church Historian's Office.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," April 3, 1880.

strain of all his responsibilities. To gain a complete rest from all these cares and anxieties and at the same time enjoy a variety of interesting new sights, he planned a trip to the Sandwich Islands. A family gathering was held at the home in Provo to bid farewell and Godspeed to Brother Smoot and his son, Reed, who was traveling with his father. Prior to their departure in early May, the faithful leader requested the prayers of his brethren that his health might improve and that they might return in safety.

From a portion of a letter which the vacationer wrote from Honolulu on June 14, we learn that his health had improved and that he planned to sail for home on July 5. Among the interesting items of his letter was the following:

I have had quite a social conversation with King Kalakaua. I find him to be quite a free and easy gentleman. He speaks the English language quite easily and fluently. I should judge him to be a well educated man of about 40 or 50 years of age, possessing a medium education and talent. He speaks favorably of our people. Our interview was just 40 minutes. When we arose to leave the palace, I made the request of him to deal kindly to our people, and bore to him a faithful testimony of the great work in which we are engaged. The captain of his guards belongs to our Church and attended our meeting today.¹

The two vacationers arrived in Salt Lake at 11:40 on July 18, appearing much benefited from the trip. They took the train the next morning for Provo.²

President Smoot's trip to the islands must have given him the urge to travel. In mid winter, he journeyed to the State of Kentucky to obtain his family genealogy. In this, he succeeded far better than he had expected to do.

In a letter to his family written from Gratz, Owen County Kentucky on December 22, he appears to be enjoying himself as he locks horns with the local ministers.

I preached at Pleasant Home, near the spot of my birth, last Sunday, (20th inst.). It snowed all day so that many who desired to attend could not get out. (The snow lies about four inches deep, but is however fast disappearing). A Campbellite priest, after I got through preaching, desired to ask me a few questions. I granted him the privilege to do so, and told him I would answer every proper question pertaining to our faith. He commenced by saying, 'I Suppose it is the duty of all your Elders to have four wives?' I answered him by saying, 'That is your supposition, sir, and not a proper question.' 'Then,' said he, 'You do believe in the doctrine of polygamy, do you not?' 'I do sir.' 'How many wives do your Elders have?' Answer, 'Some have one, some have more, and unfortunately for them some have none.' Question, 'Why is it that some have none?' Ans. 'I suppose for the same reason that you have so many old bachelors in this country---perhaps they are not good looking enough!' By this time the congregation was roaring with laughter, and I had to call them to order. The priest sat down and I consoled him by inviting him to call on me at any time, and I would answer

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), July 7, 1880.

²Ibid., July 19, 1880.

any proper question that he might propound.¹

Brother Smoot thoroughly enjoyed himself in old Kentucky, where his relatives did all they could to make his visit pleasant. He visited with many of his relatives and heard about many more of whom he had known nothing until that time. He discovered that the Smoots were scattered through the South, extending from Kentucky down into Alabama and Georgia. Although he did not say so one might suspect that the temperature of eleven degrees below zero hastened his departure for home, where he arrived on January 27, 1881.²

When he reported his trip to the people in Sunday services, he said that it stirred the feelings within his heart to visit the place of his birth and see apple trees planted by his father years before. He said that many of the older people remembered the visit of himself and Brother Woodruff over forty-three years before. He reported that a warm feeling is still felt for Brother Woodruff there.³

Brother Smoot always kept an eye out for the welfare of those about him. When diptheria was gaining a foothold in the city, he warned the people that much of it was through carelessness. The people have disregarded the quarantine law to the peril of their own health. He warned them that the law would have to be enforced for their own good. Also, he advised parents keep their children at home and in their own yards to help stop the spread of this disease.⁴

His concern was manifested not only in behalf of large groups, but also for individual persons. When Brother Maeser, while in a poor state of health, was asked by President Taylor to make a tour of the southern part of the state, President Smoot took it upon himself to write to President Taylor explaining the condition of Maeser's health.

Believing it proper that you should know of his condition I will state that he has this day exhibited to me for the first time the situation of his legs. Within the last two or three weeks they have broken out in large raw blotches which are quite tender and sore. Dr. Pike attributes the same to over mental exertion. . . . I am inclined to the belief that Bro. Maeser needs rest.⁵

Also, in the cases of missionaries whose families were in need of the missionaries presence, he kept a close watch and notified the First Presidency

¹Ibid., December 30, 1880.

²Ibid., January 27, 1881.

³"Record of Sunday Services, Provo, Utah," January 23, 1881.

⁴Ibid., July 21, 1881.

⁵Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

of the conditions, suggesting that the missionaries be released to care for their families.

The close of 1881 saw the beginning of one of the large projects in the life of A. O. Smoot. Plans were laid for building a stake tabernacle. Back in 1877, he had first suggested that the Utah Stake would probably be called upon to erect a tabernacle. On November 5, 1881, he announced in Sunday Meeting that the High Council of the Stake had considered the matter of the Utah Stake building a tabernacle and now made that recommendation to the people. The assembly approved the recommendation and a committee was appointed to select a suitable site for the building.¹

As plans for building the Tabernacle were taking shape, President Smoot launched forth in still another activity. The Provo area had long needed a bank to facilitate business transactions. Preliminary meetings to establish such an institution had been held in 1873, but its founding was delayed until 1882. On January 28, The First National Bank of Provo was organized with a capital of fifty thousand dollars. Although a number of Salt Lake City capitalists held stock, most of the stock was held in Utah County. A. O. Smoot and William Hooper, the two chief promoters, were President and Vice President. The charter for the First National Bank of Provo was issued on March 2, 1882, and doors were opened for business on April 3.²

After a year and a half of operation in the recorder's office at the County Court House, President Smoot joined in with the bank in the erection of a fine building at a cost of twenty thousand dollars. In addition to the offices of the bank it included quarters for mercantile operations and suites of offices on the second floor.³

Encouraged by successful operations, the First National Bank of Provo opened a second bank, the Utah County Savings Bank. The offices were in the same building, and its officers and stockholders were mostly the same.⁴

A publication on important Utah cities and leaders gives the following evaluation of Smoot's banking activities:

For nine years he has been at the head of the First National Bank of this city, and its present sound and substantial condition and uniform success, ever since first established, has been due, largely to his keen financial policies and judicious executive guidance. Through all its career the

¹"Utah Stake Manuscript History," November 5, 1881.

²"History of Provo," Tullidges Quarterly Magazine, III, (1885), p. 259.

³Ibid., p. 259.

⁴Scott, op. cit., p. 102.

conservative, yet liberal course followed out, has not only gained for it widespread popularity, as a safe banking institution, but has inspired confidence in the people of this community who now regard it as the most solid and well managed bank of this city.¹

This evaluation also declares that A. O. Smoot must be recognized as "foremost among the leading men of Provo, in point of enterprise and public spirit as well as a man of affluence and liberal business methods." He is doing more for the advancement of Provo than any other man. He is always on the alert to inform people of the advantages of Provo. High tribute is also paid to his influence throughout the Territory.

Taking part as he has in the diverse interests of Utah, from its earliest history until the present time, it should be said, not only in justice to himself, but as a necessary record to be included in a comprehensive and authentic review of the Territory, that he has done as much as any other one man towards bringing about the wonderful transition in material progress and modern advancement through which Utah has passed from a primitive undeveloped state to its present advanced position among the centers of wealth, population and enlightenment of the great commonwealth.²

After such an appraisal of Smoot's success in the civic and business world, it might be well to consider his attitude toward wealth. His whole attitude was that we were merely stewards of God. Our desire should not be to gain possessions, but to help build up Zion. This we should do by helping to organize the elements, by which we are surrounded, in such a way that wealth will come gradually. He condemned the practice of going to the mines and leaving the fields and herds at home untended.

People should not labor just for themselves, but should seek the welfare of the whole group.

As a watchman on the walls of Zion, it becomes my duty to warn the people when danger is approaching whether they heed it or not. The love of gain and the things of this world, is a great evil among us, insomuch that it is a very great effort to build a Temple in Zion. It is necessary for Israel to become a financial people, but our selfishness has become a hindrance to this end. God will bless us with wealth when we learn to use it for the upbuilding of Zion.³

When one of the leaders said he thought it was better for the people to be poor, Smoot said he preferred being rich, but doubted if the people could withstand the dangers of wealth. These dangers he seemed to have escaped, for throughout his life he gave generously, both for individual welfare and public good.

¹Anon., Utah Her Cities, Towns, and Resources, (Chicago: Edited and published by Manly and Litteral, 1911), p. 212.

²Ibid., p.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," November 1, 1884.

President Smoot's son in law, who lived close enough to the family to know the facts, said of Brother Smoot.

President Smoot's native hospitality was abundantly shown throughout his life. He virtually kept open house, welcoming beneath his roof and around his table thousands of travelers who passed his way. It was in these and in many other directions, that the graces of motherly kindness were manifested conspicuously by his devoted partners.¹

His son, Alma, says, "No one ever went in need around his father." Especially at Christmas and Thanksgiving time, he made sure the poor were provided for. Large stocks of supplies were gathered to distribute to the poor at this time. Peanuts were purchased in hundred pound lots. Alma and his brother, Parley, spent the whole day before Christmas delivering boxes of food to needy families.

He says the Indians would come about twice a year and stay at his father's place. His mother, Diana, would fill their sacks with flour, meat, and even give them a little money.²

Ida Smoot Dusenberry remembers that for a period of fifteen or twenty years a group of Indians would come each fall with produce to sell. Her father had a large barn where they would stay. He kept a supply of bedding in the loft, where the Indians would sleep for several days. They would send word in advance about their arrival. Her mother would cook for days in anticipation of their coming. What A. O. couldn't help them sell, he would then take to the tithing office to try to sell. If any surplus remained, President Smoot usually bought it.³

Brother L. John Nuttall makes frequent mention in his diary of spending the evening at Brother Smoot's and of the hospitality always extended by the Provo leader. Nuttall's diary also affirms the fact that President Smoot's home was the regular stopping place for the Church leaders whenever they passed through and spent the night in Provo.

Another developement in 1882, which was to further complicate President Smoot's life, was the passage of the Edmunds Law which defined polygamy as a felony.

In Provo, as in all communities, polygamists found themselves subjected to humiliating raids by Federal officers. It became necessary for the men to hide out in canyons, in cellars, or in cleverly constructed secret rooms in their homes. A. O. Smoot had such a room in his closet, built under the

¹Whitney, op. cit., p. 102.

²Interview with Alma Smoot, Bountiful, Utah.

³Interview with Ida Smoot Dusenberry, Provo, Utah.

floor with a trap door entrance.¹

However life went on, and progress continued. At the moment, the Tabernacle was the big project in the life of A. O. Smoot. On February 4, at Priesthood meeting, he asked the Bishops for a report on the attitude of the people toward building the Tabernacle. The response showed a uniform desire to go ahead in its erection. President Smoot then suggested that the Wards commence to raise a portion of their assessment so that contracts could be let out. A month from that day, they would select the building committee.²

In the interests of a more rapid building program, President Smoot made the following request for assistance from the tithing funds:

Provo City March 28th 1882

Prest John Taylor,
Salt Lake City

Dear Brother

In consultation with some of the leading Brethren of this Stake, we have deemed it not our place to make application to the Trustee in Trust for all the Tithing over Seventy five thousand dollars, for Utah Stake, for this and 1881 and the next ensuing year 1882 to apply on our contemplated Stake Tabernacle; believing that should that favor be granted us that it would not detract from the Tithing Resources of the Stake, but would give the Brethren such encouragement that would prompt them in the future to pay a heavier Tithing.

Should this application be favorably considered we would propose to use the Tithing proportionately in kind as received by the various Wards of this Stake of Zion, with kind regards.

We Remain

Your Brethren in the Gospel

A. O. Smoot Pres

D. John 1st Counselor³

The First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles discussed the matter in their meeting of April 12 and authorized the use of "so much of the Labor and Team Tithing of your Stake as you can collect and utilize." This appropriation was not to interfere with the regular cash and produce tithing of the Stake. This decision of the First Presidency was announced to the Priesthood of the Stake on May 6.

At the same meeting, the committee on apportionment made its report concerning the amount assigned to each ward. When some of the brethren thought that this was mandatory on the part of the wards and appeared a bit unwilling to support the program, President Smoot arose and placed the matter squarely

¹Works Project Administration for the State of Utah, Provo Pioneer Mormon City, (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mort, 1942), p. 109.

²"Utah Stake Historical Record," February 4, 1882.

³Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

upon the people.

The question was sprung and put to the people of the Stake, if they would build a Tabernacle upon offerings and donations, we so decided the same as other Stakes have done before us, did not understand that there was any Tax in the matter and would suggest that if we could not build a Tabernacle upon free will offerings that we abandon the idea at once, had put this machinery in motion without any understanding of receiving any Tithing, but yet thought the Presidency would help us just as they had other Stakes - but had no promise, but judged the future by the past. I am not prepared to say today what will be - but if we build this Tabernacle will do it on our own resources and if we get into a tight place we may have help. It is not intended to force this apportionment upon any of the Wards but if they choose to accept, in accord with the Spirit in which it came up before this meeting, all well but would not like to see a failure on our parts, or the building delayed. I wait the voice of the people if we shall build this Tabernacle, and it rests with them, I have done my duty and am clear in making known the wish of many people made known to me. Could not assume the dictation of the handling of the Tithing - had not yet tried to steady the ark nor to dictate those who stand as leaders in the Church.¹

In the meantime, the interests of the Brigham Young Academy were not forgotten. At the Utah Stake Quarterly Conference held on June 3 and 4, Brother Smoot presented the case of the Academy before the people. He told of President Young's plans for endowing the institution and of his death before those plans matured. He reported a request by the Board of Trustees for an annual endowment from the Utah County Court and of their affirmative answer. An apportionment was made to the wards in the stake and an appeal to the surrounding stakes, but with the general excuse of poverty, the response was poor.

Additions were now needed to the building to house the growing student body. He invited the co-operation of all those who were in a position to help. Those who helped would be the ones blessed.²

Assistance was slow in coming forth, but the need persisted. A. O. Smoot acted in characteristic fashion. At a session of the Board held on July 1, he stated that,

he had determined to make some additions to the building this summer, receiving such assistance as may be tendered, and asked if the trustees had any objections to said building. The trustees expressed appreciation of the enterprise suggested by President Smoot, and heartily sustained the enterprise.³

By proceeding at once, he was able to complete an addition of three sizeable class rooms for use in the fall. The addition, on the east of the

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," May 6, 1882.

²Territorial Enquirer, (Provo, Utah), June 7, 1882.

³"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," p. 32.

original building, cost President Smoot about three thousand dollars.

President Smoot devoted much of his time and attention to the proposed tabernacle building. He constantly stirred up the people to support the project. He announced that produce would be received at cash prices as donations on the Tabernacle. He had to warn the people against the spirit that the Tithing should pay for the Tabernacle and other public works. When the fear developed that this building would be for the use of Provo Wards only, he quieted their fears by assuring them that the Tabernacle would be for the people of the whole Stake. He asked the Bishops to make this clear to the people of all the wards. In Priesthood meeting, he warned the leaders never to speak of possible failure, but always to show enthusiasm. If they slacked off, the people would be sure to follow. His quarterly conference message again pointed out to the people the blessings that would come from this building, showing that public improvements were fundamental to progress.

An incident in the summer of 1883 shows again the interest of A. O. Smoot in the B. Y. Academy and his influential position in the Provo area. During the summer months, Benjamin Cluff Jr. was being seriously considered as a candidate for Superintendent of Schools in the Territory of Utah. Cluff was at the time a teacher in the Academy. When this threat to his continued valuable services became known, A. O. Smoot, David John, and Karl G. Maeser met to discuss the matter.

At that meeting which was held on July 15, President Smoot decided against the proposition, and that ended it. It was evident that President Abram O. Smoot was a powerful figure in those early days. He was considered by many to be second only to Brigham Young in vigorous personality, power, and influence.¹

By August 4, only \$7,841.51 had been raised of the fifty thousand dollars which had been apportioned to the wards to raise. One of the Bishops reported some indifference among the wealthy members of his ward towards the Tabernacle. President Smoot knew just how to stir the people up to their duty. He said that from the expression of the Bishops, he did not know if it would be safe for the committee to go ahead with the building, and thought a more positive expression should be heard from the meeting before the committee made further commitments. Immediate expressions of renewed determination to raise the money came from the brethren assembled.²

Somewhat of a crisis was reached in the progress of the building during

¹Eugene L. Roberts and Mrs. Eldon Reed Cluff, "Benjamin Cluff Jr.," (Typewritten manuscript, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah, 1947), p. 25.

²"Utah Stake Historical Record," August 4, 1883.

September, 1883. To help overcome the situation, the Stake Presidency printed a circular letter addressed to the Bishops, Priesthood, and Saints. The letter outlined the steps in the planning and progress of the building. It reminded the people of occasions on which the various groups within the stake had approved the building project. The walls were now raised to above the first windows. Considerable carpenter work must be done before the brick work could continue. An urgent appeal was made for the carpenters of the stake to come and assist in the work. If it was not done in time, much loss would result to the materials on the ground and to the walls, which would be exposed to the weather without a roof. After reading the circular to the Priesthood, President Smoot re-emphasized the economy of immediate action so that no loss would ensue.¹

This was not the only crisis to test the leadership of A. O. Smoot. On the evening of January 27, 1884, the buildings of the B. Y. Academy caught fire and burned to the ground. Many of the young men students raced to rescue equipment, supplies and records. Professor Maeser, Apostle Erastus Snow, and President A. O. Smoot were on hand passing through the crowd to direct rescue efforts and to cheer up the saddened onlookers.² This must have been a difficult task for Brother Smoot.

Of all who gazed on that sad spectacle that night, there was no heavier, sadder heart than that of its foster father A. O. Smoot. The institution had grown into his very heart of hearts, and to see the results of years of toil and hard-earned blessings blazing on the altar of sacrifice, wilted his feelings to the uttermost.³

The undaunted spirit of A. O. Smoot and his devotion to a cause is nowhere better seen than in his fight to raise a school from the ashes of what many would have thought a lost cause. He called a special session of the Board to meet the first thing the next morning. After discussing the disaster, the Board voted unanimously to continue the higher departments of the Academy without delay. Arrangements were to be made for temporary quarters in the Meeting House and the First National Bank Building.⁴

President Smoot called a meeting of the Board, Faculty, and students for 10 o'clock in the Tabernacle. About four hundred people, mostly students, heard the cheering news from Principal Maeser that the Academy would live on.

¹From a printed circular inserted in "Utah Stake Historical Record," September 29, 1883.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), January 28, 1884.

³Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 436.

⁴"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," p. 32.

Brother Smoot followed, assuring the people of the future of the Academy.

"School will convene as usual at half past eight. It will occupy, it is thought, the upper part of the new bank building, with the basement of the meeting house."¹

President Smoot sent a notice to the Deseret News that school would be held the next day. Classes started on time with only one day's loss.

On February 2, President Smoot announced that many thousands of dollars had already been subscribed for the new Academy building. Subscription lists were prepared, which he wished the Bishops to circulate in their wards for the benefit of the Academy. He also announced that a traveling theatrical company proposed to give one half of their proceeds for the building. He instructed the active men of the wards to use their influence to see that tickets are sold.²

When the Board met on February 9, Principal Maeser reported that classes were being held in the bank building and in S. S. Jones' store rather than the Meeting House. They were comfortable, but needed more room for the higher departments. This problem was quickly solved by arranging for the use of President Smoot's new building intended as quarters for the Smoot Drug Store.³

President Smoot seemed unaffected by these trying experiences. Childe Harold reports a visit in Provo.

While in Provo, I called upon President Smoot. I found him hale and hearty, apparently bidding defiance to the ravages of time. He was as cool, calm, and conscious as ever; he is at all times a safe guide and counsellor; . . . and without doubt, much of Provo's prosperity may be traced directly to him. I heard Professor Fowler 14 years ago, say, that he might live to be 100 years old, and time appears to verify the professor's sayings.⁴

His problems would have added gray hairs to most heads. One of the toughest was concerned with the deed of the B. Y. Academy. This deed was entirely satisfactory during the lifetime of President Young, but it contained two provisions which made it extremely difficult for the trustees to carry out their responsibilities. The first provided that in the case of a vacancy on the Board, "then the said party of the first part, his heirs or assigns shall fill the vacancy so made."⁵ Under this provision, with the heirs of Brigham Young scattered over the United States, it was very difficult to fulfill vacancies on the Board. Often they remained unfilled for years.

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), January 28, 1884.

²"Utah Stake Historical Record," February 2, 1884.

³Bd. Min BYA," p. 40.

⁴Utah Journal, (Provo, Utah), February 16, 1884.

⁵"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," p. 42.

The second provision referred to rules and by-laws and then turned its attention to the property, stating, "and the property thereunto belonging, they, the said Trustees shall hold subject to the approval of the said party of the first part, his heirs, or assigns,"¹ This provision created much the same difficulty. Any transfer of property required the approval of all the heirs. Under this provision, it was almost impossible to furnish a clear title, and therefore impossible to dispose of property to raise cash for the institution.

In an attempt to correct this condition, President Smoot met with the Board on December 2, 1882 and submitted a draft of a Deed of Assignment to the First Presidency of the Church, of the appropriating powers now held by the heirs of the late President Young. After it was studied and approved by the Board of Trustees, Mrs. Zina Y. Williams was requested to have the heirs of President Young sign the deed.²

After several weeks of fruitless effort, Warren Dusenberry reported that at the request of Mrs. Williams he had met with the heirs of President Young and attempted to get their signatures on the Deed of Assignment. Several of the heirs stated that they would not sign away their control of the Tithing Block.³

As they were struggling with the problem of rebuilding after the fire, President Smoot and three of the Trustees sent a letter to the heirs. They again pointed out the difficulty of obtaining any unanimity of action from the heirs and urged that the power be vested in some local Church authorities to more efficiently administer the affairs of the Academy. Again the numbers and scattered condition of the heirs defeated the request.

Recognizing the need for a more permanent location for the Academy, the Board met in a special session and decided to apply to Z. C. M. I. for the use of their warehouse in the city to house the academy until a new building could be erected. The request was sent on March 24, 1884 and was granted by Z. C. M. I.⁵ The upper floor was partitioned into eleven rooms, which with part of the lower floor housed the Academy until January of 1892.

¹Ibid., p. 13.

²Ibid., p. 36.

³Ibid., p. 37.

⁴Ibid., p. 42.

⁵Ibid., p. 42-43.

CHAPTER XI

COMPLETION OF THE TABERNACLE AND THE ACADEMY BUILDING

In the first months after the fire, the initial enthusiasm for a new building carried the project rapidly along. Members of the Board contacted the heirs of Brigham Young and found them favorable to the undertaking. Wards contributed money and many people, in and out of the Church, indicated a desire to contribute to the cause.

When the matter of the best site for the building was considered, President Smoot offered to give to the institution a site on the present University Avenue between Seventh and Eighth North Streets. The final location two blocks north of President Smoot's offered site was determined by the personal choice of President John Taylor.¹

Had Reed Smoot prevailed in his choice the building would have been still farther to the north and east.

I remember when this place was selected after the burning of the old place on Center Street. I spent one whole evening with my father trying to convince him that this was hardly the place to establish the university, for one of my dreams was that I could see this institution upon yonder hill covering the whole of it.²

President Taylor's choice prevailed and two thousand dollars was raised to purchase the site from Jesse Lewis from whom Brigham Young had purchased the original site.

Shortly thereafter, on May 21, 1884, the dedication of the grounds took place. After offering the dedicatory prayer, President Smoot took the shovel in hand and broke ground on the southeast corner. Karl G. Maeser and H. H. Cluff also participated in the ceremony.³ The foundation was completed but

¹Letter from A. O. Smoot and H. H. Cluff to President John Taylor (filed in the Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah).

²Address of Senator Reed Smoot, B. Y. U. Assembly Autumn 1930, from a typed manuscript in possession of N. I. Butt, B. Y. U., Provo, Utah.

³Roberts and Cluff, op. cit., p. 29.

no further work was done for a number of years.

In the meantime the tabernacle faced problems. It was far from completion and five thousand dollars was owed. In Quarterly Conference President Smoot asked the sisters to pay twenty-five cents per month to help pay off that debt. The next day he asked the brethren to contribute fifty cents per month.¹ At the next Quarterly Conference, President Cluff reported that only about one third of the donations had been paid.

On September 2, 1884 Brother Smoot's faithful companion, "Ma" Smoot, passed away. Emily, his second wife, had preceeded Margaret in death some two and one half years, having passed away on March 20, 1882. With two wives remaining and polygamy persecution gaining in intensity all the time, the leading citizen of Provo made a prize target for the efforts of federal agents.

The people were fully alert to the methods in the polygamy persecution. President Smoot exhorted the Priesthood and the members to be on the alert against the Government Officials known as "Spotters." An incident in connection with H. H. Cluff shows that they were not slack in the exercise of caution. Cluff reports the incident of February 5, 1885.

As I drove up to President Smoot's office in the Bank he hastily informed me that he had just got word from the secret service that the U. S. Marshalls were after me. Although not at all excited I slipped out from the public gaze.²

In the judicial crisis, as President Smoot termed it, he advised the people to do their duties and leave the result with the Lord. That did not mean they were to do nothing to combat the persecution. He said we had escaped serious persecution only because a few of the leading brethren had been on the alert. To successfully defend themselves required a great deal of financial means, and he called upon the people to contribute liberally to the defense fund.

In spite of the presence of the "spotters" in the city, when his seventieth birthday rolled around the family all gathered at a surprise party in honor of their father. When he arrived at half past five in the evening, he was genuinely astonished to find his wives and all of his children except two or three who lived too far from Provo to be present. Wives, children, and grandchildren all expressed sincere wishes for his future preservation and happiness. After a bounteous meal the family all gathered in the parlor and

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," August 30, 1884.

²Harvey Harris Cluff, "Autobiography," (Microfilm copy of the original handwritten account, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah), Part I, p. 209.

joined in group singing. When father Smoot was called upon for a speech, he entertained the happy gathering with accounts of family history, genealogy, and incidents in his own eventful life. "In his closing remarks he outlined the course he fervently wished his children and grandchildren to pursue, and urged upon them fidelity to the Word of God." The reunion ended as the family all rose to their feet and sang that touching old hymn, Nearer My God to Thee.¹ During the evening, the following lines prepared especially for the occasion were read in honor of Brother Smoot:

Just seventy years ago today, dear father, you were born,
 And though your trials have been severe, you are not left forlorn;
 But pleased we are to meet you now, both wives and children dear,
 Our efforts from this moment on, will be your heart to cheer.
 You now have lived your three score years, yea, add to that just ten,
 Which God has said in Holy Writ, shall be the life of men,
 But you are yet among us, which makes our hearts rejoice,
 To listen to your counsel and your ever warming voice.

We have learned to love you dearly by the course that you have taken,
 In the cause of God upon the earth, your integrity unshaken.
 We know that tis your highest aim to have us all prove true,
 To all our vows and Zion's cause and always be with you.
 Dear Parent, with the help of God, our mortal lives shall be,
 Approved of Him who rules above and pleasing unto thee,
 That all the family ties that now doth bind us here below,
 May grow more firm and sacred too as heavenward we go.²

Along in late summer of 1885, President Smoot reported that a rumor was going the rounds in Salt Lake that the Semi-Annual Conference might be held in Provo. He summarized what would need to be done if this possibility should materialize. "There will have to be one coat of plaster on the ceilings, and some temporary windows put in." He thought a great deal of good would come to Provo in being host to such a conference.³

The High Council and various quorums of Priesthood in the Stake had been using a room in the Meeting House for special meetings. When this room seemed no longer adequate, it was decided to finish the west room of the Tabernacle and dedicate it for use in these meetings. In a special meeting on December 4, President Smoot explained that they were departing from the usual custom of dedicating a building only after it was cleared of all indebtedness. However, this was only one room, and arrangements had been made to pay all the indebtedness on that portion they were about to dedicate. He then offered the

¹Territorial Enquirer, (Provo, Utah), February 20, 1885.

²Ibid., February 20, 1885.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," September 14, 1885.

dedicatory prayer, invoking special blessings upon the room and future deliberations within it.¹

In February 1886 Brother Smoot wished to go to the St. George or Logan Temple and do work for his dead friends. In his letter to President Taylor requesting recommends for himself and his oldest son and daughter, he adds an interesting postscript. "P. S. I wish to be kindly remembered to all my Exiled Brethren that are with you. Myself & Council are not sleeping at home and have not bin for some weeks. But manage to attend to our office business in a quiet way through the day."² The persecution against polygamy which had forced President Taylor from the public eye was being felt in Provo also.

The rumors of the previous September about holding conference in Provo now became a reality. While he was in Logan doing Temple work, President Smoot carried on correspondence which assured the April Conference being held in the Tabernacle at Provo. On March 8, he received a letter from President Taylor about the proposed conference location. He also received a telegram on March 10 from his co-workers in Provo promising an all out effort to prepare the Tabernacle for the occasion. It declared:

Enthusiastic desire for an liberal donations offered by citizens induce us to again communicate to you about holding Conference here. Will make effort to put in doors and windows of Tabernacle in case of stormy weather meeting house and theatre can be used.³

He immediately forwarded this telegram to President Taylor in a letter promising that if the proposition was accepted, no pains would be spared to make all things as convenient as possible. He also reported experiencing great enjoyment in the Temple work.⁴

Such assurances convinced President Taylor that Provo would be the wisest place to hold the conference. Persecution against polygamy was strong at the time and large gatherings were avoided in Salt Lake by holding Conference in several other Utah cities. This year meetings were continued on April 4, 5, 6, and 7. Speaking on the fourth day, President Smoot expressed the pleasure of the citizens of Provo in having the Conference and its many visitors come to their city. He also complimented and thanked the committees for their efforts in preparing for the Conference. There can be little doubt that President Smoot himself had much to do with the success of the whole affair. He regularly

¹Territorial Enquirer, (Provo, Utah), December 8, 1885.

²Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

³Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

⁴Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

invited the authorities to hold General Conference in the Tabernacle after that first success.

This period of polygamy persecution saw a marked decrease in the amount of tithing and contributions paid into the Church. Under these circumstances the Utah Stake Presidency directed an appeal to the President of the Church for aid. Their letter of September 22, 1886 explained their situation.

We have reached a point in the progress of our Stake Tabernacle, where we feel compelled to make an appeal to you, as Trustee in Trust, for aid.

There has been expended on the Tabernacle up to the present time, about \$65,000. Twelve Thousand Dollars of this amount we owe to parties who have furnished materials and labor and who are now in depressed circumstances and must suffer, Financially, unless we receive assistance.

To finish the building complete with heating and lighting apparatus, exclusive of an organ, will cost not less than \$20,000.

We are very anxious to pay the \$12,000 that we owe at present and push the building to completion, and therefore we respectfully ask you to appropriate out of the Church Tithing of this Stake the sum of \$25,000. In granting this request you will greatly oblige us besides being in accord with the sentiments and feelings of all the leading officers in this Stake.¹

Not depending entirely upon the generosity of the First Presidency in approving their request, the Stake Presidency prepared a letter to be sent out to the members of the Stake. They again set forth the financial obligations incurred in construction of the Tabernacle. They requested that every department of the ward organizations be enlisted at once to aid in raising funds to pay off the twelve thousand dollar debt, and also urged the Saints to continue paying their twenty-five and fifty cent donations until the building was fully completed.²

This was a difficult time for the General Church Offices as well as for the Stakes. They too were pressed for funds. Although President Taylor, as Trustee in Trust, did not send the entire amount requested, he did respond with twenty-five hundred dollars in cash and an order for twenty-five hundred dollars in produce which could be converted into cash. They expressed gratitude for this and stated their determination to somehow raise the money to meet the remainder of the debt.³

With the coming of fall, came the opening of the B. Y. Academy and the problems of its support. At a Priesthood meeting President Smoot announced plans to open a primary department where the younger children too could receive

¹Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

²Cluff, op. cit., Part I, p. 233.

³"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," November 23, 1886.

the benefits of religious instruction. Inasmuch as some of the poor people were unable to pay the fees for their children's entrance in the school, he suggested that the brethren of means educate several of the poorer children at the B. Y. Academy. He was willing to pay for the education of several children at the Academy if the parents would see to their regular attendance.¹

In a further well planned move, President Smoot called a meeting of the High Council and proposed a "Beneficiary Fund." In discussion with the High Council, it was decided that the donors to the fund should later have the privilege of nominating students whose tuition would be paid from the fund. At first the leading men of Provo were to be invited to participate and later the leaders throughout the Stake. At the first meeting of the High Council and about one hundred men, twelve hundred dollars was subscribed, and it was expected the amount would rise above this as some who were invited could not attend.²

President Smoot made a similar request the following winter. He asked each member in attendance at a Priesthood meeting to pay the tuition for at least one student at the Academy. As he had to leave before the meeting ended, he told the men that they could name the sum which he should pay and he would accept the assignment.³

On December 1, 1886, President Smoot and his first counselor H. H. Cluff sent a letter to President Taylor setting forth the condition of the Stake. Among the many matters they explained were the Tabernacle and the Academy. Work had been stopped on the Tabernacle for several months. They hoped to pay off the debt by spring with the contributions from the people.

At the close of the last school year the Academy was three thousand dollars behind in salary and rent, and about three thousand dollars in debt on the building operations. Shortage of funds had threatened the close of the Academy, but the loyalty of the faculty and the generosity of the Board kept the Academy operating. After the first semester of twenty weeks, the debts exceeded the income by twelve hundred dollars.

The control of all Board appointments and of all property by the heirs still continued to be a hindrance to efficient operations. A High Council Committee after studying the problem, joined with the Board in proposing the in-

¹"Record of the Business Meetings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood of Provo City," November 23, 1886.

²Cluff, op. cit., Part I, p. 243.

³J. Marinus Jensen and others, op. cit., p. 30.

corporation of an educational society. President Smoot and Cluff held the title to the new building lot to safeguard it from falling under the control of the heirs. This title and all the others were to be transferred to the society upon the approval of the heirs. The letter requested President Taylor's advice on the matter.¹

In another approach to the problem, President Smoot stated to the Board meeting of January 19, 1887 that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the possibility and advisability of organizing the Academy as a corporation. The matter was left for further study by a special committee.² This problem was not solved until finally in 1890 some of the heirs took the initiative and persuaded most of the others to sign an ammended deed of trust.

In the meantime developements arose which altered the entire picture of Church finances. The Edmunds Tucker Law was passed February 18, 1887. It provided for the disincorporation of the Church and confiscation of its property. In anticipation of this law, organizations had been formed in the stakes to which much of the general Church property could be transferred. When this was done in Utah Stake in the first part of March, many people thought that tithing and contributions were no longer needed, and these dropped off at a rapid rate.

Presidents Smoot and Cluff addressed a letter to Presiding Bishop of the Church, William B. Preston, and through him to President Taylor requesting approval for the Board of the Church Association of the Utah Stake of Zion to appropriate ten thousand dollars to pay off a bank obligation on the Tabernacle and enable them to contine with the construction of the building. Not only would this be a great benefit to the Stake, but would add to the genuineness of the recent transfer of property in the event the government should attempt to recover the property formerly held by the Trustee in Trust.

A second part of the proposal concerned the B. Y. Academy. It requested appropriation of two thousand dollars to pay off a debt for material and labor to the masons. This property would then be transferred to the Church Association of the Utah Stake, and the heirs of Brigham Young would be invited to join in transferring the approval powers of the earlier deed to the Church Association. It had now been decided that since the Church Association was vested with educational supervisory powers and was already within the framework of Church organization, that the control of the Academy be lodged with them rather than with a special Educational Society.³

¹Cluff, op. cit., Part I, p. 245-6.

²"Board Minutes of Brigham Young University," p. 55.

³Cluff, op. cit., Part I, p. 272-3.

President Taylor's answer, forwarded through Bishop Preston, manifested considerable surprise at the requests of Brothers Smoot and Cluff. He refused the requests and explained that if he were to agree to all the requests for money made upon him the funds of the Trustee in Trust would soon be exhausted. It would be regrettable indeed if in attempting to save our property from our enemies the feeling should be fostered within the stakes to spend it all on their own needs.¹

When Presidents Smoot and Cluff read the letter of President Taylor, they immediately dispatched a letter to him on May 2, which went into detail to justify all of their building debts and their request for aid. Although properly respectful and humble, the letter was positive in declaring, "We certainly believe that if the Church had permitted this Stake to use from the tithes forty thousand dollars instead of seven thousand dollars during the years that the Tabernacle has been in course of erection that the tithes forwarded to Head-quarters, would have equaled the amount which has been sent during that period."²

In the midst of all this pressure from money matters and after a raid on polygamists, Brother Cluff records:

President Smoot is galling under financial affairs and refers to Co-op institution that he is deeply interested in such as the Co-op store, Lumber Yard, Bank, Foundry, and Woolen Mills. These financial interests absorb much of his time and causes much worry. I have taken the liberty of advising him to throw off the responsibility upon younger men and devote the rest of his life traveling in the stake and visiting the people. 'Who is there that is qualified to take those offices and manage these financial interests?' said he. 'Who will do it when you are gone?' said I. 'If you roll them upon younger men now they have the advantage of your experience and council.' said I.³

A. O. Smoot just was not the retiring type. He could not sit by and unconcernedly watch those events in which he had an interest pass him by. He had to be in the thick of things, and there he remained till the day he died.

President Smoot had always supported proper celebrations on July 24. When word came from Salt Lake revealing the precarious condition of President Taylor's health, Presidents Smoot and Cluff immediately sent word to the wards of the Stake to discontinue plans for an elaborate street parade. They advised that meetings be held and moderate exercises be conducted. President Taylor passed away on July 25, and his funeral was held on July 29, 1887. As one of the speakers at the funeral, Brother Smoot described their long acquaintance,

¹Ibid., p. 274-5.

²Ibid., p. 279.

³Ibid., p. 236.

extending over 49 years. His message was filled with faith in the Gospel and faith that Brother Taylor was heir to those blessings because of his lifelong devotion to Gospel truths. We should rejoice in the exemplary life of President Taylor and strive to meet the tests of life in the same noble manner.¹

After living for years in the midst of polygamy persecution, President Smoot was finally arrested on October 7 under the third section of the Edmunds Law, on a charge of unlawful cohabitation. He posted bond to appear before the Commissioner in Provo on the following Monday.² The case did not come before the courts for nearly a year.

During December complaints had come from the Logan Temple about unworthy persons being sent there. President Smoot immediately gave instructions in Priesthood Meeting,

That if our youth had not made a proper Record up to the time they desired to be united in marriage, that they be married at home, and not take upon themselves the holy covenants made in the House of the Lord, until they were worthy and can comprehend them. . . . he did not expect perfection in the youth before obtaining a recommend, but expected them to observe the common laws of the Church to a reasonable extent, and not be willful violaters of the law.³

He later explained that to violate the covenants made in the Temples brings condemnation rather than blessings. Disgraced couples were not to be accorded these privileges. They should first be cut off from the Church and received back only upon evidence of sincere repentance. Those who did not pay their tithing should not apply for a recommend and thus save the Bishops and Stake Presidents the unpleasant task of refusing them.

Few months went by without President Smoot urging support for the B. Y. Academy. He could not understand the continual cry of hard times when such requests were made. He pointed to the abundant harvests, horses, lands, and cattle and thought the people should be able to support such a school. Neither could he understand sending children to be taught by your religious enemies. He then called upon the Bishops to organize "Beneficiary Funds" in their wards. If people could not send their own children, then send their neighbors.⁴

The Territorial Enquirer announced on January 3, 1888, that from that time on they should be known as the Utah Enquirer. A. O. Smoot was to continue

¹Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), August 3, 1887.

²Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), October 8, 1887.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," December 3, 1887.

⁴Ibid., January 7, 1888.

as the President of the Board of Directors.

Throughout his life, Brother Smoot had led the fight against the use of liquor and especially its sale by saloons. When the question of licensing saloons was up before the City Council in April 1888, the Stake Presidency and High Council led the signers of a petition against the move. When the council passed the bill against these protests, he announced to the Priesthood meeting that he had entered his solemn protest against this evil. When he met his co-workers who had gone before him, he desired it to be with a knowledge that he had always fought for his principles on this question.¹

One of the big events of the period was the completion and dedication of the Manti Temple in 1888. President Smoot was honored at being asked to speak at the Stake Quarterly Conference on May 20, and also at the dedication of the Temple on the next day. In both meetings he bore a strong testimony of the divinity of the work. He remembered the Church when it contained but one small stake, and throughout fifty-three years of association with the Church had never entertained the slightest doubt of its final triumph.²

Finally a long awaited day arrived. On September 2, 1888 the Saints of Utah Stake met in the first Stake Conference to be held in the new Tabernacle. Although the building was not yet completed, President Smoot expressed his gratitude at seeing such a large number of his brothers and sisters so comfortably seated in their own Tabernacle. He knew that with sincere earnest effort they could complete the building in the next six months.³

Another long awaited day arrived, this one not so eagerly anticipated. On September 20, the trial of A. O. Smoot on the charge of unlawful cohabitation was brought before the court. Conducting the defense for Mr. Smoot were Judge Dusenberry and Attorneys Sutherland and Thurman. Mr. Sutherland was later to rise to the high position of Justice of the Supreme Court.

Mrs. Diana Smoot, Mrs. Annie Smoot, Miss Ida Smoot, and A. O. Smoot Jr., were the chief witnesses for the defense. In a trial that continued for four days, evidence was presented to the effect that Annie Smoot, the only other living wife of A. O. Smoot, had not lived with the defendant for about seven years. When opposition against polygamy intensified, they had reached an agreement concerning their relationship as husband and wife. That relationship would cease. Mr. Smoot would provide for the support of Annie Smoot and her children.

¹Ibid., May 5, 1888.

²Deseret News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 30, 1888.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," September 2, 1888.

Testimony stated that Mr. Smoot neither ate nor slept at her home. He visited the home only in the event of sickness or occasionally when he came to talk to one of his sons about work.

After instructions from the judge that they should weigh all the evidence, the jury deliberated two hours until 5 o'clock P. M. The judge sent them home to return to their deliberations the next morning. After two hours that day, they entered the court room and rendered a verdict of not guilty. The judge said that the verdict met with his approval, for he did not think the evidence warranted any other verdict.¹

In spite of the long years of opposition and sometimes bitter spirit of those who opposed polygamy, President Smoot held no malice toward them. His attitude was to love them as misguided souls who needed our help.

We should be actuated by the spirit that Jesus manifested; entertain no envy or malice toward our enemies, but pray for them and wish that they too may see the light, and live in the light. Our enemies, like those who persecuted Jesus know not what they do, and our sympathies should be extended to them in view of rescuing them, as Paul was rescued, from the darkness in which they dwell. Our enemies cannot do any more than the Lord will allow.²

When the Edmunds Tucker law was declared constitutional, he said we must be prepared for even more serious events. The Lord had not forsaken us, and he never would, but we must humble ourselves and serve God more fully before we could expect deliverance from our enemies. In a more personal warning, he said,

I have been a personal observer of the dealings of the Lord with this people for over half a century, and have passed through all the scenes excepting those enacted in Jackson county. And let me tell you, I dread the fire. I have been burnt, and I don't want to pass through fire again.³

Benjamin Cluff Jr. taught at Brigham Young Academy for several years. He was then given two years leave of absence to complete advanced study at the University of Michigan. As he neared the end of this study, several tempting offers were presented to him. When President Smoot heard of these proposals, he immediately took steps to guarantee the services of Brother Cluff. He sent him a letter informing him that he was expected to teach at the Academy upon his return and that he would become the Principal of the institution in the not too distant future.⁴

¹The Utah Enquirer, (Provo, Utah), September 28, 1888.

²"The Journal History of the Church," 1883 March 4, p. 4.

³Ibid., 1889 January 6, p. 4.

⁴Roberts and Cluff, op. cit., p. 47.

The new Tabernacle, even in its unfinished state, seemed to exert a strong influence upon the people. At the conference on March 3, 1889 so many members turned out to the meeting that some were unable to crowd in.

President Smoot, in particular, was interested in pushing the building to completion. At a Priesthood meeting in May, he stated that when the people were ready to complete the building, he would give one thousand dollars in cash towards the purchase of an organ. He would also give five thousand dollars towards completing the Academy building when the people were ready to go ahead on its construction.¹

Again A. O. Smoot had to act to protect their right to the services of Benjamin Cluff Jr. This time a tempting offer came from the Brigham Young College in Logan. When news of the efforts to win Cluff away reached President Smoot, he and Brother David John, who were both determined to have Cluff teach at the Academy, acted to forestall Cluff's being lost to the Academy. They protested to the General Board of the Church Educational System.

Some heat was generated in the battle over Mr. Cluff's future services. At one time in the controversy President Abraham O. Smoot suggested that if they were going to take away so many good men from the Academy faculty, the school might as well close. Already J. M. Tanner and James E. Talmage had been called away from the school.²

The result of this conference on April 7 was that Cluff would remain at the Provo school and in the not too distant future would become the principal of the Academy.

One more time President Smoot led the fight to keep Brother Cluff at the Academy. In March 1891 the General Board of Education asked that Cluff be released from his duties at the Brigham Young Academy to take a professorship at the Latter-day Saints College of Salt Lake City. Immediately upon receiving President Woodruff's letter and request, a committee was formed and a telegram sent with the following request: "Brethren, can you give A. O. Smoot, H. H. Cluff, K. G. Maeser and Benj Cluff an interview tomorrow? If so at what hour?" Signed A. O. Smoot.³

At the meeting the next day, the matter was discussed thoroughly, and Brother Cluff was permitted to remain at his chosen institution. The call was "cancelled." Soon after that, he was appointed to be the Principal of the B. Y. Academy.

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," May 3, 1889.

²Roberts and Cluff, op. cit., p. 48-49.

³Telegram on file in the Church Historian's Office.

As 1890 drew to a close, the buzz of business activity filled the air around Provo. The Provo Lumber Manufacturing and Building Company, of which Smoot was the President and principal stockholder, was hiring 120 men to conduct their business. The Woolen Mill was also doing a record business. Perhaps this prosperity stimulated the effort to erect the Academy building. There can be no question that the amended deed of trust, signed by the heirs in 1890 and giving control of property to the Board, greatly influenced the decision to resume construction.

On December 18, in a meeting of the Board of Trustees, Joseph D. C. Young, who had first been appointed in 1884 as architect, was authorized to go ahead and complete the plans. At the same meeting the Executive Committee, headed by A. O. Smoot, was authorized to raise money by selling building lots on Academy property, block 28, plat B, and block 69, plat A.¹

The plans were completed by March 25 and let out for bid. Four bids were considered by the Board on April 17 and rejected as being too high. David John then offered the following resolution which was agreed upon:

I move that the Executive Committee be authorized to proceed to erect the Building by letting special contracts for material and labor and employ day or job work as may be deemed best by them. That the whole construction be done under the immediate observation of the Supt. of Construction.²

H. H. Cluff, who acted as the superintendent of construction, terms this act, made without funds in sight, as the greatest display of "faith and confidence that has been recorded since the beginning of the Academy." Such a decision was not entered into lightly by the President of the Board. Speaking about his father's concern for the building, Reed Smoot said,

He called me into his office one night. He had the plan, he had the cost in detail, and he said to me: 'What do you think? Shall I take this load upon myself?' He says; 'It may mean that it will take every cent I own on earth. It may not.' But he says: 'Do you think, and are you willing that I should take that step?' I told my father at the time that if I was so deeply interested in the school as he had been, and I were in his position, I would do it. And that is just the conclusion that my father reached.³

Senator Smoot had described his father's devotion to the institution in 1930 as he addressed a B. Y. U assembly:

It is true that my father was perfectly willing to sacrifice all he had

¹"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," p. 77.

²Ibid., p. 85.

³Address of Senator Reed Smoot at the Founders Day Assembly, October 17, 1932. Typed manuscript in possession of N. I. Butt, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Ut.

on earth for the institution. He was placed in that position after the fire, and he never objected in any way, and it would have done him no good if he had, for he considered the call made by President Young, to father this institution in its infancy, as binding upon him as any call that could be made by even our heavenly father.¹

Undoubtedly another factor which made President Smoot so determined to complete the Academy building was a vision in which President Young appeared to him. Brother Cluff relates the experience as President Smoot told it to him.

I was greatly troubled in my mind over matters connected with the apparent impossibility of going on with the Academy building and retain the school here. In the midst of my reflections, the founder, President Young, appeared to me and during a brief conversation said Brother Smoot you need not worry about the Academy or about how means can be obtained to build the structures which have been commenced, for the way will be opened that means will be furnished to finish the work.²

With such determination, the brick work was commenced on May 18 under Superintendent Cluff who said there was not yet a dollar in the treasury. The hope had been to sell sufficient real estate and thereby secure the necessary funds to meet the construction costs. A decline in the real estate market, coupled with imperfect titles to Brigham Young Academy property, made such sales almost impossible.

When sales were inadequate, the Board met on June 20 and authorized the Executive Committee to borrow not to exceed the sum of fifty thousand dollars, and to secure such payment by a mortgage on the east half block 28, plat C. Finally they managed to borrow upwards of forty thousand dollars, and pushed the building to completion.

Besides seeing the Academy building to completion in 1891, President Smoot exerted another lasting influence on the institution in that year. Always on the alert to strengthen the school he called Brother George H. Brimhall to the faculty. Brimhall who had been the Superintendent of Utah County Schools was later to direct the destinies of the Brigham Young University as its president.

Finally in January 1892, the new building was near enough to completion for occupancy. On January 2, President Smoot announced to the Priesthood that the dedication would take place on January 4. He desired the Bishops and their counsellors and all the brethren who were able to be present.

As he spoke at the dedicatory services, President Smoot retraced the steps of the Academy's growth, from its small beginning, through the dark days

¹Manuscript in possession of N. I. Butt, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah.

²Cluff, op. cit., part 2, p. 72.

of the fire, and now to its successful position with graduates finding positions in all parts of the west. To gaze upon the accommodations for six hundred students must have been a source of real satisfaction to Brother Smoot.

Without his unceasing efforts, this day would have never become a reality. President Joseph F. Smith must have had those efforts in mind as he made the following statement at the dedicatory exercises: "When the role of honor is read of the names who have made this Academy what it is today, second only to the illustrious name of its founder, Brigham Young, will stand the name and fame of Abram O. Smoot."¹

Others too, knew the real story behind the growth of the Brigham Young Academy. Benjamin Cluff Jr., the second Principal of the Brigham Young Academy, had been a witness to President Smoot's struggles and sacrifices to keep the Academy alive. In a letter sent to the B. Y. U. at the Founders' Day Celebration in 1932 he said,

You do well to emphasize the part Prest. Smoot played in the founding and development of the Brigham Young Academy for always during the first years of the schools existence two names will stand out prominently: Prest. A. O. Smoot for his financial direction of the school, even to pledging of his private fortune for its support, when times looked the darkest, and Dr. K. G. Maeser for its wonderful development scholastically and morally.²

At the same Founders' Day, Elder James E. Talmage, who had taught at the Academy, recognized the important role of President Smoot:

As the Executive officer of the Board of Trustees of the Brigham Young Academy, President Smoot accomplished a work which to one of inferior qualifications or of weaker devotion would have been impossible. His name will ever be held in honorable remembrance in the chronicles of the institution, as also in the history of the city, county, and state.³

In further remarks about the early days of the school, Elder Talmage summarized President Smoot's leadership of the institution and his qualities as a man.

In that time the counsels of the Stake President were held well-nigh sacred, and every one connected with the school looked to President Smoot as a leader in practically every capacity. He was thoroughly sympathetic with the needs of teachers and students, supporting Brother Maeser and the faculty in their efforts to make the best of the meager and simple equipment.

President Smoot was a leader in the right of his God-given powers, his inherent ability, and his devotion to the Church and its interests both temporal and spiritual.

¹Anon., "President A. O. Smoot," The Young Woman's Journal, III, p. 438.

²Letter in possession of N. I. Butt, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah.

³Address of Elder James E. Talmage at Founders' Day, October 17, 1932. Typed manuscript in possession of N. I. Butt, B. Y. U. Library, Provo, Utah.

To me he has always been noble and great, and my life, together with the lives of many has been permanently enriched by his inspiring teachings and worthy example. I am sure that if he knows of this day's gathering in the great University into which the Academy has developed, and if he is cognizant of our tributes of praise, he would wish to have us mention at least some of those whom he gathered about him on the Board of Trustees, and in other related capacities, all of whom faithfully followed his lead and sought to uphold his hands. Among such are Harvey H. Cluff, Wilson H. Dusenberry, Warren N. Dusenberry, Myron Tanner, David John, and Sister Coray. They were a goodly company who delighted to serve and cooperate with their chief, President Abraham O. Smoot.¹

¹Ibid.

CHAPTER XII

YEARS OF FINANCIAL DISTRESS

The Academy building was completed, but the troubles of the Board were by no means ended. A heavy cloud of debt hung over the institution. Sales of property had not raised sufficient money. Some purchasers had been unable to keep up the payments, and the land had to be repossessed. In still other instances, legal action was threatened because of imperfect titles. At a Board meeting on May 12, 1892, it was decided to attempt consolidation of the small loans into one large loan with a low rate of interest. Reed Smoot worked on a committee in this endeavor, but reported at the next meeting that the condition of the real estate prevented any solution at the present time. It was decided to take the matter to the First Presidency, an action that was to occur with increasing frequency in the coming months.

President Smoot and four other leaders met with President Woodruff, but gained little relief from that source. The continuing financial difficulty prompted the call for a special Priesthood meeting at Stake Quarterly Conference on July 17. A discussion with the Priesthood members resulted in the appointment of a special committee of Elders W. H. King, J. B. Keeler, and George H. Brimhall to canvass the wards in the Stake in an attempt to raise money either by loan or donation to pay off the indebtedness of the Academy.¹

Time seemed to be weakening the iron constitution of A. O. Smoot. For the past two winters, colds and other ailments had kept him from being among the people as much as he had formerly done. In a letter to President Woodruff on June 1, he had remarked, "My health is by no means good, and I am threatened by the return of that dreadful disease--diabetes, but hope that I will be able to fight it off."

In an attempt to recuperate, he went to the mountains for two or three weeks before the Utah Stake Conference and upon his return he remarked in the July 16 session that he was more improved than he had expected to be. After a

¹"Utah Stake Historical Record," July 17, 1892.

second session in the mountains, he reported in Priesthood meeting on September 3, that he had enjoyed himself very much in his two months in the mountains at Schofield and was very thankful for his much improved health.¹

Apparently little progress had been made by the committee collecting funds for the Academy debts. At conference on October 16, President Harvey Cluff spoke of the remaining debt of seventy-five to eighty thousand dollars. He urged the Saints to lift the burden from the shoulders of A. O. Smoot and others who had guaranteed the payment.²

The Brigham Young Academy was not the only institution in dire straits. The Tabernacle situation was also serious. For several years prior to March 5, 1892, very little had been done to complete the building or to raise funds for that purpose. On the above date, the Tabernacle Building Committee was given instructions in a Stake Priesthood meeting to finish the building as quickly as possible. To meet that objective they made contracts amounting to eight thousand dollars. After that the call came from Salt Lake to raise funds for completion of the Salt Lake Temple, so little effort was made to raise Tabernacle funds. Attention was focused on the Temple.

A Stake Priesthood assembly of January 7, 1893 considered the matter of eight thousand dollars owing on Tabernacle contracts and instructed the committee to make a loan on the property.³ President Smoot was strongly opposed to such a move and even declared in conference a week later that he washed his hands of it.⁴ However, with money needed on the Temple, the Academy, and the Tabernacle, he bowed to the inevitable, and the loan was made. The mortgage on the Tabernacle continued to worry him, and he reissued the call for the twenty-five and fifty cent donations which had never really been a success.

The one bright element in the whole picture for Brother Smoot was improved health. In a letter to President Woodruff on February 1, he said his health was much improved. He had not eaten a particle of food for a week except skimmed milk.⁵

The Brigham Young Academy continued in tight financial straits. When contributions and loans failed, the Board again proposed turning to the First

¹Ibid., September 3, 1892.

²Ibid., October 16, 1892.

³Letter of February 3, 1893 from A. O. Smoot to Wilford Woodruff, on file in the Church Historian's Office.

⁴"Utah Stake Historical Record," January 15, 1893.

⁵Letter on file in the Church Historian's Office.

Presidency for a loan of the Utah Stake tithing to tide them over until realty could be sold. President Smoot, Dr. Maeser, Principal Cluff, and Reed Smoot formed the committee to approach the Presidency. A board meeting of August 29 reported the very liberal amount of thirty thousand dollars received from the Church to apply on the debts of the Academy.¹ This however was insufficient to meet all the needs of the Academy, and they still carried the burden of debt.

The great desire of A. O. Smoot during these years was to see the B. Y. Academy free from debt and on a sound financial basis. He had done all he could. On a visit to his bed ridden wife, Annie, during this time he said,

Annie, I haven't a piece of property that is not mortgaged. I have had to do it to raise money to keep the Brigham Young Academy going. That was given to me as a mission and I would sooner lose all, than fail in fulfilling this responsibility. I love that school and I can see what it means to our youth to have a spiritual as well as book learning. It must live.²

The dedication of the Salt Lake Temple on April 6, 1893 was a long anticipated event in the lives of the Saints. In the lives of many, it was a long remembered event. President Smoot had the privilege of attending a two day series of council meetings with the General Authorities, and Stake and Ward officials. He declared this experience to be the most glorious time that he had ever enjoyed in the Church. He was so imbued with the spirit of those meetings that he thought it would be good for the Priesthood of the Stake to meet together for two or three days confessing their faults, repenting of their sins, and striving for unity.³

A less happy event occurred on June 6, when a tree that was felled by one of his workmen struck President Smoot and resulted in several injuries. The Deseret Evening News account reported:

A heavy blow on the back of the neck, two scalp wounds, a punctured wound between the shoulders, an injury in the small of the back, at the knee, and on the right foot were the extent of the accident. Dr. Hardy attended the patient, and says that while the injuries are painful they are not dangerous, and that his patient will soon be around again.⁴

In spite of this encouraging report, Brother Smoot was never able to make a complete physical recovery. This was due as much to old age and related ills as to the accident. His health had not really been good for several years, and was frequently reported as poor from this time forth.

¹"Board Minutes of Brigham Young Academy," p. 101.

²Anon., "Sketch of the Life of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 6.

³"Utah Stake Historical Record," May 6, 1893.

⁴Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), June 8, 1893.

Financial recovery seemed as difficult as physical. The Co-op Store, of which he was by far the largest stockholder, was hard pressed financially. On June 30 Smoot and seven other directors had to give their personal endorsement on a note due the First National Bank by the Co-op.¹

The Co-op was indebted to Z. C. M. I. in Salt Lake for the sum of \$27,254. Upon a request for additional security for this amount, notes were signed bearing 8 and 10 per cent interest, and a mortgage was given upon the store, fixtures, and the goods.²

During this period of financial distress, President Smoot was greatly concerned over the welfare of the poor. He said there was never a greater need for unity among the people than during this financial crisis. Immediate steps must be taken to prevent want and starvation. Nearly every home could find clothing, bedding, or furniture which with a little repairing could be used to clothe and provide for the poor. He advised the Relief Society and the Bishops to look after this matter immediately. The ward teachers were to see that there was no want, not to wait until it was reported to them.³

On January 20, 1894 his wife, Annie, who had been ill for several months passed away. The incidents at her passing show the faith of the woman Brother Smoot had selected to be one of his companions and the mother of his children. She knew that death was approaching.

As Reed knelt by her bedside, he said, 'Mother, you have one thing I crave and pray for, that is your undying faith and testimony of the Gospel. If after you are gone you can find a way to bring it back to me, I promise to cherish it, and live up to it faithfully, until the end of my life.' . . .

Kneeling beside the same bed, she turned to me and said, 'You will always be my baby. You need me most of all. Promise me before I go to keep the faith and God will never cease to bless you.'⁴

Brother Smoot himself, was far from well. He reported in May that he was unable to travel among the people as he would like. In July ill health caused him to miss one day's meetings at conference.

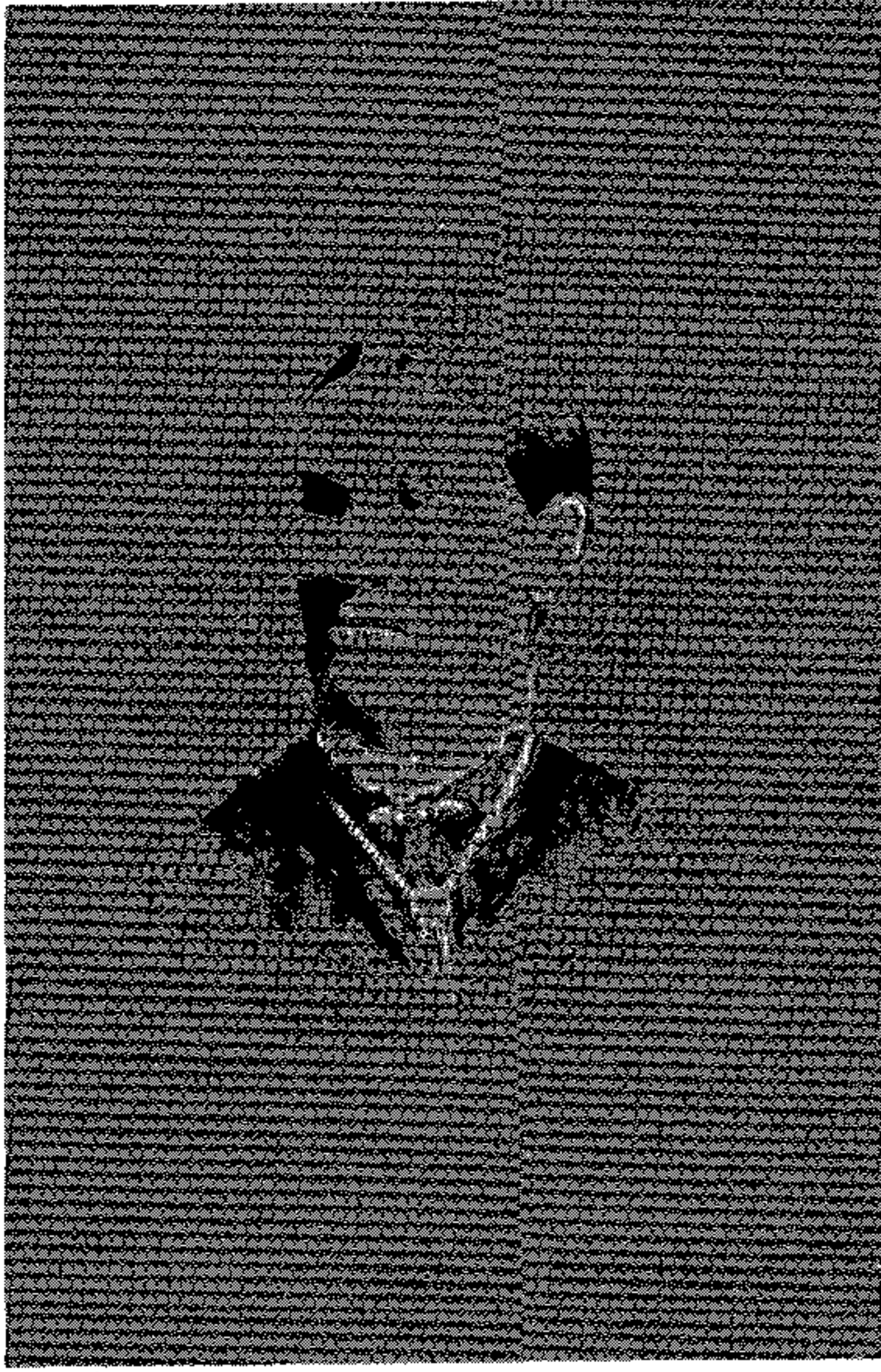
The Academy too, was suffering; it was plagued from financial ill health. Several severe attacks in the fall and winter months threatened to mark her demise. When three creditors requested at least part payment on their loans, all that the August 24 Board meeting could do was appoint a committee to negoti-

¹"Minutes of the Provo Co-operative Institution," June 30, 1893.

²*Ibid.*, September 5, 1893.

³"Record of Sunday Meetings in the Tabernacle," (Minute book in the Church Historian's Office), September 17, 1893.

⁴Ida Smoot Dusenberry, "A Brief Sketch of the Life of Annie K. Smoot," (Manuscript in the Church Historian's Office).



Anna Kirstine Morrison Smoot

ate a loan on unencumbered property to meet the demands.

By December 6 several creditors had begun suits on past due debts. The Board decided to have the attorneys file demurrers and make immediate application to the Church and the heirs for aid.

Only four days later, the secretary reported to the Board that eastern creditors were now demanding payment. Letters were dispatched explaining the true situation of the Academy and requesting further time. Another committee was appointed to seek aid from the First Presidency. Although the financial record book of the Academy shows that during 1894 the Church extended sums amounting to \$51,988.29, the Academy was still in distress.¹

¹"Financial Record of the Brigham Young Academy," (Showing all receipts and disbursements, in B. Y. U. records).

CHAPTER XIII

RELEASE FROM EARTHLY CARES

The eightieth birthday of A. O. Smoot was the occasion for a large family gathering. During the evening, he stood on his feet for about thirty minutes, recalling the events of his life. He expressed his love and appreciation for his family and bore a fervent testimony to the truthfulness of the Gospel. Some may have sensed that he would not be with them to celebrate another birthday. His son-in-law, Orson F. Whitney, asked him,

If this were the last gathering of the family and the last time he would counsel them, what his advice would be, and what had been the guiding star which had enabled him to so successfully conduct his life. He had replied that his last words of counsel would be to serve God and keep his commandments; listen to the teachings of the Priesthood. He had attributed his success in life to following the counsels of the Priesthood, and had often done so even when he did not understand it, and had always found that course to be right.¹

On the last trip which he made east for Walker Brothers he had received as part of his pay one hundred and twenty gold dollars. He had saved these dollars and now brought them out and presented one to each child and grandchild. Alma Smoot of Bountiful still has one of those dollars.²

He seemed to realize that his days were drawing to a close. On this occasion, he produced a small leather bag from which he drew forth three coins and presenting them to the family he said, "This will be enough to bury me with, and it will probably be all I have."³

Brother Smoot had always fostered and supported home production. From this he never wavered. He had planted and raised some locust trees on his property. As his last days drew near he requested that these trees be cut down and the lumber be used to build his casket. He wanted it large and roomy.⁴

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 11, 1895.

²Personal interview with Alma Smoot, Bountiful, Utah.

³Personal interview with Ida Smoot Dusenberry.

⁴Anon., "Brief Sketch of the Life of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 4.

Several stories of Brother Smoot's enjoyment of his grandchildren come from these last days. One of the grand daughters, Allie Smoot Coleman, was just a young girl during this period. In the evening when he had returned from his office she would go into the parlor where he sat and read the evening newspaper to him.¹

Along with several of the other brethren, Brother Smoot had ordered very expensive and unique watches. These watches, costing five hundred and fifty dollars each, could be made to ring and reveal the time by the number of rings. Brother Smoot used to take his grandchildren on his knees and to the delight of the little ones make it ring out the time.²

Another birthday was drawing near. As in the past President Woodruff's birthday was celebrated in the Salt Lake Temple. A large company, including the Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, leading men, his family, and special friends numbered about two hundred and fifty people. "Among those who had come to pay him honor on this occasion was his old life-long friend, President A. O. Smoot, of Provo."³ This was to be not only the last meeting of the two friends, but the last public gathering President Smoot ever attended.

At Priesthood meeting the following morning, President David John announced the illness of Brother Smoot.

He regretted to have to report that Prest A. O. Smoot was very feeble this morning, having been in Salt Lake City the day previous to attend the celebration of the anniversary of the Birth of Prest Woodruff and while there he was taken sick on the way home, had a heavy chill and consequently was unable to be out this morning, but desired to have the faith and prayers of the brethren in his behalf.⁴

On March 5 he took an additional chill, and his condition was listed as critical. The next day a telegram sent to Brother Woodruff reported that Brother Smoot was very low, and was growing weaker. It stated that unless a great change came very soon he could not last much longer. The Deseret Evening News which reported the contents of the telegram then added,

Later

Provo, March 6, 4:15 p. m. - President A. O. Smoot died at 4:10 this afternoon. All members of his family were present except his son Gresham.⁵

¹Personal interview with Allie Smoot Coleman, Provo, Utah.

²Personal interview with Alma Smoot, Bountiful, Utah.

³Cowley, op. cit., p. 589.

⁴"Utah Stake Historical Record," March 2, 1895.

⁵Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 6, 1895.

The next day a brief newspaper account summarized his life as follows:

In the death of Abraham Owen Smoot, both church and state in this part of America have occasion to mourn; not only the city of Provo, where he lived, and the county and Stake in which his home was situated, but also the whole Territory of Utah, and the entire Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A staunch, patriotic citizen, he was also a firm, consistent member of the Church; and in both lines of life and activity, he has been prominent and useful since the early days of Utah's settlement. As a civilian he has been called to the very highest offices in the gift of the people among whom he dwelt; as an ecclesiast he has presided for more than a score of years over the second in importance of all the stakes of Zion.

President Smoot was not made of pliant, vacillating stuff; his was a temper cast in stern and rugged mold. In what he believed to be right he was as immovable as the hills. As far above the blandishments of flattery as he was impervious to the insidious advances of persuasion, he was nevertheless eminently just in his conclusions, and the possessor of rare and ripened judgement. If convinced that he had erred, none was more ready than he to make restitution; and though he was one of a thousand for mental strength and force of character, he had none of the elements of the oppressor, and he was quick to resent as he was slow to resort to undue dictation. He was courageous in his own independence, yet gentle in his rule; a wise counselor, an unswerving friend, and honest man. In the best sense of the term he was a stalwart among the leaders of latter-day Israel--this applying both to his mentality and his physique; and though he had already long since covered the allotted span of human life and in his mortal career was a shock of corn fully ripe, he will still be profoundly missed by thousands who have looked to him as a brother, and respected him as a man.

Upon receiving news of his death, the High Council, the Brigham Young Academy faculty, Directors of the Co-op Store, and various groups with which he had been intimately associated, each passed resolutions of respect in his honor and entered them upon their minute books. Each of them expressed high tribute to him.

Members of the family joined with members of the High Council on a committee to form the plans for the funeral. The group which assembled on Sunday March 10, to pay their last respects to the faithful leader made up the largest funeral assemblage ever witnessed in Provo. Both the Union Pacific and Rio Grande Railways ran special trains from Salt Lake to Provo on the day of the funeral with fares at half price for that day only. Trains were held in Provo until after the funeral and then returned to Salt Lake. From early morning until time for the services to commence, carriages kept arriving from the nearby towns.

At 8:30 A. M. the remains were taken from the family residence to the Tabernacle. The procession to the Tabernacle included the High Council, Bishops of the various wards, the Faculty of the Brigham Young Academy, and many friends.

¹Ibid., March 7, 1896.

Six pall bearers were from the High Council and six from the Academy faculty. At the Tabernacle, the remains were viewed by over five thousand people before the services commenced at 11 o'clock. The coffin was covered with white broadcloth, and the stand was also draped in white. Appropriate floral decorations were placed about the casket and the stand. A large photograph of President Smoot hung in the aperture of the west wall which had been left for the organ.

An interesting feature of the funeral was the presence of about forty or fifty of President Smoot's Indian friends who attended in all their tribal regalia. Many of them had camped outside of his home during the illness, anxiously awaiting news of his condition.

President George Q. Cannon, who presided, announced that the opening hymn, "Death Gathers Up Thick Clouds of Gloom," would be sung by the choir. The opening prayer was offered by Lorenzo Snow, the President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles.

Elder Joseph E. Taylor, of the Presidency of the Salt Lake Temple and a long time friend of Brother Smoot spoke at the request of the family. He said that many years of association had endeared the soul of the departed to his soul in love even as the soul of David and Jonathan were united in love. President Smoot was a man of strong will and strong determination, and when once a person gained his friendship he could rely upon it through life.

President Joseph F. Smith said he had looked upon Brother Smoot as a father. From his boyhood, he had held President Smoot to himself as an example, and felt that if he could pattern after that example it would be all he could expect. In his devotion to the truths revealed by the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brother Smoot was as firm and immovable as a mountain. Whatever faults he had sank into insignificance beside the noble qualities in his character. He was one of those noble souls called from the other side to come forth and perform a great work.

President David John pointed to twenty-seven years of service which had been rendered by the departed leader as Stake President. Every Bishop in the Stake had been ordained during his administration. Brother John believed that President Smoot had been in touch with the spirit world before his death. He had told his family, who surrounded his death bed, that he heard sweet music and the sound of welcoming voices beyond the veil.

His associate in the Stake Presidency, Edward Partridge, spoke of Brother Smoot's readiness to bend his own iron will to the wills of those who presided over him in the Priesthood.

President George Q. Cannon described the character of Brother Smoot as being strong and positive. Such men cannot fail, at times to create feelings that more pliable natures do not cause, but every man who admired true manhood, courage, and integrity, could not fail to admire President Smoot. He was a stalwart of the kind necessary in founding of God's Church on the earth. He was a man of affairs, but he never used his official position to benefit himself financially. His chief characteristics were singleness of purpose, purity of motive, and entire fidelity to the duties devolving upon him. It is most pleasing to know that besides laying up treasures here on earth, he also laid up treasures in heaven.

His life-long friend, President Woodruff, knew the departed as well as any one. At the time in Kirtland when only two of the Apostles stood by the Prophet, the others came to Brother Smoot and himself urging them to join with their group against the Prophet. He and Brother Smoot warned the dissenters that if they did not repent they would go to perdition. He did not mourn at the passing of Brother Smoot, because he knew of the blessings awaiting him on the other side.

The last speaker, Elder Karl G. Maeser, paid tribute to President Smoot's devotion to education and especially the Brigham Young Academy.

After the benediction was pronounced by Apostle John Henry Smith, the funeral cortege moved in solemn procession to the cemetery. Arrangements for the procession were complete even to the details. There was not a hitch in the procession although it was a mile and a half in length. Brother Woodruff said it was the longest he had ever seen in Utah.

A silver band with muffled drum, led the line of march; followed by the two councilors, Brother John and Partridge; then came the white hearse, with pallbearers, wearing white sashes on their arms, marched in line on both sides. The family and relatives of deceased came next in fifteen carriages. Then followed the Priesthood, walking four abreast. There were 68 patriarchs and high priests; 84 seventies; 112 elders; 52 of the bishopric and lesser priesthood, and 600 B. Y. Academy students. The civil authorities came next, but there were only seven. Mayor Holdbrook was among the number. They also walked.¹

This was followed by two military companies then stationed in Provo. They marched in full dress uniform. Friends and citizens of the town formed at the rear of the procession in carriages. There were fifty-two vehicles in all.

At the cemetery, Elder W. H. King offered the dedicatory prayer.

Still further respects were paid to the life of A. O. Smoot. On Sunday

¹Deseret Evening News, (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 11, 1896. All items in the funeral account are taken from this same source.

March 31, Memorial Services were held in the Brigham Young Academy honoring his devoted service to that institution. For testimony that such was fully deserved, we turn to the appraisal of Orson F. Whitney who knew him well.

If one thing more than another shortened the life of President Smoot it was the weight of care voluntarily assumed by him in behalf of that worthy but then struggling institution. Over its doorway should be written three names--Brigham Young, Abraham O. Smoot and Karl G. Maeser.¹

Greater than any honor which man might proclaim in memory of Abraham Owen Smoot is the life which he lived. All who know that life must ever honor Abraham Owen Smoot as a real man, a true Christian, and a servant of mankind.

¹Whitney, op. cit., IV, p. 100.

CHAPTER IVX

CONCLUSION

After examining the details in the life of A. O. Smoot, one feels inclined to agree with that gentleman's own observation about his life when he said:

To me everything has seemed to come along naturally. And yet when all things are considered, my whole life might be regarded as miraculous. When I reflect upon the precarious condition of my health when I was a boy, and the indulgence with which I was then treated, and then upon what I have been enabled to endure and accomplish, through the blessings of God since, there is something rather remarkable about it to me.¹

This study reveals several elements which run through Mr. Smoot's life and form a strong basis for the conclusion that Elder Smoot was chosen for a great work and that his life was preserved in order that he might accomplish that work.

First of all we should notice the unusual improvement and preservation of his health. A. O. Smoot was sickly as a boy, at the point of death several times. At his baptism and confirmation, he was promised strength which became his. Several times in his later life he was healed from serious illness in a manner which seemed miraculous. His narrow escapes from death by accident add to the idea that his life was preserved by the intervention of heavenly power.

A second element in Smoot's life which lends to the idea of his selection for a great work is his great desire for the welfare of his fellow men. This thesis shows that his life was spent in attempting to better the lot of his associates. He believed that by strengthening the Kingdom of God on the earth he could best serve his fellow men. His life was devoted to that end.

The third element in Smoot's life which shows him to be a man of special calling is the total of his accomplishments which benefited those who lived about him. His Patriarchal Blessing promised him that he would be preserved from the persecution of his enemies and be blessed with great wisdom. This combination

¹Smoot, "Early Experiences of A. O. Smoot," op. cit., p. 17.

of wisdom and desire to serve made him a great force in the development of Utah, and especially the area in Utah County.

Although A. O. Smoot was possessed of great native ability, he grew with his responsibilities. This thesis includes early experiences and entries from his daily journals which show that in his youth he lacked education and training. By contrast speeches and letters of his later life reveal great development in wisdom and the ability at self expression.

In assembling the facts of this biography several new points of interest came to light. The thesis contains an account of the discovery of the altar at which Adam offered sacrifices. Although it does not give the exact date it does establish the fact that the date of discovery could not have been before June 20, 1838. That was the date on which Smoot first assisted Alanson Ripley to survey the area at Adam-ondi-Ahman. This fact should also help distinguish between the stone tower and the altar of Adam which stood on the same hill. Joseph Smith had identified the Nephite tower on May 18, 1838 over a month before Smoot began his survey work.

Brigham Young's instructions to Smoot and other missionaries on October 8, 1844 show that the idea of building up the outer stakes of Zion rather than move to the center areas is not entirely new. He told them not to go for only six months but to take their families and build up stakes as large as the one at Nauvoo.

The incident about publishing the Prophets views on the power and policy of government is disclosed by this research. Because of opposition to publishing Joseph's views on slavery, three thousand copies had to be suppressed in the State of Tennessee.

An interesting incident of Church History is brought to light in connection with the first company of emigrants to come to Utah under the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. The transportation of the zinc encased bodies of two deceased Elders shows the ingenuity of the mission officials.

This thesis helps to show the importance of the successful arrival of the first company of saints under the auspices of this fund. Because it would influence the number of persons to come later under that agency, much importance was attached to its success. Smoot's able direction of the company contributed much towards its success and continuation in later years.

More new manuscript material was found for the Provo period of Smoot's life than the Salt Lake period. Stories have often been told about President Smoot's call to Provo, but this thesis pinpoints Smoot's statement that a pe-

tition to divide the county was the "life spring" of his call to Provo.

Z. C. M. I. in Salt Lake City is often referred to as the first co-operative mercantile venture in the state. The account of the Provo Co-operative Mercantile Institution shows that after little interest could be aroused in Salt Lake, A. O. Smoot took the problem in hand and his successful launching of the Provo store stimulated the establishment of A. C. M. I.

President Smoot directed many of the important early developments of Provo. Many unpublished details about these projects have been uncovered and are contained in this work to give a more complete story of such undertakings as the building of the Woolen Mills, the Tabernacle, and the Provo Canyon Road. Each of these accounts adds to the completeness of Provo and Utah history. Inasmuch as the Church played an important role in this early progress, this account also adds to Church History. This biography provides another strong evidence that an important factor in the success of early pioneer colonization was direction by strong leaders. It also helps to show that A. O. Smoot was not only called, but chosen.

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THESIS ABSTRACT

ABRAHAM OWEN SMOOT PIONEER MORMON LEADER

C. ELLIOTT BERLIN 1955

The origin of the Smoot family is traced to thirteenth century Holland when a vassal of the Count of Holland chose the name Smoot. The family, after conspicuous service, entered the ranks of the nobility and gained a coat of arms. William Smoot contracted to perform fifty days service in the Colony of Virginia in 1633. Impressed by the new land, he settled in America.

His descendant and the subject of this biography was born on February 17, 1815, in Owenton, Franklin County, Kentucky, to George Smoot and Ann Rowlett who named their infant son Abraham Owen Smoot after an illustrious uncle, Colonel Abraham Owen. Young Abraham was so ill as a child that when he was nine years of age, burial clothes were prepared for his death which seemed imminent. Providence ruled otherwise. The young boy had a strong desire to live and find the true church. On March 22, 1835, at the age of twenty years, he was baptised by Elder David Patten who in the confirmation promised Smoot that he would become strong and healthy which he did steadily from that date.

After being placed in charge of a local branch, Smoot was ordained an Elder on February 26, 1836 and labored as a missionary companion to Elders David Patten and Warren Parrish. He also labored as a missionary with Wilford Woodruff with whom he journeyed to Kirtland to go through the Temple where he was ordained a Seventy on December 20.

The Prophet Joseph sent Smoot back to the southern states to regain his health and to lead a company of southern saints to Missouri. Before starting south, he was promised in a Patriarchal Blessing pronounced by Joseph Smith Senior that he would recover his health and gain wisdom and fame among the saints and the Lord's protection while among his enemies. A Baptist Deacon who opposed Smoot in one of his public meetings of the journey was suddenly stricken dead.

87 upland in 1835