PAPA MARRIED A MORMON

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FOREWORD

"JOHN D.," Mamma said to me when I showed her a copy of the magazine containing my first published short story, "promise me that some day you will write a story about the little people who built the West—the people like Papa, Uncle Will, Uncle Mark, Aunt Cathie, Bishop Aden, Hal Gentry, Grandpa and Grandma Neilsen. Write a true story about the Mormons as Papa knew them, as I know them, as you know them."

The promise was forgotten until after her death. Mamma was a souvenir collector. We found several trunks in our attic filled with diaries, letters, newspaper clippings, prize ribbons won at fairs, school report cards, programs of the operas Mamma saw in Denver on her honeymoon, our baby clothes and other mementoes of some particular event in Mamma's or Papa's life that held a sentimental value.

I remembered my promise as I relived Papa's and Mamma's lives when I read the diaries, the love letters, the old newspaper clippings. I was swept into the past as I fondled these by-gone treasures and looked at the photographs and tin-types in the family album. I made a story outline and compiled hundreds of notes about "the little

people who built the West." However, our entry into World War II brought an abrupt end to the work. The house was sold. The family scattered. The promise was again forgotten.

Fourteen years later when preparing to move to another city, my sister found the story outline and notes in an old trunk. She sent them to me. The ghosts of the past paraded by me, reminding me of my promise. The story of the miners and the Mormons as Papa, Mamma and I knew them, still had to be told, and could be told only by some use of poetic license so that the story would be of the people who made Utah history and not history *per se.*

Now, there are left only the tombstones, man's briefest biographies.

Now, there are left only the diaries, the turning of each musty page like the opening of a door into a long vacant room.

Now, there are left only the newspapers, jaundiced and brittle with age.

Now, there are left only the love letters, faded and so crisp they crumble even at a loving touch.

Now, there are left only the failing memories of the very aged.

Now, there are left only the skeletons rattling in the family closet.

But, now the promise is fulfilled.

John D. Fitzgerald

Contents

PROLOGUE

MEXICO became a Spanish possession two hundred years before there was a United States of America. In the spirit of the times, the Catholic priests carrying the Cross and the Spanish soldiers carrying swords began the conversion of the natives to Catholicism. A string of missions was built northward along the Pacific Coast for a distance of five hundred miles and northwest as far as Santa Fe, New Mexico.

To consolidate this huge empire the two terminals had to be joined. The Escalante Domingues Expedition failed; but a later expedition established what became known as the Old Spanish Trail. This ran from Santa Fe through the southeastern corner of what is now Colorado, across what is now Utah and Nevada, on westward to San Bernardino, California, and from there to the Pueblo of Los Angeles.

Spanish traders traveled this trail for half a century without building a single settlement along the way. The major business of these traders when traveling westward was buying and stealing male Indian children and adults. On arriving at the Pueblo of Los Angeles, they sold these helpless Indians into slavery to work on Spanish ranchos or to be sent to Mexico to work in the mines. The trip eastward differed

only in the sex of the Indians. Female children and adults were bought or stolen to be sold as slaves upon arrival in Santa Fe. These female Indians were sent to Mexico to work as domestics or in the fields.

The War of 1845 between Mexico and the United States reduced this empire by one half. Two years later Brigham Young led the Mormons into the Great Basin, later known as Utah Territory. The Latter-Day Saints took the bleak, barren land that nobody wanted and wrested from it food, shelter and clothing. They planted trees, built homes and, with irrigation, pushed back the desert along the Old Spanish Trail.

The Latter-Day Saint religion teaches that the American Indians are Lamanites, descendants of a long lost tribe of Israel. The Saints were the first white men who did not covet the land, the treasure or the person of the Indians. They called the Lamanites "brother," and sought them out only to convert them to Mormonism and attempt to civilize them.

Dixie, to the Mormons, is that portion of Southern Utah Territory colonized by them. In the year 1854, Brigham Young addressed a group of volunteers for an Indian Mission to Dixie. The purpose of the Mission was to build a settlement at the mouth of Red Rock Canyon and do missionary work among the Paiute Indians.

"Learn their language," Brigham Young exhorted the members of the Mission, "and this you do more effectively by living among them as well as by writing out a list of words. Go with them where they go. Live with them, feed them, clothe them and teach them in their own language. They are our brethren, we must seek after them, commit their language, get their understanding."

Those were days when boys became men in their teens.

Ephraim Aden, a big-boned, tall, gaunt-faced youth of twenty was chosen Captain of the Mission. His lean, homely appearance was accentuated by what remained of his right ear. All of the ear but the lobe had been torn off by a bullet in a hunting accident. He had formed a habit of reaching for his ear and, finding it gone, gently pulling on the remaining lobe.

The Mission consisted of twelve wagons, thirty horses and mules, six cattle, eight cows, twenty-six men. They traveled southward along the Old Spanish Trail to Cedar City. From Cedar City they struck out over ground that had never known the touch of a wagon wheel. They had traveled only a few miles when a band of Indians mounted on small ponies surrounded the wagon train. The Indians spread a blanket in front of the lead wagon. The Chief of the tribe pointed at the blanket and began shouting in a guttural voice.

Captain Aden, realizing that the Indians were demanding tribute before they would permit the wagon train to proceed, ordered bread, bacon, flour and tobacco placed on the blanket. The Indians picked up the tribute and rode away.

Their first contact with the Paiutes impressed the members of the Mission with the big job that lay ahead of them. The Indians were filthy dirty. The odor emanating from their bodies was nauseating. This feeling was mitigated by the knowledge that the "Diggers," as they were called on the other side of the mountain range, were much more unkempt and uncivilized than the Paiutes they'd just met.

Three days' journey brought the Mission to the mouth of a canyon they named Cottonwood. Here a camp was made while a dugway was built up the canyon to the top of the plateau. Upon completion of the dugway the camp was moved to the top of the plateau. The construction of a dug-

way down Red Rock Canyon on the other side of the bench was begun.

From the rim of the eastern side of the plateau the view was uninterrupted for as far as the eye could see. Here the Wasatch promontories ended abruptly. The desert below was strewn for miles with grotesque rock formations, left from volcanic upheavals, which reached up from the sands like the gnarled hands of the damned. The rain and wind had carved fantastic shapes out of the red sandstone, and these added to the bleakness and unearthliness of the scene.

Winfred Judd, Recorder of the Mission, after viewing this foreboding sight made this entry in his journal: "I find it hard to believe that man, beast or plant could survive in such a God-forsaken place."

The judgment of the scouts who had chosen the location for the colony was vindicated when the dugway down Red Rock Canyon was completed. The land at the mouth of the canyon was virgin and fertile. A creek fed by many springs wound its way down the canyon. It became a mere trickle by the time it reached the bottom, but a dam could be built with flumes to carry the water over the sandstone formations.

There was some concern about the wind, which at times blew so hard that it hurled sand against the faces of the members of the Mission until they were flecked with blood. When this concern was voiced to Captain Aden, he replied: "Brothers, I say this to you, that on this site chosen by the scouts and approved by President Young, we shall build a colony if we have to plant a seed at a time and stand upon it until it takes root."

A survey was made of the new townsite with lots laid off and plotted. The numbers of the lots were placed on slips of paper and put into a hat. Each member of the Mission drew a slip of paper entitling him to a lot six by twelve rods

within the townsite. Later each member drew slips from a hat which entitled him to one acre of ground outside the townsite for farming, and four acres of desert land which could be converted to pasture land by irrigation. The town was named Adenville in honor of the Captain.

Their first shelters were dugouts. A hole six feet deep and twelve feet square was dug in the ground. It was covered with a roof made from cottonwood poles slanted at a twenty-two degree angle, with bundles of rushes placed between the poles and held in place by willows. A foot of dirt was shoveled on top to keep out the rain, snow and cold. The dugouts had no windows. A door was fashioned from a piece of canvas stretched on poles and hung with hinges made from the bark of willows. Beds were constructed by driving four corner posts into the dirt floor. Black willow poles were split in two to serve as bed slats. These were covered with pine branches providing a mattress. Pillows were made from the flugg of cattails which grew along the creek bank. A plank placed across the posts at the foot of the bed was used as a table. A piece of rag tied to a button in a shallow dish of grease provided light. There was an abundance of greasewood, sagebrush, rabbit brush and mesquite for fuel. These dugouts were the first homes of almost all pioneer Mormon colonists.

A log meeting-house chinked with mud was erected and dedicated after all the dugouts were completed. During the first church services held in the meeting-house, Captain Aden gave thanks that only two men had been lost since the Mission had left Salt Lake City. One member had been killed during the construction of the dugway up Cottonwood Canyon; the other had died of pneumonia.

The names of the remaining members were placed on slips of paper in a hat. They drew lots to see which six mem-

bers would leave immediately to begin the missionary work among the Indians and which eighteen would remain to build the canal and the dam. There were no exceptions in these drawings. Captain Aden and Winfred Judd were two of the six names drawn.

The Missionaries left the following day. They traveled northward on horseback along the foot of the plateau for three days before arriving at a temporarily deserted Indian village. Judd made the following entry in his journal concerning this first Indian village: "We shall have no trouble locating the Paiute villages. The stench of one can be smelled for a mile or more."

Fires were still smoldering in the village and several dogs were running around. The Missionaries spread a blanket before the Chief's wikiup which was covered with tule rushes, placed leaven bread, dried fruits, beads and tobacco on it, and sat down to wait.

Two hours passed before a young Paiute of about twenty years came down from the hills. He stopped within hailing distance and called to the Missionaries in Spanish, asking who they were. Judd, who spoke Spanish, called back that they were Latter-Day Saints come to seek their brothers, the Lamanites. The youth disappeared and returned shortly with his father, who was Chief of the tribe, and several old men who were members of the council.

Captain Aden presented the Chief and his son with gifts, while the members of the council squatted around the blanket and began cramming the food into their mouths. The Chief's son's meager knowledge of Spanish was a fortunate happenstance, although the story he told of how he had acquired it was almost unbelievable—he claimed he'd been stolen by a more powerful tribe and sold to the Spanish traders when fourteen. At the Pueblo of Los Angeles he had

been sold as a peon to work on a rancho. After four years of slavery, he'd escaped and all by himself made his way across the desert back to his tribe.

The Chief invited Judd and Captain Aden into his wikiup. Judd speaking in Spanish, with the Chief's son translating into the Uto-Aztecan language of the Paiutes, told the Chief the history of the Lamanites. He showed the Chief the pages in the Book of Mormon wherein the history of the Lamanites was recorded from plates of gold.

The Chief snatched the Book of Mormon from Judd, strode from his wikiup and called the tribe before him. He held aloft the book and proudly told the tribe that their history was written in it. He said the Missionaries were sent by the great Indian God Shenowab to help them because they were brothers. He ordered the squaws to prepare a meal and invited the Missionaries to eat with him and his council.

Captain Aden watched the squaws bring water from a stream in willow baskets lined with pine gum. The water was poured into clay dishes, and hot rocks were dropped in to make it boil. They cooked a food that was dark grayish in color and looked as if it had chunks of bacon in it. The odor, even from a distance, was repugnant.

The Missionaries sat in a circle in the Chief's wikiup with members of the council. A wicker basket containing the grayish colored food was passed from hand to hand with each diner taking a fistful. With stoic calm the Missionaries ate the food, not discovering until later that what they thought was bacon was in reality bunches of matted ants. This was the forerunner of many meals for which the Missionaries needed strong stomachs. They found, for instance, that the only parts of small animals like rabbits which weren't eaten by the Paiutes were the fur and the bones. Head, entrails and all were cooked by the Indians and de-

voured with relish. Grasshoppers were roasted, or after being driven into a pit and dried, ground into a meal from which a sort of biscuit was made. The Missionaries stuffed themselves with berries, acorns, sunflower seeds, cactus fruit, parched corn, squash, yam and sego lily roots so they might eat as little meat as possible.

One week after their arrival they received permission from the Chief to baptize and confirm the entire tribe. They knew it would be difficult because the Paiutes had an aversion for water. When the Missionaries washed or bathed in the creek, the whole tribe would line the banks and laugh at them. None of the tribe had taken a bath since they were born. It took a great deal of coaxing to get the Paiutes to consent to immersion in the creek water.

Soon after, a member of the council became ill. Captain Aden discovered that the Paiutes immediately seemed to understand the "laying on of the hands," to heal the sick. This confirmed his belief that the Lamanites were descendants of the long lost tribe of Israel and that the ritual had been either handed down to them from generation to generation, or had come to them by instinct because it was a part of their past.

The first time the Missionaries sang a hymn all the Indians including the Chief fled to the hills. It wasn't until this happened that the Missionaries learned that the Paiutes didn't know how to hum or sing. After overcoming their fear, the Indians made nuisances of themselves every time the Missionaries sang a hymn by insisting on looking into the Missionaries' mouths and poking their dirty fingers inside to find the thing that made the music.

Captain Aden and his followers remained in the camp for three months during which time they learned enough of the Uto-Aztecan spoken language and sign language to spread the

word of the Gospel of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, among the Lamanites. It wasn't until they were ready to leave that they discovered the Paiutes didn't know the meaning of a handshake. The Indians insisted on placing their wrists in the Missionaries' hands.

A seven-day journey northward brought the Missionaries to a much larger village, where they arrived at a most inopportune time. The tribe's Chief, Sanchem, was dying. The medicine man and the council of the tribe refused the Missionaries' request to administer medicine or even "lay on the hands."

Captain Aden and his followers were forced to sit idly by and witness a carnage of savage orgies attendant on the Chief's illness and death. The first day the Missionaries were in camp two Indian boys, a squaw and seven horses stolen from another tribe were killed as a sacrifice to make the Chief well, and there followed six bloody days of pagan sacrifices of human beings and animals before the Chief died.

With helpless horror the Missionaries watched the Chief's five squaws beaten to death by other squaws. They were appalled when eight young boys, thirty horses, and two young Indian maidens were slaughtered as a sacrifice. The nightmare was climaxed when a twelve-year-old Indian boy was buried alive with the dead Chief after being told he was to watch over him.

The Missionaries spent three months in the village before returning to Adenville. They all felt discouraged. Judd gave voice to this when he wrote in his Journal:

> The Paiutes on this side of the mountain range have been preyed upon by stronger tribes. Their terrible fear of Spanish slave traders has driven them into desolate regions where they have taken up life as animals and not as human beings. They are amongst the most degraded peoples in the world. They

know not the meaning of pity or love. They are congenital thieves and it is as impossible to teach them stealing is a sin as it would be to tell the sparrow he must not snatch the worm away from the robin. They are lazy and indolent. They are barbaric but lacking in the courageousness of the Sioux or Apaches. The conversion and civilizing of the Paiutes will take many, many years. I agree with Captain Aden that we must give most of our attention to the young.

Twenty years later Judd noted in his Journal:

Our success in converting and civilizing the older Paiutes has succeeded only to the point where we have made them discontinue their barbaric practices of human sacrifice. Sometimes I think the only reason the older members of the tribes offer themselves up for rebaptism each year is to obtain a clean shirt. The older members have been Christianized only to the extent that they come knocking on our doors at Christmas time carrying sacks and crying: "Creesmas geeft." The smaller and weaker tribes which have moved closer to Adenville for protection present a problem. The only thing they won't steal is a cow. For some strange reason they consider a cow unclean and will not drink milk or eat butter. Dear Lord, never has a cow been so maligned. We have succeeded in teaching them cleanliness to a certain extent.

Our biggest success has been with the children and younger Paiutes. We have taken the children into our own homes and raised them with our own children. We have established a Mission School and were surprised at the aptitude for learning some of the children displayed.

We have placed Missionaries with all the tribes on a rotating basis. They are charged with the health and well-being of the tribe as well as their spiritual welfare. They have taught the tribes farming, irrigation and agriculture. It is still necessary for us to furnish each tribe with a considerable amount of produce from our storehouse to insure them an adequate diet.

Although our progress has been slow, we feel that we have accomplished a great deal. We have proven to the Paiutes that

we are their friends and brothers. We have driven away the terrible fear they had in them of the white man and Spanish slave traders. There remain many years of work to be done with the Lamanites.

The colonization of Adenville flourished. In the year 1877, as our story opens, the population was over one thousand. There were log cabins or adobe houses for every family. A grist mill, a woolen factory, a tannery and a soap factory were all producing for export to Salt Lake City and other communities. Eighty acres of cotton, forty acres of corn, ten acres of vineyards and sixty acres of wheat were under cultivation. The dam which used to "go out like the wash," every Monday was rebuilt and was strong enough to resist any flash flood. The canal, which had given so much trouble owing to gopher holes, was now reinforced with willow growths along its banks, and permanent wooden flumes had been built over all sandstone formations.

Upon completion of the beautiful Tabernacle made from red rocks quarried in the canyon, Adenville was made a Ward with Ephraim Aden as Bishop, fourteen high priests, eight seventies, forty elders, six priests, seven teachers and twenty deacons.

Two great calamities befell the community in 1877. Its residents were still in a state of shock and grief over the death of their beloved President, Brigham Young, when a prospector accidentally stuck his pick into a sandstone formation in Red Rock Canyon just two miles above Adenville and discovered horn silver where silver had previously not been known to exist. The hell-roaring mining camp of Silverlode was born.