



The Church Historian's Office, used from 1854 until 1917. Courtesy of Church History Library.

CHAPTER 12

RETURN TO UTAH, MAY 1897—JULY 1897

Since I had left home May 11, 1895, nearly 25 months before, I had traveled about 53,820 miles, namely, 38,730 miles on sea and 15,091 on land. These are English statute miles, and as the distances given on the sea travel were generally geographical miles, I added 4,946 miles on the steamship travel, so that the sea travel on steamships sums up to 37,284 miles and on sailing vessels 1,316 miles, and on small boats 130 miles. Of the land travel, 11,341 miles were by rail, 762 miles in carriages and other kinds of vehicles drawn by animals, 10 miles in jinrikisha drawn by natives of Ceylon and Japan, 453 miles on horseback, 75 miles on donkeys, and one mile on a camel.

—Andrew Jenson¹

Jenson's Autobiography²

Saturday, May 22. About 8:15 a.m. I left the conference house in Glasgow, proceeded by streetcar to Union Street, traveled to Greenock, whence a tugboat took me out to the fine steamer *City of Rome*, which lay anchored about half a mile from the pier. Having secured passage on that steamer for America, I was shown my stateroom at once and at 1:00 p.m., when the large and beautiful ship lifted anchor, we commenced our voyage for our beloved America. Our company of Latter-day Saints consisted of nine elders returning to America, 24 emigrating Saints from the Netherlands and Great Britain, and one returning tourist, Ansel B. Call, late president of the Sheffield Conference, was appointed president of the company. We were 34 Latter-day Saints on board. Sailing down the Firth of Clyde we soon reached the North Channel, and, passing north of Ireland, the ship took a southwesterly course toward New York. Nothing of importance occurred on the voyage, but I enjoyed every day on board. We arrived in New York on Sunday, May 30. This was my sixth voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. I succeeded in getting the many Church records, which I carried with me, through the custom house at New York without much expense.

Our company left New York at 3:30 p.m. crossing the Hudson River on the steam ferry and went to the New York and Ontario Railroad Station, where we boarded the train and commenced our long overland journey at 4:40 p.m. We traveled via the suspension bridge and through Canada to Windsor; thence we crossed the Detroit River (train and all) and then traveled via Chicago to Kansas City, Missouri. Here Elder Call, who had taken charge of the company to this point, left the party to go direct to his home in Mexico, after which I took charge

of the company the remainder of the journey to Utah. After a delay of only half an hour at Kansas City, we were again on our way westward, having changed cars, and the night found us rolling westward at a good speed. We arrived at Denver at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 3, where I attended to business for some of the emigrants. At 6:45 p.m. we continued our journey from Denver.

Friday, June 4. At early dawn we passed Rawlins, Wyoming, and, continuing the journey, we arrived at Ogden at 2:00 p.m. Here I parted with the company, except Elder Charles B. Harper and the Lamont family, who went with me to Salt Lake City, where we arrived at 3:15 p.m. Of our party of 34 Latter-day Saints, only six came on direct to Salt Lake City. On our arrival there, I soon caught sight of my wives, Emma and Bertha, and four of my younger children, namely, Minerva, Eleonore, Eva, and Harold. They gave me a hearty welcome.

Since I had left home May 11, 1895, nearly 25 months before, I had traveled about 53,820 miles, namely, 38,730 miles on sea and 15,091 on land. These are English statute miles, and as the distances given on the sea travel were generally geographical miles, I added 4,946 miles on the steamship travel, so that the sea travel on steamships sums up to 37,284 miles and on sailing vessels 1,316 miles, and on small boats 130 miles. Of the land travel, 11,341 miles were by rail, 762 miles in carriages and other kinds of vehicles drawn by animals, 10 miles in jinrikisha drawn by natives of Ceylon and Japan, 453 miles on horseback, 75 miles on donkeys, and one mile on a camel.

During my absence I had delivered 232 addresses, namely, 35 in the Hawaiian Mission, 7 in Tonga, 11 in Samoa, 60 in New Zealand, 6 in the Society Islands Mission, 4 in Australia, one in Palestine, 29 in Denmark, 3 in Norway, 11 in Sweden, 3 in Germany, 8 in Switzerland, 6 in Holland, 33 in England, 4 in Wales, 3 in Ireland, 2 in Scotland, and 6 on board vessels. Six outdoor discourses are also included, of

1. *Autobiography of Andrew Jenson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), 386.

2. *Autobiography*, 385–88.

which I delivered four in England, one in Ireland, and one in Scotland. Of my 232 discourses, 34 were delivered in the Danish language and 101 through translators; my ordinance work on the mission consisted of two baptisms, 11 confirmations, 6 blessings of children, 8 special blessings, 4 ordinations to the priesthood, one setting apart of a Relief Society officer in Hawaii, and many administrations to the sick. I visited or passed through the following named states, countries, and groups of islands: Idaho, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Hawaii, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Society Islands, Tuamotu Islands, New South Wales (Australia), Victoria (Australia), South Australia, West Australia, Ceylon, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Italy, France, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Prussia, Hannover, Saxony, Bavaria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, New York, New Jersey, Ontario, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, and Wyoming.

In all my travels I enjoyed good health, considering that I had been subject to so many changes in climate and diet, and returned home well satisfied with my labors. I worked hard and was in this respect perhaps more zealous than wise, for I often stuck to my task sixteen hours a day.

I called at the Historian's Office and was bade welcome home by Franklin D. Richards, who then accompanied me to the President's Office, where I was greeted by President Wilford Woodruff and George Q. Cannon. I had already met President Joseph F. Smith's family. Soon after my arrival home, I unpacked some of my boxes sent home and commenced to arrange my books in my library or office. I soon spent considerable of my time regularly at the Historian's Office and assisted in arranging the books which I had brought home. On June 27 I was called to preach in the Tabernacle, on which occasion I gave an account of my late mission. During the remainder of the year, I delivered a number of lectures of which my experience while traveling often made

the basis of my remarks. On July 3 I wrote the following letter to the First Presidency and a similar one to historian Franklin D. Richards:

Salt Lake City, Utah, July 3, 1897.

Historian Franklin D. Richards:

Dear Brother:

Having now almost completed my travels, as planned a few years ago, in the various stakes of Zion and in all our missionary fields throughout the world (outside of the United States), this may be a fitting opportunity to make a condensed report of my travels during the past ten years. The historical labors which I have performed for the Church directly commenced in 1888, when I visited all important places connected with the history of our people in the states of New York, Ohio, Illinois, and Missouri.

In 1889 I visited a number of the settlements of the Saints in Utah, Wasatch, and Millard counties, gathering historical information.

In 1890, for a similar purpose, I visited the Cassia, Oneida, and Bannock stakes in Idaho, and the Tooele, Davis, Sanpete, and Emery stakes in Utah.

In 1891 I was regularly engaged by the Church as a historian and was given letters of instruction and introduction to presiding officers in the Church, after which I commenced a more thorough and systematic work, and going much more into details. During the year I visited the several wards in the Box Elder, Panguitch, Sevier, Summit, Morgan, Bear Lake, and Cache stakes.

In 1892 I visited all the wards and branches of the Church in the St. George, Parowan, Beaver, Malad, Juab, and Uintah stakes.

In 1893 I visited the Weber, Tooele, Millard, Davis, Utah, San Juan, and San Luis stakes, and also made a second historical

tour of the states, visiting places of historical interest to our people in the states of Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, etc.

In 1894 I made a tour of the Snowflake and St. Johns stakes, the Mexican Mission, and the St. Joseph and Maricopa stakes, returning by way of California. Later in the year I visited the settlements of the Saints in Canada and in the Bannock Stake and also traveled and labored in the Salt Lake Stake.

In 1895 I finished my labors in the stakes of Zion and in May started for my foreign mission to continue my labors abroad. During the remainder of the year, I labored in the Sandwich Islands Mission, the Tongan Mission, the Samoan Mission, and the New Zealand Mission.

In 1896 I visited the Society Islands Mission and the Australian Mission. Then, after visiting Ceylon, Egypt, Palestine, France, and Italy, I continued my historical labors in the British Mission, Scandinavian Mission, and the Swiss and German Mission.

In 1897 I finished my labors in the Swiss and German Mission, the Netherlands Mission, and the British Mission, returning June 4, having been absent from home two years and one month.

On my extensive travels I have collected a vast amount of historical information by perusing the records and documents which have accumulated in the various stakes of Zion and the respective missionary fields, and also by culling from private journals and interviewing many persons of note and long experience in the Church. I have also sent and brought to the Historian's Office hundreds of records from foreign missionary fields that were not needed abroad anymore, and many more such records which I packed for shipment in different places can be expected

here soon with returning elders. My notes being gathered under different conditions and under many difficulties—often hurriedly—need careful compilation and arrangements before they can be used for history. They, however, constitute the foundation and outline for histories of nearly every stake, ward, branch, quorum, association, etc., of the Church in its gathered state, and of every mission, conference, branch, etc., abroad, from the organization of the Church to the present time. To bring all this into readable shape will necessarily require years of patient toil and labor.

In some of my previous reports I have referred to the very imperfect state of our records, as kept of late years, throughout the Church. I would earnestly recommend a thorough reformation in regard to record keeping. There is a lack of system and uniformity throughout the Church in the recording of ordinance work and in the making of minutes and rolls, statistical reports, annual reports, etc., etc. Each mission, stake, and ward seems to have its own peculiar system or no system at all; and until regular forms and blanks are furnished from headquarters for use throughout the entire Church, this irregularity must necessarily continue. Our so-called genealogical books, or registers of members now somewhat in use in the bishops' wards in the different stakes, are, in my estimation, out of date entirely and do not answer the purpose for which they were intended; and our statistical blanks are worse still and ought, in my judgment, to be condemned at once in favor of something better. If the forms that I submitted to the Church Historian about three years ago, and which I have endeavored to introduce abroad, are not accepted, I would suggest the appointment of a special committee to prepare forms, blanks, etc., and upon their adoption by the First Presidency,

Historian, and general Church recorders, make them universal throughout the Church, both at home and abroad.

In my researches and observations, I have also discovered that a great number of false and inaccurate dates and statements are continually creeping into our writings and records. In the absence of original records, or owing to carelessness in consulting these, many people attempt to give dates and other technical matter from memory, which, in most instances when criticized, are found to be incorrect. Thus more than half of our missionaries, when requested to give in their genealogy at the Historian's Office, give in wrong dates of their baptism or no dates at all, and the same is the case when genealogical members [numbers?] for ward and quorum books are obtained.

This unpleasant feature could be avoided in the future, I think, if all members were required to produce certificates of baptism, ordinations, etc., the same as members of other denominations, and the same as was done in our Church at an earlier date.

I return home from my foreign mission in good health and spirits, though somewhat tired and fatigued. I feel that the Lord has blessed me and crowned my efforts with success. With a few exceptions, the presiding officers of the Church, both at home and abroad, have treated me kindly and have assisted me in different ways of prosecuting my labors.

Your brother in the gospel,
Andrew Jenson