

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF WM. YOUNG BLACK

Wm. Young Black was born 20 Aug. 1784. He was the only child of either of his fathers two wives to survive. There seems to be more to this man of the past than meets the eye, or has descended in tangible form to posterity. A product of a religious home environment, his spiritual vitality was a pillar of strength to him and to his family through the years. Years that were packed with pioneering hardships as well as rewards.

His father was Wm. M. Black, of obscure abstraction; was born at Maltone, Antrin, Ireland, in March 1744. He was of strong and active mind, ever seeking hungrily for truth. After being apprenticed as a hosier in Belfast, Ireland, he settled in Lisburn to build his trade. He spent his entire life, over 91 years in this locale. Wm's. mother, Mary Gardener, was the second wife of his father. She was born in 1864 in Lisburn, County Antrin, Ireland, daughter of James Gardener. Wm. M's first marriage to Charlotte Cumberland, however, provided a circumstance of import in the lives of Wm's entire family. Hansie Cumberland, Charlotte's father, had been accustomed to entertaining Wesleyan Methodist Ministers in his home. By persuasion of Charlotte, Wm. M. attended thier classes and joined thier society soon after. He became a class leader and performed this duty for more than 67 years.

In the latter part of the 18th century, there was political and religious unrest in the British Isles. The common people were seeking relief from taxation and freedom to worship. the developing of new frontiers called many families to colonize far countries and seek ownership of lands about them.

Family life in Ireland was difficult. Rebellions against England, religious wars among the churches and unpopular home government had brought the people to poverty and almost destitution. Many children died of common diseases. The death rate of mothers and babies was extremely high for lack of proper nourishment and medical care. Of Wm. M's family, Charlotte (wife and mother), her two girls, Jane and Charlotte, her son George and Mary's son Joseph all died before 1798.

There were no schools for Wm. to attend. The only form of education came through the home and the church. Few books were published. Boys were apprenticed out to learn trades as preparation for life was not a ready made plan. Success came only to those who developed their talents and special gifts. The teachings of a devout home rounded out a solid foundation on which Wm Y. built his life.

During his early teens he, and his brother Valentine Mark, no doubt helped as best they could, to get extra earnings to supplement the family earnings or income. In his quiet, unassuming manner, he was alert to grasp ideas and adjust to circumstances. Though small of stature, he developed a fine healthy body and a keen mind.

At this time of his life, England was at war with France. The Parliamentary Government

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government of England had been successful in bringing Ireland and Scotland under control, and uniting them into a leading world power. The British Navy was now "Mistress of the Seas". In 1784, the year Wm was born, Napoleon Bonaparte received his first commission in the French Army. In 1793 he helped dislodge the British from Toulou, France. This, and other brilliant victories were the beginning of his rise to power and to becoming Emperor of France. His conquering of Italy, Austria and Spain were the crowning events in his bid for world power.

The threat of Napoleon conquering the world was a time for families to give their sons to protect the freedom of their country. Wm., age 16, and Valentine Mark, enlisted in the British army in 1800. Wm. was in the 72nd regiment and served 4 yrs. in Ireland and 17 years abroad. He was at the taking of Good Hope from the Dutch Jan 6, 1806 and the seizure of the island of France from the French in 1810. He went on to Madras in 1814, and from there to Bengal, East Indies. On returning to England in 1821, he was at the Isle of St. Helena where Napoleon had recently died.

World peace was restored and he returned to England about March 1, 1821. Realizing that perhaps two or three months time would be required until he could muster out and be assured of his soldiers pension, he sent a message to his parents in ~~England~~ Lisburn, Ireland.

After 17 years absence, Wm. returned to his home and loved ones. Since receiving Wm's message, his father had anxiously awaited his arrival. It seemed an answer to his prayers for the necessities of life, that his son, whom he had believed dead, was returning well and healthy.

The second of July 1821, he arrived at the only home he had known. His father joyously greeted him, but at once had to inform him of his mothers death. The shock of hearing of her son's return had been too much. She died the following sabbath. (From James Argne's biography of Wm. M. Black.) Wm. then inquired about his brother, Valentine only to learn that he had enlisted again, had gone to France. During the remainder of Wm's lifetime, until this time Valentine has never been heard from .

His father then related , how his friend, Daniel Johnston, an active Wesleyan minister (Methodist), had died 4 yrs previously and left to his guardianship his daughter, Jane.

Twenty one years bring many, many changes. Here was Wm. almost 37 years old, 5 ft 9½ in tall, black hair, large deep blue eyes, well matured in mind and body. The army had given him training to make decisions, use time and energy to attain an objective. He was steady in purpose, sure in judgment, and a heritage of honesty and integrity. He quietly, without acclaim, performed the tasks at hand now, there was a new life for him to build.

Wm decided to take up his father's trade, with the equipment and clientele already accumulated over a period of 56 yrs. His previous experience as a young man, working with his father helped him to learn more readily the finer points of the trade from the master hosier. The income from the business, and the army pension offered a comfortable living for a family.

As the days and weeks passed, Wm. spent many hours at the looms. He also found time to discuss the Methodist New Connexion religion which his father had helped to found.

Since his return home he had observed the young lady in his father's household. Jane, born June 11, 1801, at Lombeg, Antrin county, Ireland, she was much younger than he. Yet, her religious background and activity certainly gave them something in common. In the snapping blue eyes and brisk little body of brown haired Jane Johnston burned a zeal for accomplishment that made handicaps seem to resolve themselves in her favor. Mutual respect grew into love for Wm and Jane. During the ensuing few months their beautiful courtship culminated in marriage on July 31, 1822. They remained in the family home.

Note;(In 1909 when Albert C. Black was in Ireland on a mission, he was taken to this house by Wm. Andrus, a relative by marriage, of Jane Johnston's. Mr. Andrus explained that this was the house in which Wm. and Jane were married, Wm's father died and their four children were born. In an upstairs room, Albert saw the dilapidated looms which Wm. and his father used to knit the hosiery. They were left there by Wm. and Jane in 1838 when they moved to Manchester, England.)

In this house, on May 6, 1823, their first son, George was born. On April 25, 1825, their only daughter, Mary was born. The second son, William Valentine, was born Feb. 21, 1832. Wm's father passed away Feb. 4, 1835. A little over a year later on July 14, 1836, Joseph, their last child was born.

With the industrial age gaining rapidly in England, Wm's hosiery trade was placed in a precarious state due to the manufacturing of cotton goods in the textile mills in Manchester, England. Manchester was mentioned as a place where employment could be found. It was, at that time the manufacturing center of the world.

Wm. and Jane left their native land and went to Manchester to find employment. New found friends invited them to hear of a new religion being preached in that community. The meetings were held in what was known as "Harris' cellar". These "preachers" were missionaries representing a church who called themselves the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints". These "preachers" were Elders Wm. Clayton & Joseph Feilding. (Elder Clayton served as secretary to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He also composed the hymn "Come, Come Ye Saints."

From the teachings and sermons of these missionaries they immediately recognized the truths they had been seeking for during their lives. Elder Clayton baptized Wm. and Jane Jan. 14, 1839 at Manchester, England. The oldest son, George, was baptized in March 1840.

Wm. was so enthusiastic about these new found truths that he wanted to take them to his native land for his relatives and friends. At a conference of the church held in Manchester July 6, 1840, he was ordained a priest. At a succeeding meeting held July 7 1840, he was called on a mission and his desire fulfilled.

Elder John Taylor sailed for Ireland from Liverpool, 27 July, 1840. He was accompanied by Elders McGuffie and Wm. Black. This was the introduction of the gospel into Ireland.

In Sept. of the same year, Wm. was called home to Manchester to help arrange passage to Zion for his wife and three sons. Mary had proceeded them with another groupe of saints. With this accomplished, and with no feeling of insecurity for his family on this account, Wm. was now prepared to return to his labors as a missionary.

In view of the pending general conference in England, he remained in England.

Oct. 6, 1840 at the 7:00 P.M. meeting, the president of the conference proceeded to call upon those who were willing to volunteer their services to labor in the vineyard of the Lord. The volunteers were as follows; 10 high priests, 13 elders, 18 priests including Wm. Black. Wm. was assigned to labor in Oldham, a few miles north of Manchester and build up a branch. The minutes of the next general conference at Manchester, Apr. 7, 1841, lists Wm. Black as president of the Oldham branch of 86 members. In the evening services of this conference his name was presented and passed upon to be ordained an elder. He was ordained under the hands of Hyrum Clark and John Smith Apr. 7, 1841. Brother John Kerigan was appointed his companion. The Lord blessed them and their labors. By their faithful efforts two branches were established, Oldham and Rockdale.

When Wm's 2 yr. mission was completed he was released at the October conference of the church in 1842. In December of this same year he began his journey to America to join his family. He landed in New Orleans in March 1843. It was necessary for him to wait for the ice to break up on the Mississippi river before he could proceed to Nauvoo. Arriving in April he heard the Prophet Joseph Smith preach to the congregation of saints on the unfinished floor of the temple. He joined his family in August, 20 miles distant and in his words, " found them safe and well, Praise the Lord".

In the summer of 1843 the family moved to Nauvoo, bought a lot and began to build a home. This was their "Promised Land", where they could live their religion and for the first time build a home of their own.

While earning a living they were closely associated with the leadership and the activities of the church. George, at the age of 19, was a body guard to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Jane, upon the recommendation of Brigham Young, who had known her in England, was set apart as a midwife and nurse by the Prophet Joseph. As there was no opportunity for Wm. to pursue his trade as a hosier, he worked as a laborer plus odd jobs he picked up now and then. Mary was at an age to do housework and cook the meals for the family.

In March 1844 William V. and Joseph were baptised as members of the church by Parley P. Pratt. Joseph's name was recorded as Joseph Smith Black. Mary was baptised in Apr. 1844

During this period the persecution of the leaders and the people was rapidly increasing until it reached the tragic climax of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum Smith. In this dark hour John Taylor was also shot and so severely wounded that his life was also despaired of. He was driven to Nauvoo and immediately called for Jane to dress his wounds and be his nurse.

With the death of the Prophet Joseph, there grew conflicts and dissensions over the right to leadership. It was a time to try the faith of each member, and many fell away. The family of Wm. and Jane remained true to the faith and continued on under the leadership of Brigham Young

May 11, 1845, " by order of Brigham Young" Wm. was ordained a High Priest under the hands of William Huntington and Samuel Gulley. It seemed there was some confusion in the family with the name of William (small wonder). For better and more convenient identification his name was now recorded as Wm. Young Black .

Among the faithful there was talk of migration to the Rocky Mountains. At the October general conference in 1845, the members of the church, on suggestion of Pres. Brigham Young, unanimously covenanted as follows; " That we take all the saint with us, to the extent of our ability-- that is, our influence and property." The members of the church had been constantly instructed to prepare for the journey by laying in stores of provisions, for many months. Later descriptions and accounts testify that Wm's family were as well prepared as the average.

Real joy comes to the Latter Day Saint when the time comes in his life that he may receive the highest ordinances of the Priesthood on this earth. Jan. 6, 1846 William, Jane and George, their oldest son, received their endowments in the Nauvoo Temple. Jan 17, 1846, William and Jane were sealed to each other in the holy bonds of eternal matrimony by the Priesthood. There was the privilege and opportunity to be among the first of the church membership in this, the dispensation of the fullness of times, to receive these ordinances in a Temple of the Lord.

Wed. 4, Feb. 1846, the first of the Saints left Nauvoo and crossed the Miss. river on the ice in their journey to the west. The latter part of April the great body of the saints had left Nauvoo and were slowly wending their way, seeking a haven in the west.

Before leaving England, arrangements were made by William to draw his pension in Canada, twice each year. (perhaps April and October.) This no doubt, was a long tedious journey by foot, by boat and by horseback. Early in September 1846, he left on this journey. When he returned to his family he found them in the camp with the saints on the west bank of the Mississippi river in Iowa.

During his absence, the last of the saints had been driven from Nauvoo. The Black family had a wagon but no team. They pushed the wagon down to the river where it was ferried across, the family camped at Montrose, Iowa. The hardships, extreme exposure and discouragements endured at this time was surely a test for the most faithful. Sickness, inclement weather and shortage of food was the common lot of all. It was here, at this hazardous time that quail, by the thousands came to their camp and supplied food.

The fighting continued until the 16<sup>th</sup> of Sept., and the mob was repulsed four times. On this last day, a treaty of surrender was entered into, which stipulated that the city of Nauvoo should surrender Sept. 17 at 3:00 P.M. The arms of the besieged were to be delivered up to the "Quincy Committee", to be returned at the crossing of the river. The citizens and property were to be protected from all violence. The mob forces entered Nauvoo on the 17<sup>th</sup> and in keeping with the usual mob spirit, failed to regard their agreement. The saints were driven from the city. They searched the wagons on the banks of the river- took all the firearms and scattered provisions wantonly all over the ground. Families of the poor were ordered from the city at bayonet point, the sick were sorely abused and homes plundered. With such inhuman treatment, the members of the church remaining in Nauvoo, were forced to cross the river in their poverty and distress. These outcasts camped on the bank of the river for several days, where the Lord, in His mercy, fed them as He did the children of Israel.

Jane, George, Wm.V and Joseph witnessed the street fighting up to Sept. 16, 1846, and left, with the others, Sept. 17, 1846.

Why was the Black family among the last to leave Nauvoo? We here review some of the family circumstances at this time. Mary had married William McDonald in the fall of 1845. He was not a member of her church and did not want to move west with the family. Mary was expecting her first child in Nov. of 1846. George was working on a river boat at St. Louis. Wm. V. was employed as a cabin boy on a Mississippi River boat. His earnings helped feed the family. Jane was continuously caring for the sick. Note: Jane Johnston was a great help in caring for the sick and wounded. On one occasion she had to amputate a man's leg, having only an ordinary saw and knife as instruments. The man recovered.) William was in Canada to draw his pension. Perhaps they planned to go later in the fall or the next spring with the remainder of the saints. Conditions beyond their control brought about the move sooner than expected.

When Mary's baby was born- date is not known for sure - Nov. 29, 1846 or July 4, 1846 Mary died. After her death, William McDonald brought the child, three weeks old to his maternal grandparents in their camp in Iowa, then he returned to Illinois. He was never heard from again. William and Jane named the child William Johnston McDonald ( this man became our grandfather).

They continued to make their way west to Council Bluffs on the banks of the

Missouri river to prepare for the trek west with the main body of saints. They were to stay near there at Kaneshville for more than 3 years, until June 1850.

Five hundred men between the ages of 18 and 45 were recruited for the United States army at Council Bluffs in June and July of 1846 for the Mormon Battalion. This, of course, made a scarcity of able bodied men. When this call came, a great part of the young men of the ages required, were scattered over the plains. Many, at this time had gone to St. Louis and other points of employment to obtain means to help them carry their families west. All the saints were poor, and some, in dire want.

While in Kaneshville, Wm. Y. and his boys worked tirelessly in helping their wagon company make ready for the trek west. Jane, in addition to her care of her infant grandson, continued to care for the sick. She had been mindful of a young widowed Irish girl, Mary Ann Donnelly Groe. This girl seemed to take the place of her only daughter, Mary. Mary Ann left her father and mother in Ireland for the gospels sake, she was their only child-- widow of an L.D.S. missionary by the name of Groe. Jane adopted Mary Ann and her baby and brought them to Utah.

June 12, 1850 the Captain James Pace Co., consisting of 100 wagons, left Kaneshville. It was the fourth of eight companies to leave the Winter quarters area in 1850. Richard Sessions was leader of the first 50 wagons and David Bennett was leader of the second 50 wagons. The Wm. Black family were in the R. Sessions company. Wm. Y., Jane, Wm. V., age 18, Joseph S., age 14, Wm. Johnston, age 4, Mary Ann Donnelly and her baby girl made up their family.

Their outfit consisted of one yoke of cows, one yoke of oxen, and five loose cattle. Joseph S. drove the loose cattle the entire distance on foot.

Jane, in later years, writes; "After a weary, tiresome journey of over 1000 miles often walking fifteen to twenty miles a day to ease the load of the ox team, we arrived in Salt Lake valley in the fall of 1850."

Great joy must have come to the hearts of these pioneers on entering the valley. The second "Promised Valley" in 10 years for the Black family.

According to historian Bancroft, the pioneer of 1850 found the valley of Great Salt Lake an industrious center. As a result of the California-bound gold migration, there followed an enormous advance in the price of provisions. Flour, before the harvest of 1850, sold at \$1.00 per pound; sugar, 3 pounds for \$2.00. Beef was 10¢ per pound. Wages of laborers did not exceed \$2.00 per day, and skilled mechanics \$3.00 per day.

About 2 months after entering the Salt Lake valley, Pres. Young called Wm. Y. and family to go to Sanpete County, with other saints. They settled at Spring City. This offered to them perhaps, a chance to file on, and become owners of new land, in a new country. Homes were built, as best they could, and after a good harvest of 1851 and 1852 they were settled and comfortable again.

Indian Chief Walker had other ideas. The cattle and horses raised by these

colonists in Sanpete and other outlying communities, appeared to be easy for these tribesmen to acquire. They raided the settlements with such loss of property and that the U. S. Cavalry came in to protect the people. In 1853 Pres. Young called these families back to Salt Lake Valley to live while Chief Walker and other Indian leaders were brought under control.

Wm. Y. and his three sons volunteered as part of the army in the Indian uprising. Wm. Y. served and enlistment for two full years, in the U. S. Cavalry.

In 1855, after the Indian wars were settled, and with the coming of Johnston's Army to Utah, the families returned to Sanpete valley. There were four homes to be maintained. Now each son had one, or more wives. They settled in Manti; Wm. Y. built a rock house at the foot of the hill where the temple now stands. True to the family traditions, they immediately set to the task with spirit and faith. At last they were settled in peace where they could be free to become landowners, home builders, righteous members of their church and citizens of this new country.

April 6, 1850, George married Susan Jackaway. In 1852 he married Mar Ann Bonnell Groe in Salt Lake City. This was the first plural marriage in the Wm. Y. Black family. In 1854, Wm. Y. married Almeta Ayres in Salt Lake City. In Spring City in 1857 he married her sister, Victoria Ayres.

Joseph S. married Nancy Cynthia Alford at Ephraim, 12 Nov. 1855. At Spring City, 14 Nov. 1860, he married Sarah Jane Barney. Caroline Thompson became the third wife of Joseph in 1861. The fourth wife was Louisa Jane Stocks in 1864.

Orson Hyde was chosen by Pres. Young to select a number of families from the southern and central counties of Utah to settle the Rio Virgin and Santa Clara River Valleys in southern Utah. Again, Wm. Y. and his three sons and families were called to go. In 1861, they were a part of the great colonizing program of the church to go to Utah's Dixie. This mild climate, to grow grapes, fruits, cotton, sugar cane, corn, etc. had some appeal. Wm. Y., now in his 76<sup>th</sup> year, with his families, built their first homes in Springdale. Here once more they settled, unitedly building homes, churches, schools, farms, sawmills, cotton gins, sugar mills and small manufacturing plants under very trying conditions.

Perhaps there was not enough water and land here for expansion, for all the families; after about three years they moved higher up in the Rio Virgin to Rockville. Again they built homes, laid out farms, and went to work diligently to rest a livelihood from the fields and timbers of the mountains.

Pres. Young released the families of Wm. Y. and his sons from the Dixie Mission, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> 1869. Most of the families returned to Kanosh, Hillard Co., Utah. George died there in 1872.

Wm. Y. and Jane preferred to remain in Dixie. Their years of migrations, serving the Lord, their fellow men in colonizing new areas was at an end. They lived here until 28 Jan. 1873, when Wm. Y. was called to his well deserved rest.

Agnes Black McLeod, his oldest living grandchild as of 1958, lives in his home



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and gives us the following; He was always busy doing something. He was quiet and unassuming but always accomplished the task at hand. He was honest in dealings with his fellow men and had an abiding testimony of the life and mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. For years these industrious people raised corn, cane and cotton. Grandfather (Wm. Y.) took the produce raised to Pioche, Nevada to get cash. George W., went with him a number of times. He was too small to lift the yoke on the oxen but he drove one of the oxteams. He was deeply fond of his father and often has said "there was no better man ever lived." This was during the years of 1867-68 when Wm. Y. was 84 yrs. old. He took two yoke of oxen and two wagons, traveled 60 and 70 miles to market produce. George relates; grandfather kept two yoke of steers. Every fall he would give or donate \$75 to the church, three oxen, to be used in helping the saints to cross the plains. Each spring he would break or "gentle" three more wild steers for his own use.

Jane Johnston Black continued to live in their home in Rockville until 1878, when she was persuaded to go to Deseret in Millard Co. and live with her children. She passed away Jan. 20, 1890. Services were held in Deseret and Rockville, Kane Co. where she was buried beside her life's companion.

The descendants of Wm. and Jane (numbering in the neighborhood of 3,890 in 1950) dedicated a monument to their memory 25 June, 1950.

The sealing of children to parents was done in the S. L. temple April 1st, 1958 as follows;

George, Mary, Wm. V. and Joseph S., to Wm. Young and Jane Johnston Black.

Wm. Y. and Joseph to William E. and Mary Cardiner Black.

William M. to Wm. L. and Mrs. Wm. L. Black.

Jane, Mary, Eliza, Isabella and Daniel to Margaret Chambers Johnston.

Daniel Johnston to Daniel Johnston and Catherine Patterson.

There were six additional family groupings also sealed at this time.