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LIFE STORY OF MOSES CLAWSON
By himself

This history was evidently written about the time Moses married Sarah Ann Hinkley in 1853, just after returning from a mission to England. He spells her name "Hinkley" and that is the way it is recorded in the Endowment House record. Also there is a difference in the date of marriage. The endowment house record gives 25 of September 1853. He says the 27 in his history. This document was mailed to Hannah Clawson in Phoenix in early 1966. Copied in April 1966 by Marion L. Clawson.

I Moses Clawson, son of Ebenezer and Lola (Foot) Clawson, born in Cayuga County, Town of Dryden, State of New York on 8 October 1801. My Father, Ebenezer Clawson, was born in one of the New England States, N.A. Jacob, Johnathan, Moses, brothers to Ebenezer. My mother's father died while in the service of the Revolutionary War. Foot (Simson, Darias, David, Lucy, brothers and sister to my mother. My grandmother on my mother's side was named Rebecca Barker, married after the war. Esekkel Sanford, who served in the war. One son Eliseph Sanford.

Nothing transpired to my memory until my father was taken with inflammation on the brain in 1806. Died on the 12th day of August. The family composed of 6 children named: Charles, Lucy, Betsy, Moses, David and Lola. Then I was tossed from place to place until my mother married Josiah Richardson, between 1808 -1809. Lived at home until 1812 when my step father and older brother joined the American Army against England. Was left until the end of the war in 1814 to do all the labor upon the farm, which was very trying upon me, being very young. In 1815, owing to the service, cold, water, such as nothing of importance was raised-herbs were plenty. Potatoes came on in their season, which with milk was our only sustenance for months - nothing else procurable for money.

I then went for myself and, not having means worked from place to place. I partly learned shoe making. Nothing till 1921 when I was disappointed in getting a wife. That same summer, 20 Aug. 1921 I was married in the town of Grotten by Squire Crittenton. Children born to her - 12; seven sons and five daughters: Cormelia Brown (Clawson) daughter of William and Hannah Brown. Born in County of Sellsbury, N.Y. 22 Oct. 1803. 1. Eunice Clawson, born in Dryden Tompkins Co. N.Y. 14 May, 1822. I then moved a 100 miles West to Troopsbury, Stevben Co, N.Y. in a wilderness. Very few inhabitants. 2. Ebenezer Clawson born 18 Oct 1923 in Troopsbury, Stevben Co. N.Y. Town divided. 3. William Henry Clawson, born in Greenwood, Stevben Co. N.Y. 6 Nov. 1825. 4. George Clawson, born in Greenwood, Stevben Co., 4 Sept. 1827. 5. Wallace Clawson, born in Greenwood, Stevben Co., 18 Sept. 1829. 6. Lola Amanda, born in Greenwood, Stevben Co., 12 Mar. 1832. 7. Moses Clawson Jr., born in Greenwood, Stevben Co., 25 Mar. 1834. 8. Moroni Clawson born in Caldwell Co. Missouri, 1 Jan. 1837. 9. Sarah Jane Clawson, Caldwell Co. Missouri, 24 Jan. 1839. 10. Cornellia Eliza, Hancock Co. Illinois., 18 Dec. 1843. 11. Ertinesia (Artimesia) Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Illinois, 9 Feb 1846. 12. David Clawson, Kanesville, Potanatamice Co, Iowa, 6 April 1849.

I commenced and cleared a couple of farms in Stevben Co. N.Y. Nothing of special import transpired. Was called into the Militia service and was honored with a Majory Commission, which office I held for a number of years.

My mother and Step-father were Methodists and finally broke off and joined a very curious Sect. (up to 1830 did not myself believe in them. The leader of this Sect. Some of which had been Baptist and could not believe in a God without body parts and passions.

In the fall of 1830 Col. John Stevens, and old gentleman came to my house and said to me "reports say in the paper there is a Golden Book or Bible found", which thrilled through me like an electric shock, which caused me to reflect materially. Not being a praying man, my desire was to get the book forthwith, which in a few months was put into my possession. I read it carefully and believed that God had again manifested himself unto men by giving them a history of this American Continent. Not having any further information and feeling anxious to know the right way that God had ordained. There came into the place an Elder by the name of James Thorp of the Methodist who preached very plausible.

Doctrine and myself and family fell in with him. Finding they did not practice what they professed and wishing to find the right way, left them. (Before I could join, was baptized by immersion) was with them a year or more. About that time came a Society called Christian. I thought them more liberal. I joined them thinking I was exchanging error for truth. Remained with them until about 1834.

Sometime in that year a man by the name of Ezra Landon came from the North part of the country, who preached the prophecies, those past and yet to be fulfilled. He did not tell us who he was, but we afterwards found out that he was a Mormon. I still continued with the people until the forepart of 1835 when two Elders from Kirtland, Ohio came to our settlement by the name of John Gould and George Bobcock. Being of an inquiring mind I invited them to come to my house. They preached a number of times in the settlement. On the 2 of March 1835 myself, my wife and my youngest sister, Lola, went into the waters of baptism under the hands of John Gould. Persecutions raged immediately with unabated fury. After being confirmed and promised the gift of the Holy Ghost was visited with a feeling for several days as though my whole frame was of fire through which I received great knowledge as pertaining to things of God. My friends would often look at me as though something strange had happened, and I would often ask them why they did so. They answered, "Why- you have joined Old Joe Smith", What is so strange about that? "Why he is a money digger". I preached to them to the best of my ability.

My mother's brother, David Foot, had been ordained an Elder. He soon commenced to baptize and organized a branch which grew to be quite a branch. My step-father, Josiah Richardson, my sister, Lucy and my younger brother, David united with the church. My step-father and mother moved west to Missouri. David and Lucy soon apostatized and left the church.

Continued at my trade that summer and next winter. The Elders visited us. The sick were healed. John Murdock and others came and preached to us, the Word of Wisdom. At that time my youngest sister's child, 4 yrs. old was dying. The Elders spoken of and my step-father administered to the child and in a short time it called for something to eat. This was the first healing I had seen done.

At that time I was a slave to tobacco, having used it a number of years. And while passing with the Elders to my place of abode something says to me, "Do you believe Joseph to be a prophet? I assented "yes". Then says the spirit, "Throw away your tobacco". I have never used a particle since.

Nothing transpired except additions to the Branch through our preaching and the Gifts of the Gospel. In the fall I was ordained a priest under the hands of Elder Foot and others.

That summer George A. Smith and a cousin of his came and remained a great part of the summer. I took a notion to move to Missouri the next spring. Had a valuable farm and a good frame house worth several hundred dollars. The most anyone would offer me was \$150. Started for Missouri the 11th of May 1836. Having traveled a few days my son Ebenezer being a young lad, driving my horses, was thrown from the wagon, ran across his body and over his head, which injured him very much by cutting the sculp several inches on the back of his head. He seemed dead, but by rubbing and care he got better. After he came to, the first thing he said was, "Oh, my back." Report this was on the bank of the Genesse River. The news soon spread that a Mormon child was run over and killed. Took him down to the river about ½ mile to a hotel where we were furnished a room. Not knowing as I do now the power of the Priesthood we were advised to send for a doctor. Could not hear of one for a long distance. An old man present advised bleeding, got confused. The house filled with people to see the Mormon boy supposed to be killed. Then four men, Mormon Missionaries, came in. The leaders Moon and Rufus Fische the rest unknown, who had left an appointment 6 miles back, said, "Bro. Clawson don't be afraid. Don't send for a doctor." Told them we were in their hands, now do as you think best. He then came in and said, "All those who wish to stay can stay, as we wish to close the door." Part remained. He said, "We will now administer," which he did after prayer. Anointed him with oil, during the time the boy said, "Father, he did not put oil on the place it hurts. Continued to anoint, then administered. Elder said, "In a few hours you can go on your journey." After a time my son awoke and said, "Father let us go on." We traveled 6 miles farther and camped for the night. My injured son driving the team part of the time. The wound on his head healed up without ever swelling-only leaving a scar.

On the 25th of May old Father Smith called a Blessing Meeting and blessed myself and wife. We then continued our journey to Missouri. Nothing happened until we arrived on Crooked River. There being stopped by the mob. Stayed several days. The church having been driven from Independence, Jackson Co. Also from Ray and Clay Counties, and family gave us permission to go to Caldwell Co. where it was mostly prairie.

Arrived 6th of Aug. within 3 miles of Far West. Built a house and in the next winter went to Lexington and entered the land with none other portion. While at Crooked River, which was very sickly, took the chills and fever which we carried up to Caldwell, Co. Living where there was but few people, provisions was very hard to get except corn of which there was plenty- but no mills to grind it and had to grate it on a grater.

Was one of the first that settled Caldwell Co, Far West not being known at that time. Commenced on a new farm. I was blessed in my labors and accumulated property very fast. Winter of 1837 was ordained an Elder under the hands of the President of the Elders. Nothing materially transpired until Moroni was born Jan. 1, 1837. In the spring of 1838 the people began to be jealous of us.

The Prophet was living with us and gave us a great deal of good counsel. With him on the 4th of July, when we assembled to celebrate that day and raised the Liberty Pole, it would seem that the evil one had conspired against us for a shaft of vivid lightning descended and the Liberty Pole was rent to within 3 ft. of the ground. Joseph then said, "Brother, our liberty is gone." During the day Elder Rigdon preached what was and is known as the Salt Sermon. Many Missourians being present, which sermon had a tendency to stir up both saints and sinner, for from that time persecution commenced.

Owing to the frequent outrages of outsiders in riding furiously into town over women and children, we got together and organized under the title of the Brothern of Gideon. A man by the name of Sampson Avard figured very conspicuously in it and becoming dissatisfied, apostatized and led a number astray.

Nothing of note except persecuting until government raised up 5000 men to come to Far West, destroyed property, murdered men and lavished women. Fell upon a little company at Haun's Mill and killed quite a number.

The news came to Far West while we were preparing a sort of breastwork against them. The company came in, some 5000 said to be government troops. After George W. Hinkle and others betrayed Joseph and his brother into the hands of the Militia or mob, called a military court martial of the officers and 18 ministers and passed sentence on Joseph and others, that they be taken to the Square in Far West in the morning at 8 o'clock to be shot. It did not take place, but being overpowered we were obliged to go into a hollow square of about 5000 men and lay down our arms. After which they had great power over us and persecuted - robbing our houses and plundering our property.

Set a strong guard around us and would not let us leave the city, but obliged us to sign away our property to pay the expense of what they termed the "war." Then they selected from the remnant some 60 or 70, shut us up in confinement and next day started us for Richmond, on pretext of a trial. Had sent Joseph and others over the River to Independence, supposing that they would be killed. Joseph having prophesied before hand that he would yet stand on the corner of the spot where the temple should be built.

I fed and clothed and gave them money. I with the rest were taken to Richmond some 40 miles and there thrust into prison. Snow being some 12 to 14in. deep, we were dragged through the snow with very little provision - and well guarded. After several days a mock trial commenced. Austin A. King, a Methodist preacher, set as judge. All manner of high crimes were brought against us. They then sent for Joseph and others and put them on trail with us, confining them in another room in chains. After 2 weeks of trial some 20 were liberated, they not being able to find anything against them. Court continued 3 days and I after that, with 4 others were liberated. Joseph and others was taken to Liberty and thrust into prison. The remainder were confined in dungeon there.

After my return, my daughter Lola Amanda (should be Sarah Jane) was born Jan. 24, 1839. The mob continued their outrages and were not permitted to hold any public meetings. Joseph Young came to my house and wished me to go to meeting with him. After wandering in the forest for a time we came upon a house where we found Brigham and Heber and others in Council. They ordained myself and others into the Quorum of Seventies.

In an order of the mob for us to leave the state, we began to make preparations therefore in accordance with council to get away without help, if possible. I gathered up what little I could and got over to the state of Pike, Co. I commenced preaching. Raised up quite a Branch. Remained until 1840, when Joseph said, "Come up to Hancock Co.", which I did to a place called Orlins. My family remained there while I went on a mission east. Returned home in 1844 was again on a mission east. While there Joseph was murdered. The mob still continued to harass and in 1846 myself and neighbors were all burned out and driven into Nauvoo. Before we left, a daughter, Cornelia, was born to us. Remained there through the winter. Daughter Artemesia born next spring. Left for Salt Lake Valley. While living at Lima was called to the High Council, and ordained a High Priest under the hands of Isaac Merely. Arrived at Kanessville on the Missouri River. Lost two children there a young man and a young woman.

Lola Amanda died in June 1847 (1848). Wallace died in March of 1843 (1849). April 6, 1848 a son David was born. After which we left for Salt Lake Valley, where we arrived in the fall of 1848 (1849). Nothing of importance happened on the road. Arrived on the 27 of Oct., 1849. Bought a house and went to work to procure the necessaries of life. Next spring, April Conference, 1850, called to go to England. Gone three years and six months less 2 days. Preached and presided over a number of conferences. Administered to the sick and many were healed under my administration. Called to return home. Called to preside over a ship, the Ellen Marie, bound for New Orleans. Had on board 299 saints.

After a passenger of 7 weeks, arrived at New Orleans. Then chartered a steam boat for St. Louis and from there to Keokuk, Iowathen took charge of a few wagons across to Kansville. There, approved a captain over 56 wagons to cross the plains. Some sick, 2 deaths (children) before we arrived in Salt Lake after 75 days. On my arrival found my wife sick, who died on the 22 Oct. 1853. Family being scattered with no one I got into bad company.

During my mission had got acquainted with Sarah A. Hinkley 27, Sept. 1853 was sealed to me.

Note. The sealing records show she was sealed to him on the 25th in Brigham Young's office.