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Snow, Erastus

Snow, Erastus, a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles from 1849 to 1888, was the son of Levi and Lucina Snow, and was born at St. Johnsbury, Caledonia county, Vermont, Nov. 9, 1818. His father's family was among the early settlers of the Massachusetts colony. At an early age Erastus Snow was much impressed with religion, his mother being a member of the Wesleyan-Methodist church. In the spring of 1832 Elders Orson Pratt and Luke S. Johnson visited Vermont and commenced to preach the fulness of the gospel. William and Zerubbabel, two elder brothers of Erastus, were the first of the Snow family who were baptized. All the family (there being seven sons and two daughters) subsequently came into the Church, excepting two of the sons and the father. Erastus, who was only fourteen years of age, believed the testimony of the Elders when he first heard it, and was baptized by his elder brother, William, Feb. 3, 1833. Immediately after his baptism, he commenced to search the scriptures diligently and soon became very desirous to preach. Consequently, he was ordained to the office of a teacher, June 28, 1834, by Elder John F. Boynton. At that time he worked on his father's farm at St. Johnsbury, where a branch of the Church had been organized. Erastus met regularly with the Saints on Sundays and visited them in their houses. He also made several short missionary trips to the neighboring villages, in company with his cousin Gardner Snow and others. He was ordained by his brother William to the office of a Priest, Nov. 13, 1834, after which he extended his missionary labors into the States of New York and New Hampshire, holding meetings and baptizing quite a number. After being ordained an Elder by Elder Luke S. Johnson, Aug. 16, 1835, he continued his mission with increased zeal in New Hampshire and Vermont, in company with Wm. E. McLellan, his brother Willard and others. Nov. 8, 1835, he left St. Johnsbury together with Elder Hazen Aldrich and traveled to Kirtland, Ohio, a distance of some seven hundred miles eastward. After a hard journey, during which they came near being shipwrecked on Lake Erie, they reached their destination Dec. 3rd. In Kirtland Elder Snow met the Prophet Joseph Smith for the first time and lived with him several weeks. During the winter he attended the Elders' School, and the following spring received his endowments in the Temple, together with some three hundred other Elders. He was anointed by Pres. Alvah Beman, whose daughter he subsequently married. Thus in his early youth he participated in the glorious blessings which at that time were poured out upon the members of the Church, and especially upon those bearing the holy Priesthood. About the same time he was ordained into the second quorum of Seventy, and received his patriarchal blessings under the hands of Joseph Smith, sen. After the endowments in Kirtland, the Elders went out preaching with greater diligence than ever, and Elder Snow started on a mission to Pennsylvania April 16, 1836. He was absent over eight months, during which time he traveled 1,600 miles, preached 220 sermons, baptized 50 persons, organized several branches of the Church in western Pennsylvania, and returned to Kirtland, Dec. 29th. On this trip he encountered much opposition from the clergy and endured considerable persecution. On one occasion (Aug. 22nd), when an armed mob had collected at Cherry Run, Armstrong county, for the purpose of driving him out of the county, he had a narrow escape from having personal violence inflicted upon him. Arriving at Kirtland, he met a number of his friends from the East. In the beginning of 1837 Elder Snow, together with Luke S.

Johnson, made a missionary trip to Portage, forty miles south of Kirtland, and later, in company with Elder Wm. B. Bosley, he visited the Saints in Pennsylvania. After his return he frequented the high school at Kirtland. Continuing with Elder Bosley as a missionary companion, he started on another mission to the East, May 9, 1837. In Andover, Ohio, he held a discussion on the divinity of the Book of Mormon, with a Campbellite preacher by the name of Roberts. The meeting lasted until midnight and resulted in victory to Elder Snow. In Bridgeport, Franklin county, Penn., two sisters, who were lying at the point of death, were miraculously healed under his administration. Many other cases of healing occurred on this and his former missionary trips. On one occasion, while holding a meeting at Bridgeport, he was disturbed by a mob, which drove him from the place and pelted him with rotten eggs. At Leitersburgh, Maryland, he was accosted in public by a Campbellite preacher, with whom he discussed for twelve hours. After seven months' absence, he returned to Kirtland, Dec. 5, 1837, having labored faithfully in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland, preached 147 sermons and baptized about forty people. Jan. 2, 1838, he started from Kirtland on another missionary tour. **mA** couple of days later he attended a conference of Elders at Milton, fifty miles south. There he was challenged for a debate by a Mr. Hubbard, a Campbellite preacher, who denounced the Book of Mormon as false. Elder Snow suggested to the congregation that he would produce as much proof for the divinity of the Book of Mormon as his opponent could for the Bible. With this the people seemed to be entirely satisfied, and a meeting was appointed for the following day. But when the hour of meeting arrived, none of the six Campbellite preachers, who were present, would abide by Elder Snow's proposition. Being anxious to use every opportunity that presented itself to lay the truth before the people, Elder Snow finally consented to other arrangements, and the debate was continued until 11 o'clock at night. As usual, the truth was triumphant, although Elder Snow was abused in various ways. After this he visited a number of branches in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland, held many meetings and baptized quite a number. He also crossed the Potomac and held meetings in Virginia. Finally, he was forced into discussion with another Campbellite preacher in Cookstown, Penn., which was continued for two nights, and ended with complete victory to Elder Snow, although his opponent was the Rev. Mr. Young, considered to be one of the ablest men in the State. The people were almost thunderstruck at the result of the discussion, and Elder Snow, in compliance with their earnest solicitations, remained in the neighborhood several days longer and preached to them. In the latter part of May he received a message from Kirtland, notifying him to return to Ohio, for the purpose of going to Missouri. With joy he complied with this call and arrived in Kirtland June 3, 1838, after five months' absence. In Kirtland he met Elders Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde, who had just returned from their missions to England, and were now preparing for a journey to Missouri. Most of the Kirtland Saints were also preparing to remove to Missouri because of apostasy and persecutions in Ohio. Together with forty or fifty others, Elder Snow started from Kirtland June 25th and traveled by land to Wellsville, on the Ohio river, thence with steamboats down that river, 950 miles, and up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, 550 miles further, to the Richmond landing in Missouri. From this place the company traveled forty miles northward to Far West, in Caldwell county, where they arrived July 18th. Here Elder Snow met his parents and other relatives who had removed thither from Vermont. Some of them were suffering with the fever and ague. Elder Snow now

commenced manual labor, but when the persecution shortly afterwards broke loose against the Saints, he was forced to take up arms, like his brethren, in defence of the people against mob violence. After participating in the defence in Daviess county, he was seized with the fever and ague, and when Far West subsequently was besieged by the mob militia, his physical weakness had become so great that he could hardly walk half a mile. Yet he remained bravely at his post, in the ranks of the defenders of Far West, until the town capitulated. He was also present at the remarkable mock trial before Judge Austin A. King, at Richmond, Ray county. Elder Snow married Artemesia Beman Dec. 3, 1838, and taught school the following winter in Far West. In the following February (1839), together with other brethren, he was sent by the Church at Far West as a messenger to Liberty, Clay county, where Joseph, the Prophet, and fellow-prisoners at that time were incarcerated. When the jailor on the evening of Feb. 8th brought supper to the prisoners, the visiting brethren were permitted to enter the cell. That same evening the prisoners, agreeable to an arrangement made the day previous, made an attempt to escape, but failed. When the jailor went out, Hyrum Smith took hold of the door, and the others followed; but before they could render the assistance needed, the jailor and guard succeeded in closing the door, shutting in the visiting brethren as well as the prisoners. The jailor immediately gave the alarm, and the greatest excitement followed. Not only the citizens of the town, but a great number from the surrounding country, gathered around the jail. Every mode of torture and death that their imagination could fancy, was Proposed for the prisoners, such as blowing up the jail, taking the prisoners out and whipping them to death, shooting them and burning them to death, tearing them to pices with horses, etc. The brethren inside listened to all these threats, but believing that the Lord would deliver them, laid down to rest for the night. The mob finally became so divided among themselves that they were unable to carry out any of their numerous plans. That night, while some of the visiting brethren spoke about their being in great danger, the prophet Joseph told them "not to fear, that not a hair of their heads should be hurt, and that they should not lose any of their things, even to a bridle, saddle, or blanket; that everything should be restored to them; they had offered their lives for their friends and the gospel; that it was necessary the Church should offer a sacrifice and the Lord accepted the offering." The brethren had next to undergo a trial, but the excitement was so great, that the guard dared not take them out until it abated a little. While they were waiting for their trial, some of the brethren employed lawyers to defend them. Elder Snow asked Brother Joseph whether he had better employ a lawyer or not. The Prophet told him to plead his own case. "But," said Brother Snow, "I do not understand the law." Brother Joseph asked him if he did not understand justice; he thought he did. "Well," said Brother Joseph, "go and plead for Justice as hard as you can, and quote Blackstone and other authors now and then, and they will take it all for law." He did as he was told, and the result was as Joseph had said it would be; for when he got through his plea, the lawyers flocked around him, and asked him where he had studied law, and said they had never heard a better plea. When the trial was over, Brother Snow was discharged, and all the rest were held to bail, and were allowed to bail each other, by Brother Snow going bail with them. They also got everything that was taken from them, and nothing was lost, although no two articles were found in one place. Before Elder Snow and his companions left Liberty, some of the lawyers, merchants and other leading citizens promised them that they would set the prisoners at liberty for a compensation of \$10,000 worth of real

estate, but when the brethren, after their return to Far West, had raised that amount, the parties neglected to fulfil their promise. In the meantime the Saints commenced to leave the State, but Elder Snow and others concluded not to go away until the Prophet and his fellow-prisoners were set free. Elder Snow therefore proceeded to Jefferson City and tried to get their case before the judges of the supreme court of Missouri. These dignitaries, however, utterly refused to take action in the matter. After much exertion and pleading Elder Snow, finally, through the assistance of the Secretary of State, managed to get an order issued for a change of venue, on the strength of which the prisoners were started from Daviess to Boone county. On this journey, as is well known, they escaped from their guards. Elder Snow started with his family for Quincy, Ill., April 15, 1839, and arrived there on the 27th. The prisoners had arrived a few days before. In the beginning of May, Elder Snow visited Commerce, in Hancock county, which had been selected as a gathering place for the Saints. Here he commenced a new home, and in the following June removed his family to Montrose, on the opposite, side of the river, where he had secured a small hut for a temporary dwelling. July 4, 1839, he started on a mission, to which he had been called at the conference held in Quincy two months previous. He traveled through several counties in Illinois, held a number of meetings and administered to the sick, until it was revealed to him in a dream that his family was sick and needed his presence. He returned home July 31st and found his wife and a number of his relatives in bed with the fever and ague. They had already suffered a great deal, as there were none to render them assistance, most of the Saints on both sides of the river being sick at that time. Elder Snow, in company with other Elders, went from house to house administering to the sufferers until he also was taken sick. In August he was somewhat better and undertook a journey to Quincy with a team. On the return trip the horses ran away, tipping the wagon in a river. Elder Snow was thrown into the middle of the stream, right under the horses, and was unable to extricate himself. Only through the marvelous preservation of a kind Providence was he saved from drowning. This accident, however, caused a fresh attack of the fever, and he was confined to his bed for several weeks afterwards. At the October conference (1839) held at Commerce, Elder Snow was appointed a member of the High Council, at Montrose, and in November following he attempted to go out and preach, but after having held a few meetings, he was again prostrated by sickness and laid up for some time in the house of Brother Haws in Knox county, about seventy miles from Commerce. While remaining there in a helpless condition, he received word from home that his wife lay at the point of death at Commerce. All he could do, however, was to pray for her, as he was not able to return home until the 20th of December following. Then she was much better. When President Joseph Smith returned from Washington in March, 1840, he told Elder Snow that his labors were much needed in Pennsylvania. Wishing to act upon this suggestion, he at once prepared for a mission to that State. But as the protracted illness to which he and his family had been subjected had reduced him to the depths of poverty, he had no means wherewith to defray traveling expenses, and he was too weak to undertake the journey on foot. After preaching several times in Quincy and attending the April conference at Commerce, where he received some means from kindhearted Saints, he finally took leave of his family April 28, 1840, and started on his mission with Elder S. James as a companion. They traveled down the Mississippi and up the Ohio rivers, a distance of about fourteen hundred miles, to Wellsburgh, in Virginia, where they landed May 7th and

commenced their missionary labors. After having held a two days discussion with a Campbellite preacher (Matthew Clapp), Elder Snow continued to Philadelphia and afterwards visited New York and Brooklyn. In these cities he preached several times, and in August visited Rhode Island, where one of his brothers resided. After this he held meetings for five successive days in a New Jersey forest, where two thousand people were present on one occasion, and seven were baptized. He continued to preach and baptize in Philadelphia and vicinity, and also in New Jersey, until towards the close of September, when he received a letter from Nauvoo to the effect that his mother-in-law, with whom his wife resided, was dead. Concluding under these circumstances to bring his wife to Pennsylvania, he left Philadelphia Sept. 30th and arrived at Nauvoo Oct. 21st, having been absent about six months and traveled 5,650 miles. After a stay of seventeen days in Nauvoo, he started for Pennsylvania Nov. 7, 1840, taking his wife with him. After his arrival in Philadelphia, he published a small pamphlet, which he had written in answer to a publication issued against the Saints by a Methodist preacher. His wife, who had been provided with a home at the house of Brother Wm. Green, in Chester county, bore a daughter, Elder Snow's first-born, Jan. 21, 1841. With unabating zeal Elder Snow continued his missionary labors, principally in Philadelphia and surrounding counties and New Egypt (New Jersey) and neighborhood, preaching, baptizing, visiting the Saints and administering to the sick. Finally he happened to meet Elder Geo. A. Smith, who was returning from his mission to England, and also Elders John E. Page, Dr. Galland, Wm. Smith, Hyrum Smith, Wm. Law and others from Nauvoo. The two last named brethren had visited the New England States, and meeting Elder Snow on their return they desired that he should go to **Salem**, in Massachusetts, to open the gospel door. In a revelation given in 1836 the Lord had said that He had much people in that city. Although Elder Snow had expected to return to Nauvoo in the fall, and he also knew that his long absence would affect his temporal affairs considerably, he made up his mind to go to **Salem**, after making the subject a matter of sincere prayer. Consequently, he left his former field of labor, where he had gained many warm-hearted friends, who would administer to the wants of himself and family, and on Aug. 16, 1841, he started for a far and to him unknown country, where not a single member of the Church could be found. He took his wife and infant child, which was sick, to Woonsocket, near Providence, Rhode Island, and left them there with his brother, while he continued to Boston. There he held several meetings and met Elder Benjamin Winchester, who had been appointed his missionary companion. They had previously labored together in Pennsylvania. They proceeded to **Salem**, a city which at that time had about fifteen thousand inhabitants, situated fourteen miles northeast of Boston. They put up at one of the cheapest hotels in the city and prayed earnestly to the Lord to open the way for the introduction of the gospel to its inhabitants. The following day they secured the Masonic Hall to preach in and held their first meeting there in the evening of the 6th. Their next move was to print 2,500 copies of a somewhat lengthy circular addressed to the inhabitants of the city, in which the principles of the gospel were set forth in great plainness. Elder Winchester then went to Philadelphia, while Elder Snow continued to preach four times a week in the Masonic Hall. By contributions from the congregation he succeeded also in raising means to pay for the use of the hall. He now received numerous invitations to visit people in their houses, and while improving every opportunity that presented itself to deliver his message of peace and salvation, he at length found himself surrounded with friends, and

able to leave the hotel. Next he asked the Lord to open the heart of some one to receive his family. His prayer was answered. A Mr. Alley, who resided in Lynn, some five miles from **Salem**, and who was deeply interested in the work, kindly offered Elder Snow's family the hospitality of his home. Brother Snow consequently went to Woonsocket in the beginning of October and brought his family to Lynn, where they remained four weeks, while Elder Snow continued his labors in **Salem** and Marblehead. Afterwards they removed to **Salem**. Besides speaking three times every Sunday in the Masonic Hall, he also held meetings in private houses. Among his opponents and the enemies of truth was a priest by the name of A. G. Comings, the editor of a religious periodical. This man published in his paper a number of wicked falsehoods against the Saints, but refused to insert Elder Snow's refutation of them. This led to a public debate in the Mechanic's Hall, where about five hundred people were present. The discussion was continued for six successive nights, and as the interest gradually increased with the listeners, the popular feeling turned against Mr. Comings, whose arguments consisted chiefly of slander and abuse. The result of it all was, that many more began to investigate the fulness of the gospel than formerly, and from that time Elder Snow's meetings were so well attended that the Masonic Hall could not hold all who came to hear. Consequently, three leading men of the town took it into their heads to rent a more commodious hall in which Elder Snow preached to full houses for six Sabbaths. He reaped the first fruits of his work in **Salem** Nov. 8, 1841, by initiating the first five persons into the Church by baptism, and before the close of February, 1842, the number of baptized had increased to 35. March 5, 1842, he held a conference meeting in the Masonic Hall, and organized a branch of the Church, consisting of 53 members. He also ordained an Elder and a Priest. Subsequently he extended his field of labor to Boston, where he assisted Elder Nickerson in organizing a branch of the Church, and to Marblehead, Bradford, Lynn, Petersboro (in New Hampshire) and other places. In April, 1842, he visited Philadelphia, Penn., where he attended a five days' conference. After his return to **Salem**, his first son was born, May 1, 1842. Another conference was held in **Salem** on May 28, 1842, on which occasion seventy-nine members were represented, and the number had increased to ninety the following June, when some of the Saints commenced emigrating to Nauvoo, Ill. Elder Snow continued his labors in **Salem** and surrounding country until the spring of 1843. Besides the numerous meetings he held, he had several discussions with preachers of various denominations, which always resulted in victory for the side of truth. Among others, the apostate, John C. Bennett, put in an appearance at **Salem**, and commenced to lecture against the Saints in Nauvoo and Joseph Smith, but Elder Snow confronted him so ably and energetically that Mr. Bennett soon found it advisable to leave the town. Under Elder Snow's administrations a number of sick were also healed. Among such could be mentioned a Mr. Baston, in Boston, who, even before he had been baptized, was healed from a deadly fever and a Sister Spooner in Chelsea, who was healed by the laying on of hands, after being declared by a council of physicians to be incurable. She had for seven months suffered with dropsy of the worst kind. Having set the branch in order and appointed a brother to preside, Elder Snow left **Salem** March 9, 1843, leaving his family behind, and arrived in Nauvoo April 11th. He had this time been away about two years and a half, and was agreeably surprised to witness the many changes and extensive improvements which had taken place during his absence. He now spent one month among his brethren and the Saints at headquarters, and received much valuable

instruction. Among other things the Prophet Joseph Smith personally taught him the principle of celestial and plural marriage. May 11, 1843, Elder Snow once more turned his face eastward and returned to his family in **Salem**, but after laboring a few months he took his wife and children and returned to Nauvoo, where he arrived Nov. 5th. The following winter Elder Snow remained in Nauvoo, and in order to support his family and also complete a house, which he had commenced, he entered into a mercantile business together with Parley P. Pratt, in which he was somewhat successful. Altogether he spent a very pleasant winter in the society of the Prophet and other leading men of the Church, with whom he frequently met in council, and learned many things, to which he formerly had been a stranger. Early in the winter he became a member of the masonic lodge at Nauvoo, and advanced quickly through the various degrees to that of a grand master. When the Masonic Temple in Nauvoo was dedicated, April 5, 1844, Elder Snow delivered the dedicatory speech. At the general conference held at Nauvoo in April, 1844, Elder Snow was again called to go on a mission to the Eastern States. Consequently, about three weeks later (April 30th), he took a memorable leave of his family and the Prophet, whom he never saw again in this life, and commenced his journey. After having visited the branches in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont, he, in company with four of the Twelve, held a conference in **Salem**, Mass., in July. About this time the sad news of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith reached him, and he concluded to return home. When he arrived at Nauvoo July 25th he found the Saints bowed down with grief over the loss of their beloved leaders. Elder Snow attended the special meetings on Aug. 8th, at which the Twelve Apostles, with Brigham Young as president, were acknowledged as the highest authority in the Church, notwithstanding Sidney Rigdon's claim to the leadership. Elder Snow spent the winter in Nauvoo, and although his health was poor, he performed considerable public work besides taking care of his family. In February, 1845, he was appointed to make a missionary trip to Wisconsin Territory and northern Illinois. He started almost immediately, but his horse took sick, and he was obliged to return to Nauvoo, where he then attended the April conference, and a few weeks later witnessed the mock trial of the murderers of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, at Carthage. During the summer and following fall considerable sickness prevailed in Nauvoo and vicinity, and Elder Snow and family were among the sufferers. In September the mob commenced to persecute the Saints in Hancock county and burn their houses. Elder Snow was present in the general council of the Church, held in Nauvoo the following October, where General Warren, Judge Douglas and other State dignitaries, sent by Governor Ford, were present, and where the Saints agreed to leave the State early the following spring. From that time the Saints doubled their efforts in completing the Temple, in order to receive their blessings before leaving for the wilderness. In the beginning of December the attic story was dedicated for giving endowments, Elder Snow and his wife received their anointings Dec. 12th, after which he was called to administer in the Temple, and he remained there night and day for six weeks, together with the Twelve and others who were called to officiate in a similar manner. Jan. 23, 1846, Elder Snow yielded obedience to the principle of plural marriage, by having not only his wife Artimesia, but also a second wife, Minerva, sealed to him for time and all eternity. They also received their second anointings. During the winter the difficulties with the mob continued to loom up, and when it was decided in council to commence his emigration westward in February, Elder Snow was sent to Quincy to lay in supplies for the pioneer

company. After his return Pres. Young counseled him to make preparations for the journey of himself and family. He sold as many of his loose effects as he could at a very low price, equipped himself with such teams and provisions as his limited means would allow, and left Nauvoo with his family Feb. 16, 1846. Through the carelessness of the managers, the boat, which brought his effects across the river, capsized, whereby some of his goods were destroyed and his oldest child had a narrow escape from drowning. He left buildings and real estate in Nauvoo to the value of \$2,000. Most of the other exiles made similar sacrifices, and this property was left in the hands of a committee, who was authorized to sell it and use the means thus received for the removal of the poor. Elder Snow and family traveled in the advance companies until Grand river was reached and the temporary settlement of Garden Grove was located. He then, having lost a number of animals and being short of provisions, concluded to return to Nauvoo to sell his property and thus get means wherewith to continue the journey. Giving his family instructions to press on to Mount Pisgah, he commenced his backward trip on May 14th, together with Brother Edmund Ellsworth, and reached Nauvoo in safety. He, however, found it no easy task to dispose of his property, and it was not until in the beginning of July that he succeeded in trading it for about one-fourth of its real value. With the ready means thus gained he paid his debt, bought two other teams and some provisions, took his mother and another widow by the name of Aldrich and her family with him, and again took up the line of march westward July 5, 1846, accompanied by his brothers, William and Willard, their families and others from Nauvoo. Towards the latter end of the month the little company arrived at Mount Pisgah, where Elder Snow found his family anxiously awaiting his return. The Twelve Apostles and the main camp of the Saints had already reached Council Bluffs, 138 miles further west, and, after tarrying a few days at Mount Pisgah, Elder Snow and family continued the journey to the Missouri river. There the Saints were scattered in small camps, and were busy building huts and preparing for winter. The Twelve had made their temporary headquarters at a point which they had named Cutler's Park, about three miles west of the river on the land of the Omaha Indians. Elder Snow crossed the river and joined the main camp at this place Sept. 1st. After his arrival at Cutler's Park, he and other members of the family took sick, and his youngest child died Sept. 9th. In the beginning of December, however, he had so far recovered that he, during the remainder of the winter, was enabled to make several trips to St. Joseph and other places in Missouri, to lay in supplies for himself and others. Some time before this the main camp of the Saints had removed from Cutler's Park to the Missouri river, where they built Winter Quarters. In January, 1847, a revelation was given through Pres. Young, showing the mind and will of the Lord concerning the organization of the "Camps of Israel" for further movements. In this revelation Orson Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, Amasa M. Lyman, George A. Smith, Ezra T. Benson and Erastus Snow were selected to organize the Saints into companies and appoint captains of tens, fifties and hundreds, with a president and two counselors over each company, etc. In order to comply with this revelation Ezra T. Benson and Erastus Snow visited the Saints, who were temporarily located on Running Water, about one hundred and seventy miles north of Winter Quarters. They were received with much joy by the Saints, to whom they administered advice and comfort. A special conference was held at Winter Quarters April 6, 1846, and the following day Pres. Young and others of the Pioneers broke up for the West. Elder Snow, having been selected as one of the Pioneers, called his family together

(April 8th), laid his hands on his wives and children and blessed them, and after giving them the necessary instructions, and arranging for their comfort as best he could, he joined the Pioneer Camp which was located on the prairie, some seven miles distant. A few days later the actual journey of over one thousand miles was begun. Elder Snow writes: "Many interesting episodes occurred on the journey, but among trying and affecting ones was the appearance of the mountain fever among us. This affliction detained us so that, with the labor on the roads through the Wasatch Mountains, we were unable to reach Great Salt Lake valley until the 21st of July, when Orson Pratt and myself, of the working parties, who were exploring, first emerged into the valley and visited the site of the future Salt Lake City, and when we ascended Red Butte, near the mouth of Emigration canyon, which gave us the first glimpse of the blue waters of the Great Salt Lake, we simultaneously swung our hats and shouted, Hosannah! for the Spirit told us that here the Saints should find rest. After about six weeks' labor here, laying out the City and Fort, plowing and planting fields, and building cabins around the Fort block, I started with the rear camp of the Pioneers on the return trip, on Aug. 26th, and on the last day of October reached Winter Quarters on the Missouri river, where I had left my family, having been about six weeks without tasting bread. The sweet joy of this meeting was mingled with deep grief at the loss of a dear little daughter, Mary Minerva, who had died during my absence. Many of our people remaining at Winter Quarters were becoming comparatively destitute of clothing and other necessaries to fit them for a march into the desert; and it was determined, in the councils of the Church, to send a few Elders into the Eastern and Southern States to solicit contributions (from the benevolent) of money or clothing in aid of our poor, most of whom had received little or nothing for their farms, homes and worldly possessions which they had left behind them in Illinois. It fell to my lot to accompany Ezra T. Benson, one of the Twelve, into the Eastern States, to New York, Boston, and many other Eastern towns and cities, soliciting aid. Some received us kindly and contributed money and clothing; but by far the greater proportion of the people turned a cold shoulder to us. We left Winter Quarters, January, 1848, returned April 29th. Sometimes we were together, at other times we were separated, operating in different places. On my return trip I passed through Ohio and visited the Kirtland Temple, and at St. Louis fell in company with several returning Elders and a company of Saints, with whom I ascended the Missouri river. After our return to Winter Quarters there was a general stir and bustle of getting ready for starting with our families to Great Salt Lake valley, and gathering our year's supplies of seeds and provisions. Most of my oxen had perished during the winter, or had been eaten up by the Indians, and I was under the necessity of yoking up my cows and all my young stock to work with the few oxen I had left, to haul the wagons for the journey. I traveled in company with Pres. Young and Kimball and had a very pleasant and agreeable journey, my teams holding out well and my family enjoying good health. We reached our destination with much joy on the 20th of September. Soon after our arrival in the valley, I was appointed one of the presidency of the Stake, and during the following winter (Feb. 12, 1849), I was called and ordained into the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, together With Charles C. Rich, Lorenzo Snow and Franklin D. Richards. In my ordination, President Brigham Young acted as spokesman. I continued to labor in the ministry, in common with my brethren, though all were obliged to labor with their hands during the week, in opening up farms and building houses for our families. We all wintered in the Old Fort, which had been

commenced and partly built by the Pioneers, using our wagon beds chiefly for our sleeping rooms. During the spring of 1849, we began to move out on our lots, divided the city into Wards, and began to fence by Wards. During the summer, I built chiefly with my own hands, two rooms on my lot, one of adobe, the other of logs, separated from each other for a shed between, and got my family moved into them, with some wagon beds by the side of them for sleeping apartments. This year the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company was organized, and the system of emigration inaugurated, which has so largely contributed to the gathering of our people and the building up of Utah Territory. I was appointed one of the committee of three in gathering funds to put into the hands of Bishop Hunter to send back to our poor brethren left on the Missouri river. At that time our settlements extended only to Provo on the south and to Ogden on the north. We gathered about \$2,000. About this time, also, I participated in the organizing of the provisional government of the State of Deseret. At the semi-annual conference held in October, 1849, I was appointed on a mission to Denmark, to open the door of the gospel to the Scandinavian people. At the same time, Elder John Taylor was appointed to France, Lorenzo Snow to Italy, Franklin D. Richards to England, with several Elders accompanying each of us. We took our departure from Salt Lake City on the 19th of October. Our little company consisted of 12 wagons, 42 horses and mules, 1 carriage and 35 men. This included a couple of our merchants, going to St. Louis after goods, and a number of brethren who went east on business. Shadrach Roundy was appointed captain, and Jedediah M. Grant captain of the guard. Bishop Edward Hunter was also one of the company. The chief incident of the journey was a charge made upon our party by about two hundred Cheyenne warriors during our noon halt on the Platte, forty miles above Laramie, on the 12th of November. They were on the lookout for a war party of Crows and thought to gobble up our little party for pastime, but we did not quite relish the sport, and having about one hundred and thirty shots with us, in about one minute's time we formed a line of battle, under the direction of our gallant captain, Jedediah M. Grant, in front of our wagons, with our animals behind them on the river's bank, and when every man's finger was upon his piece ready to fire, the savage horsemen were brought to a sudden standstill. A parley commenced, which resulted in their giving us the road, and they withdrawing to their camps, while we made a good afternoon's march. During the night following, a party of Crows succeeded in making a descent upon their camp and running off a number of their horses. We went down on the south side of the Platte, and reached the Missouri river, at a point where now stands Nebraska City, on the 7th of December, in a blinding snow storm which had lasted about fourteen hours. The snow was about three feet deep when we reached the old barracks (Old Fort Kearney) on the west side of the river. And how joyful we were at finding there cabins to shelter ourselves and shelter for our animals. We held a meeting that evening and gave God thanks for our successful journey and our safe arrival over the bleak and dreary plains. The Missouri river was full of mush ice, and we saw no means of crossing it. We all joined in prayer that night that the Lord would cause the ice to congeal, and make a bridge for us to cross over. When we woke up the next morning, the river was gorged with ice a little below us, and was piling up with floating ice. The second day we all passed safely over with our horses and wagons, and the day after the ice broke up again and there was no more crossing the river for three weeks after. After a visit to Kaneshville, about fifty miles up the river, where the Saints received us with much joy, most of the missionaries journeyed

together till we reached St. Louis, whence we expected to take different directions through the States to visit the remnants of the Saints, remaining in the States and gathering means for crossing the water. During the week we stopped in St. Louis, I had varioloid (mild smallpox), and was very sick for a few days. I suppose I must have contracted the disease on my overland journey through Missouri. Sister Streeper, my kind-hearted hostess, who cared for me like a faithful mother, had a large family of children, including a young babe, who was frequently laid in the bed with me, and when the pits began to appear on me, and the character of my disease became known, she, in her anxiety exclaimed, "Oh! my poor babe, and my poor children, none of whom have been vaccinated." At first, for a moment, a feeling of grief came over me, that I should be the cause of this agony; but straightway the Spirit came upon me, and I said to her: 'Be of good cheer; because of what you have done to me God will shield you and your house, and none of you shall suffer on my account.' She believed my words and was comforted; and, so far as I know, no soul took the disease from me, except Sister Felt, who had a few moments' conversation with me while the fever was on me, and her little infant daughter who well-nigh perished with the smallpox. I sailed from Boston on the 3rd of April on a Cunard steamer, for Liverpool, where I landed on the 16th. We visited many of the churches in England, Scotland and Wales. During the next four weeks I received many contributions in aid of our missions. I landed in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, June 14, 1850, in company with Elders George P. Dykes and John E. Forsgren-the former an American and the latter a native of Sweden. We were met at the wharf by Elder Peter O. Hansen, a native of that city, who had embraced the gospel in America, and had left Salt Lake City with us, but had made his way in advance of us to his native land. Brother Peter O. Hansen conducted Elders Snow, Dykes and Forsgren to a hotel, where, after being shown an upper room they all kneeled together and offered up thanksgiving to God, dedicating themselves to His service. Finding the hotel noisy, they moved to a private house (L. B. Malling's) the next day, where they were kindly received and well entertained. On the following Sunday (June 16th) they attended a meeting, conducted by Mr. Peter C. Monster, a Baptist reformer, who had been subjected to much persecution because of his religious belief. He was an educated man and commenced to investigate the principles taught by the "American missionaries" in real earnest, and at one time it seemed as if he would embrace the fulness of the gospel, together with his whole congregation, but finally he hardened his heart and rejected the truth. The principal and best part of his followers, however, were subsequently baptized into the true Church of Christ, and as was the case with the Campbellites in Kirtland, Ohio, in the early days of the Church, so also did a congregation of reformed Baptists furnish the first fruits of the preaching of the gospel in its fulness in Denmark. Apostle Snow baptized fifteen persons in the clear waters of the beautiful Oresund, near Copenhagen, Aug. 12, 1850. Ole U. C. Monster was the first man and Anna Beckstrom the first woman baptized. These had all been members of Mr. Peter C. Monster's reformed Baptist Church. August 14, 1850, the first confirmation took place in Denmark, and on the 25th the Sacrament was administered there for the first time by divine authority in this dispensation. On the latter date the first ordination to the Priesthood also took place, Brother Knud H. Bruun being ordained to the office of a Priest. After the first baptisms, many others came forward and followed the example, and on Sept. 15, 1850, the first branch of the Church in Scandinavia was organized in Copenhagen, with fifty members. The young Saints

rejoiced exceedingly under the influence of the Spirit of God, which was abundantly poured out upon them. The manifestations of the power of God in the healing of the sick also gladdened their hearts, and before the end of the year the work had taken deep root, not only in Copenhagen, but in the province of Jutland, where another branch of the Church had been organized in Aalborg by Elder Geo. P. Dykes, Nov. 25, 1850. In the meantime, Elder John E. Forsgren had gone to Sweden, where he succeeded in baptizing a few, after which he was arrested, guarded and finally banished from the country. Apostle Snow, assisted by Elder Peter O. Hansen and others, set diligently to work translating the Book of Mormon into the Danish language. The book was published in the beginning of 1851, and was the first edition of that divine record published in a foreign language. In order to get means for its publication Elder Snow had to make a trip to England, where he raised the necessary amount among the British Saints. After its completion he made a second trip to England. Shortly before his return home, in 1852, he also published the Doctrine and Covenants in the Danish language. In September, 1850, Apostle Snow wrote an interesting pamphlet entitled "En Sandheds Rost" (A Voice of Truth), explaining the first principles of the gospel in a very plain and forcible manner. Over 200,000 copies of that little work have since been published in the Danish and Swedish languages. "Remarkable Visions" by Orson Pratt and a number of other pamphlets were subsequently translated and published in Danish. By diligent application and close study, Elder Snow also acquired a sufficient knowledge of the Danish language to enable him to converse freely with the people, and thus he became more intimately acquainted with their characteristics, manners and habits. By an exemplary and consistent life and kind ways, he soon gained the love and confidence of a race whose devotion to the cause of truth and high regard for its advocates has been subjects of much comment in later years. Apostle Snow soon learned to appreciate the warm feelings, full-heartedness and true friendship of the Scandinavian Saints, and in his later years better than ever, no doubt, he realized the fact that among his best and truest friends were some of those who embraced the fulness of the gospel under his administrations in the country of the north. It is here also worth recording that none of the missions established by the Elders in this last dispensation, save the British, has been so fruitful as the one rounded by Apostle Snow in Scandinavia. In 1851 a Danish hymn book was prepared and printed, and a monthly (soon changed to a semi-monthly) periodical called "Skandinaviens Stjerne" commenced. This paper is still the Church organ in Scandinavia, and is now running on its 50th volume. As in all other countries, where the fulness of the gospel has come in contact with the erroneous traditions and creeds of men, persecutions on the part of the clergy and the ignorant soon began to show its face in Denmark, and in various places the Elders and Saints were subjected to cruel treatment by mobs. Religious liberty had been granted the year before the mission arrived, but the people generally did not seem to understand the change proposed by this action of the government, and the authorities also were slow in rendering protection to such as were openly denounced by the clergy and others as false prophets. But the more severe the persecutions, the better the work flourished. New branches sprang into existence in nearly all parts of Denmark, and in the latter part of 1851, the gospel was also successfully introduced into Norway. Elder Snow soon found himself surrounded by a host of intelligent native Elders, who labored with a zeal perhaps up to that time unequalled in the history of the Church. Returning from England in August, 1851, he held the first general conference of the Church in

Scandinavia. The second one was held in the following November, on which occasion three conferences (Copenhagen, Fredericia and Aalborg) were organized. In the beginning of 1852, having laid a good and firm foundation for the work of God in Denmark, Apostle Snow began to make preparations for returning home. In February the third general conference was held in the city of Copenhagen, on which occasion nearly six hundred members were represented in Denmark, besides a few in Norway and Sweden. A farewell feast was arranged for Brother Snow in a large hotel parlor, February 24, 1852. About three hundred persons were present on that occasion, and a time, such as had never been had before in that land, was enjoyed by the young and confiding Saints. All vied with each other in showing their appreciation of and good feelings towards the man who had brought them the true religion of Christ. Apostle Snow, taking an affectionate leave of his flock, sailed from Copenhagen March 4, 1852, accompanied by nineteen emigrating Saints. These, together with nine others, who had embarked a few weeks previous, were the first direct fruits of the gospel from the Scandinavian countries. They have been followed by more than twenty-five thousand others. After spending a few weeks in England, attending to the organization of the Deseret Iron Company and other matters, Apostle Snow embarked from Liverpool May 8, 1852, in company with Franklin D. Richards, and arrived safely in Salt Lake City Aug. 20th, following, having been absent from his mountain home nearly three years. At the October conference, 1853, he was called, in connection with Geo. A. Smith, to gather fifty families to strengthen the settlements in Iron county; and the following year he was sent east to take charge of the Church in St. Louis and the Western States. Accompanied by other Elders, he left Salt Lake City July 8, 1854, and on the 4th of November following he organized a stake of Zion at St. Louis, Mo. Nov. 22, 1854, he commenced the publication of the St. Louis "Luminary," and he also superintended the emigration crossing the plains. In 1855 over two thousand Saints commenced the journey to the valleys from Mormon Grove, a place near Atchison City, Kansas, which had been selected by Elder Snow as the starting point for the overland journey. From this mission he returned to Salt Lake City Sept. 1, 1855. Elder Snow left his mountain home April 22, 1856, on another mission to the States, from which he returned in August the following year. Having returned from still another mission to the East, he was called, in connection with Geo. A. Smith and other Elders, on a mission to southern Utah, with a view to locating settlements in the valleys of the Rio Virgen and Santa Clara for the purpose of raising cotton. This mission started from Salt Lake City Nov. 29, 1861. St. George and other settlements were located the same year; and from that time until his death Apostle Snow devoted a great deal of his time to the interest of southern Utah, over which he presided spiritually for many years and also represented the southern counties in the council branch of the Utah legislature, until disfranchised by the Edmunds law. In 1873 he performed a short mission to Europe, on which he again visited Scandinavia, after which he was principally engaged in traveling among the Saints in Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, aiding in locating new settlements, organizing new Wards and Stakes of Zion, as well as strengthening and building up the older ones. Perhaps no other man in the Church performed more pioneer labor than Apostle Snow. His diligence, untiring zeal and energy was really remarkable. When the anti-polygamy crusade commenced, Elder Snow, like many of his brethren, became an "exile for conscience sake," and the hardships he was forced to endure as such undoubtedly shortened his days. After a most remarkable and useful life, fraught with

great events and crowned with many blessings, he departed this life at his home in Salt Lake City, May 27, 1888, a little under the age of three score and ten. Apostle Erastus Snow was kindhearted and benevolent, a man of fine appearance and strongly built. Like all great men he had his peculiarities. He was a deep thinker, and at times, so swallowed up in profound thought, that he took but little notice of things around him. Sometimes, when asked a question, he would not answer it until the next day, or perhaps still later. Frequently, some would think that he did not hear their question, but he seldom failed to answer it at some future time. He was an honest man, a true husband and a kind father, a wise counselor, an efficient pioneer and colonizer, a great statesman and, in every sense of the word, truly an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. His name and his works will live forever in the generations of the Saints who loved and respected him as their friend and counselor." (See also "Historical Record," vol. 6, p. 145; "Southern Star," vol. 2, p. 361.)