3. Birth of a Missionary

WHILE THESE great projects were under way in lumber, sugar, and railroads, as well as in banking, coal-mining, and construction work, a far less dramatic event occurred. On September 9, 1890, five years after her marriage, and following a trip from North Powder, Oregon, to Logan, Utah, my mother gave birth to her oldest child. As I have already said, I was named after the apostle of the church who officiated at the wedding of my parents.

It was in Logan that I learned how to walk and talk. This mastered, at the stout age of three I was moved back to Oregon, where a new home was in readiness for my mother at Baker City. Five years later I began my education in the lumber business.

Though my father was a millionaire by then, he felt the age of eight was a suitable one for his children to go to work. He wanted none of us to grow up in idleness or acquire a taste for easy living. Though his plan in this respect was fulfilled only in part by his twenty-one children, in my own case there was my mother to oversee its execution. She, too, agreed that time spent in idleness was not good for a boy. And so, in that summer when I was eight, I was sent to the box factory that was part of the Oregon Lumber Company and was told to carry my weight in boxes. The rate of pay was five cents an hour for ten hours' work.

When I held in my hands the first fifty cents for a day's labor, my father offered a plan whereby I could be taught to follow in his footsteps and become a capitalist by curtailing the consumption of my current income. At the outset of that first summer he said that if I saved my money until I had one hundred dollars,

he would sell me one share of Oregon Lumber Company stock at its par value.

"It's worth much more than that," he explained with great care, "and if you come to own a share you will be a capitalist."

For the sake of being a capitalist I saved twenty-seven dollars and a half that first time around. The next summer my daily earnings were raised from fifty to seventy-five cents. And by the end of the third summer the combined savings totaled one hundred dollars. I was sold the share of stock as promised and became a capitalist at the age of eleven. The feat won a treasured compliment from my father, which was multiplied many times over in the compliments I paid myself. I've never ceased being a capitalist since then.

School, work, and little play filled the years until I was fifteen. At that time I was sent from Baker back to Logan, where I was lodged in the home of an aunt so that I could attend the Brigham Young College in that city. This living-arrangement was continued for a year and a half, until my whole family was moved to Logan in 1907. Each summer, however, there was a trek back to Oregon and a job in some aspect of the lumbering business, in the forests, on the railroad, in the company store, or in the mills.

With my graduation from the high-school level of Brigham Young College in June 1909, my formal schooling was completed. For the six months that followed, I worked at what was to me a flattering assignment. My father put me in charge of the commissary attached to a project then under way. It aimed to extend the Sumpter Valley Railroad from its terminus at Austin, Oregon, over a mountain range to Paris City, twenty-three miles away. My part of the job was to run the commissary for the work gangs and crews, to provide supplies for the camps that were set up as the work progressed, and to keep all pay rolls.

By the time we reached the summit of the mountain range, the temperature had dropped to forty degrees below zero and I was ready to have my feet warmed.

At Christmas of 1909 I not only warmed my feet at a family celebration, but enjoyed a heart-warming send-off for a foreign adventure. I was nineteen at the time and had received my "call" from the Mormon Church. I was due to leave for a mission to the Glasgow slums at the turn of the year.

One word about these missions. As often as not, it was an impious lad instead of a devout one who was called to undertake them. For the church leaders, with keen insight, knew that these boys would be attacked simply because they were born into Mormon families. They also knew that an organization gains strength through defense by its members. Thus it was expected that the impious lads would "find" themselves as they faced these attacks.

In addition, the Mormons as a group had a passionate devotion to education, the common saying among them being that no man can be saved in ignorance. But of equal importance with this religious motivation there was the fact that the Mormon leaders recalled their own struggles to rise in the world under the handicap of little or no schooling. Brigham Young, for instance, never had more than eleven days of formal instruction in all his life. Thus, fathers who had been denied schooling wanted their sons to have it in generous measure even though it taxed the family resources to the outer limit. And the missionary work abroad was as much a part of the plan for higher education as it was part of a religious effort to make converts. From Utah alone about five hundred men were sent each year to some foreign land. Wherever possible, it was the land from which the parents of the missionary came. In this way a link was formed between generations, or between families left behind and those in America, or between cultures. Not only could the young missionary attend the universities of the place to which he was sent, but it was expected that he would keep his eyes open and his mind free to absorb instruction offered by mere exposure to new conditions and new people.

The family of every young missionary paid his passage to his

destination and bore the cost of his work while he was abroad. The church itself merely paid the return passage. It was the church also that determined the length of the mission. Where a foreign language had to be learned, six months were set aside for that purpose, and then two years of missionary work followed. In English-speaking lands, however, the length of the mission was generally about two years. The missionary could return home holding his head high only if he had been granted an honorable release by Church authorities. He would have been disgraced had he pulled up stakes and come home before that time.

My own tour of duty in Scotland ran for two years and two months. Its first and last parts were spent in Glasgow, with an eight months' period sandwiched in at Dundee. At both places I used a labor-saving device to spare my lungs while I sought a crowd. In Glasgow the green served the cause of free speech, much as Hyde Park does in London. In Dundee the same cause was served by St. Andrews Square, which is flanked on one side by St. Andrews University and on the other by a branch of the Bank of Scotland. In both places anything could be said, and orators harangued crowds on subjects ranging from astrology to the coming revolution.

Wearing my high silk hat and frock coat on Sundays—this being the garb of a Mormon missionary—I would pick out the largest crowd gathered around a speaker, and as he reached the end of his observations on the fate of man, I would work my way forward to the speaker's stand. The instant he was through, I would hold up my hand and cry out: "Now just a minute here!" and would launch my own talk in defense of the Mormon Church. But despite these ruses, I regret to say, the number of converts I made could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Nevertheless, I had an interesting and instructive time.

Several youths with whom I was to have close connections in later years were then enjoying themselves in Germany. One of these was Lawrence Clayton, grandson of William Clayton,

the clerk of the company that made the advance trek with Brigham Young from Nauvoo to Great Salt Lake City. The journals of William Clayton are primary source materials for early church history, and the hymn he wrote in a time of great tribulation is a favorite among Mormons to this day. Its first stanza reads:

> Come, come, ye saints, no toil nor labor fear;
> But with joy wend your way.
> Tho' hard to you this journey may appear,
> Grace shall be as your day.
> 'Tis better far for us to strive
> Our useless cares from us to drive;
> Do this, and joy your hearts will swell
> All is well! All is well!

At the time of my meeting with young Lawrence Clayton, in 1910, he was the "Bishop of Berlin." We were brought together at a conference in Rotterdam of all Mormon missionaries then in Europe. Of all who came, those stationed in Germany drew our greatest interest. While Germans themselves were allowed to advance the Mormon work, foreign missionaries were barred by law. Accordingly, Americans like Clayton sought to elude the police by describing themselves as students. And to carry off the masquerade, they entered fully into the rich university life of that epoch in German history. This sort of underground activity imposed no hardships on them. They attended lectures by famous professors during the daytime, sang lustily with their German comrades at night, and occasionally addressed a meeting in halls built or engaged by German Mormons. But sometimes the police caught up with the underground leaders from America.

They did so with Lawrence Clayton. He was arrested in Berlin, jailed for thirty-six hours, and on the personal order of von Gagow, the Berlin Police President, was banished from Germany. The order included Clayton's children, "down to the

third generation." This was a more modest control of the future than the rule of a thousand years Hitler meant to set up. But even so, von Gagow was no more successful in enforcing his limited decree than Hitler was in enforcing his more pretentious one. Eight years later Clayton was back on German soil. This grandson of Brigham Young's aide, who had marched across the American desert to get out of reach of the United States, was among the first to see action in France as an American artillery officer. And from the Argonne Forest on, each time he ordered a lanyard pulled, he would cry out: "And now, boys, we'll fire this one for von Gagow." He fired and fired, until at last the Hindenberg Line gave way, and Clayton reached the Rhine as an unquestioned victor in a very personal sort of war.

My cousin, Elmer Stoddard, had also been caught by the German police and banished. His place in Cologne was taken by Robert Hinckley, now a vice-president of the American Broadcasting Company. With Elmer at the time of his banishment was his older brother, Earl, who had been on a mission in Scotland and, upon completing it, went to Cologne to study German. It had been planned that the three of us would see Europe together, once I finished my work. But when Elmer was kicked out of Germany and made for the delightful hardships of an exile in Vienna, I first toured Germany alone with Earl. Thereafter we linked up with our heroic sufferer in Vienna to make a grand tour of the balance of Europe.

What we saw was a Europe at peace. The occasional rattle of a saber could just as well have come from the royalty of Europe exchanging visits as from an armament plant. None of us dreamed we were about to witness the birth of the warfare state, "mobbing to its heart's content." What we saw was a prosperous Europe, whose best people wore English clothes if they were male, French clothes if they were female, and who attended German watering-places, where they heard operas by Wagner and Verdi and danced to waltzes by Strauss. Not one of us understood that the capitalist economy of Europe, radiant in its

representatives, who moved in the best society, was on its last legs.

The youthful Americans who were the Mormon bishops of Europe's great cities may have had some trouble in accepting all of Joseph Smith's revelations, but in other respects we were all too much our fathers' sons to doubt their beliefs in perpetual progress, the miraculous power of laissez-faire, or their optimistic trust in the liberating powers of an advancing science and technology. If the prospect of war entered into conversation, it was dismissed in an offhand way. Businessmen, we said, needed peace if they were to prosper. *They* would check any government that wanted to declare war. If not the businessmen, then the *laboring* force of each land would check any government that wanted to declare war. If not the businessmen and the laboring force, then clearly *the system of alliances* between various powers would create a balance of forces that would convince any power that it could not risk aggression against a neighbor that belonged to an opposite alliance. Our answers in all these matters faithfully parroted what we heard from our parents, born in the nineteenth century.

Come, come, ye saints . . .
All is well! All is well!