

ELISHA H. DAVIS.

Biography from the Lehi Centennial History

Elisha Hildebrand Davis, the son of Isaac and Edith Richards Davis, was born in West township, Columbia County, Ohio, October 22, 1815. His great-great-grandfather, John Davis, came from Wales and settled in Salem County, New Jersey, where the great-grandfather, Thomas Davis, and the grandfather, Isaac Davis, as well as the father, were born.

While the family were living at West Township, Ohio, they were converted to the gospel as taught by the Mormon elders, and in 1838 most of the members of Isaac Davis' family, including Elisha, joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Soon after, the family moved to Illinois, and after residing in several places, settled near Nauvoo.

Elisha was baptized August 19, 1838, by Edwin D. Woolley, and on the 8th of the following January he was ordained an elder under the hands of Lorenzo D. Barnes, H. Sagers, and Edwin D. Woolley. The next day, in company with three elders who had ordained him, he started on a mission to the Eastern States. He labored for about two years in the states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, assisting in raising up several branches of the church. On this mission he was instrumental in bringing the gospel to Bishop Edward Hunter, Bishop Elijah Sheets, Bishop Jacob Weiler, the Rhodbach family of Cedar Fort, the Bushman family of Lehi, and many others who afterward joined and became prominent and faithful members of the church.

He often worked in the harvest fields with the people and in this way earned sufficient means to supply himself with clothing and food, and at the same time won the love and confidence of those with whom he associated. In the fall of 1840 he started for Nauvoo, traveling with a family he had baptized. He arrived some time in the following March, and was present at the laying of the cornerstone of the Nauvoo Temple, April 6, 1841.

Having had a brief visit of about six weeks with his father's family, on the 27th of April, 1841, he started on his second mission east of the mountains, which lasted about three years, when he was called by Brigham Young, who had now become the president of the church, on a mission to England, arriving in Liverpool August 19, 1844. on the sixth anniversary of his baptism. During his entire time in the British mission he presided over the London Conference, and at the close of his ministry, on Christmas day, 1846, he took to wife Mary Ann Mitchell.

In company with John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt, Joseph Caine, and others, he set sail for the United States on the good ship "America." After a perilous journey, they landed at New Orleans, March 7, 1847, and proceeded up the river to Saint Louis, and thence to Winter Quarters, where Elisha found that his father and sister, Sabina, had died a few days before his arrival. Elisha and wife remained in Winter Quarters about a year, when they re-crossed the river to Iowa, and built a house on the ground where the Liberty pole stood, and where the Mormon Battalion was rallied.

They lived there two years, their daughter, Mary Ann, and son, Elisha, being born at this place. They then removed ten miles east to Keg Creek, where Sarah Agnes was born; remained there a year; and emigrated to Utah in 1852.

Mr. Davis tended Bishop Gardner's mill on Jordan River the first winter, as he was a miller by trade, and in the spring of 1853 the family moved to Lehi. In the spring of 1854 they moved to Bountiful, Davis County, and for over a year Elisha ran a grist mill for Heber C. Kimball. In 1855 they lived in Bingham Fort, near Ogden, and in 1857 returned to Bountiful.

Elisha took part in the Echo Canyon war, and in the "Move" south he once more brought his family to Lehi, where they have since resided. From 1858 to 1869 he had charge of Samuel Mulliner's grist mill, which stood on the present site of the sugar factory. From then to the time of his death, he followed farming and stock raising.

Mr. Davis lived to a ripe old age, beloved and respected by all who knew him. As a

result of his early training in the church, he was a theologian of marked ability, and a clear, logical, and forceful speaker, very devoted to his church and a good citizen. He was one of the early members of the City Council, and held other positions of trust and honor.

The following is from his journal:

"To My Posterity:

"During a life of nearly 82 years, 59 years of which time having been spent in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I can testify to the happiness of a life of moral honesty and religious devotion. Experience has taught me the high value of moral purity and religious sentiment, as reaching far above earthly pleasures, and the gratification of appetite and passion which cannot produce lasting joy.

"My success in life has come through my not borrowing money and mortgaging my home, but always living within my means, and sustaining myself and family by the sweat of my face.

"When I owned little, I lived on little and was satisfied. My married life of 46 years has been a happy one; my wife was always true, gentle, faithful, kind, and wise, a helpmate in every deed to me. During our entire married life of 46 years, we never had a hard feeling, nor cross word, but lived in love together, always adopting the rule of speaking gently and kindly to and of each other; and now, at the advanced age of 82 years, standing as it were on the verge of eternity, my great desire and advice to all of you is to be faithful and true to our holy religion, to never depart from the faith and turn against God.

Every day that I live, I rejoice more and more in the great work of the Lord, and in the hope of eternal life. "Your loving father and grandfather,
"Elisha Hildebrand Davis."