

Life History of William Reed Jamison

FEATURING

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Tape Recorded in 1980-1981

I was born October 1, 1901 in Fairview, Idaho. My father was William Henry Jamison and my mother name was Mary Arzella Jamison.

I'm not sure which log house my folks lived in. There was one house that was grandma's, her granddaughter, Aunt Annie and Uncle Willard lived in, my parent's lived in the other one. Later father built a home south of Preston, Idaho on eighty acres of land that was grandma's. My father and Uncle Willard bought this property from grandma. It was a very nice piece of land. We live there for sometime and that is where my brother Hazen was born.

The home that father built, I lived in the same home after I was married for a short time. My father went to the canyon and logged out the timber that was then sawed into lumber for the house. Henry Hyde came and helped do the finish work as father was not a skilled finish carpenter at that time. My first memories was when I was about two years old, and I watched Henry put the frames on the doors and windows.

From there I went to school in Preston, but one year I went to the old rock school house in north Fairview. Here in Fairview is where Mrs. Jenkins taught all eight grades. I went there for one year and then I went back to Preston. I remember my first grade teacher was Mrs. Daley. In those days we rode horses to school. I had a little white pony that was as stiff as a board to ride. Later we had other horses that I rode that was much better to ride. Sometimes your feet would get so cold that when you got to school they would be so numb when you got off your horse. So that's the way we spent our early days in school. Where ever we went it was by horse back.

When I was sixteen years old I finished the eighth grade and went on into the academy. I never did accomplish any great thing in the academy. I went there and spent sometime and from there I went to high school.

Before getting into my missions experiences I would like to tell a little about my experiences from age six up through being baptized, confirmed, receiving the priesthood, ordained a deacon, etc. A lot of things happened in those days around the age of eight that might be of interest to somebody. My father took me too the Lewiston Canal north of our place and baptized me on my birthday, October 1, 1909. From there I went to church and had my confirmation.

I saw my first automobile when I was about seven or eight. This thing came smoking down the road it didn't have tires like we know now. It had old buggy wheels, rattling and smoking and I ran off the edge of the bridge to get out of it's way and away it went. About three or five years later they were quiet common on the roads. My folks never had one. After we were married, Hazen shoved a old relic of on them. By 1912-1915 you could buy them. Uncle Lewis had a Model T Ford and the tires would probably run 10,000 miles in their lifetime.

I received the Aaronic Priesthood while my father was on his mission. Brother Maughn contacted me and invited me to come to priesthood meeting. I rode a pony that was called Kit, a little mare that we had. Mike



Nutter went with me and he road a little roam pony. We road our horses to priesthood meeting in Preston on roads that were not graveled or any thing like that. After priesthood meeting they decided to ordain me a deacon. Inasmuch as my father was away on his mission, Bishop Lorenzo Johnson ordained me a deacon and I have a certificate that says I received it. I was ordained a teacher by my father. He also ordained me a priest in the Preston Second Ward.

At the age of eleven my father was called on a mission to the Eastern States. Early one morning I rode with him and Uncle Edward Lewis to Preston where he boarded the train and went to New York City where the headquarters of the mission was. He was five days on the train to New York. Comparing it to a few years ago we flew it in about five hours. When he arrived in New York City he was met by his mission president, President Rich.

President Rich had written two volumes of speeches and tracks on gospel themes. Father had sent a large box of them home to sell. Mother took Old Kit (horse) and the buggy and went around the country selling these for a slight profit. Mother was always looking for ways to make a few dollars.

She and I picked so many raspberries I don't think I would ever pick another one, and perhaps I didn't. Lizzie Egbert had a big patch of raspberries. Lizzie was grandmothers granddaughter and married Jim Egbert and lived out west of Fairview on the sand hills. They had water delivered to them by canal and they had a lot of good raspberries planted and trimmed and were kept in good shape. Mother picked them in shares with our help, anyhow they were picked and sold. After mother got all she wanted she sold the rest. We sold about twelve quarts for a dollar. Getting by while father was gone, mother was a hard worker supporting the family. These were some of our experiences, of course I was the oldest and the chief help. We had two milk cows and three heifers and a few pigs. Uncle Willard ran the farm on shares and we live on the farm while father was away on his mission.

I would like to tell you of many incidents that happened when I was a young boy. There is one incident that stand out in my mind. I was about thirteen years old and I was going to Jefferson Grade School in Preston. On the street corner of state street and main was a Parade Office and this was a place where all the pipes, machinery, and equipment were stored for the building of the Power Plant at Onieda Station Dam. Sometimes before and after school I would stop by there and watch the workers. They would load these huge pipes on wagons and haul them up to the dam site in the narrows of Bear River (west of Mink Creek). They had these huge wagons and several teams of horses. One day they were loading pipe and they had an accident. One of these huge pipes tipped and it rolled off the wagon and it struck a man by the name of Jenkins and he was killed. The wheels on the wagons were about four feet high and a full load would weigh between ten or twelve tons. They would leave Preston and traveled the old dugway road down into Riverdale and up the river to the dam. The team consisted of ten lead teams and many times I watched them leave Preston and those lead teams were trained to come out so far, driven with a single jerk line, the next team would jump over the team chains and carry it out farther until the next team following them would jump over the chains again, and that's how they would turn the corners with those long pipes on the freight wagons. I was told that they also had horses along the back to control the braking of the wagons as they were going down hill. The freight hauling went on for months until the power plant was completed. It later became part of the Utah Power and Light Company. During the war years, soldiers were sent there to guard and watch the dam. The area where the dam was located was very rugged with very narrow roads along the river. The hills were also infested with rattle snakes.

Another incident in my youth. After world war I , they had a camp called Vitelson Camp near Banida, Idaho. The camp provided us meals, shelter and a small wage. We had to buy our own hay an grain for our horses. We stayed at this camp for several months. Mose Geddes had a little store near by and we often went there to buy candy and spend our money. They were building a Reservoir (what is now known as Twin Lakes). They dug a big trench from the lower area and haul the dirt up to the top forming a bank for the reservoir. Now days they would use a back hoe and it wouldn't take so long but, we did it with horses and that was

quite a job. I was about sixteen or seventeen years old and I had four head of horses there to work on the job. We took dirt out of this huge trench and haul it to the bank of the reservoir and it took along time to form the bed for the reservoir. Then we had to dig a trench where wooden pipe would be place into the trench. The wooden pipes were made from 2 x 6's or 3 x 6's and steel bands would be placed around them and that is how the water was conveyed to the reservoir. It was not long after that they began to leak in the joints. In later years they were replaced with steel pipe. When the project was completed the water came from Mink Creek and flowed through this pipe that was then used to fill the reservoir. The water was then use to irrigate all of the west side of the valley.

Another experience that I had while working as a young man. This came after the Vitelson Camp. Bill Hawkes had a threshing machine run by horse and motor, and I had a team of horses and wagon. I would follow the threshing machine from one farm to another. I would load the grain bundles into my wagon and haul them to the thresher. I worked on the thresher itself, feeding the bundles in to the machine. Most of the harvesting and threshing was at Winder, Idaho. Harvesting and threshing grain was hard work and took a strong back. Sometimes I would use my team of horses to help pull the threshing machine around and I got quite a lot of grain for myself that way. While working from farm to farm in the Banida and Winder area I had a little mare that came up missing. I knew she had been raised up in Swan Lake area so I took my horse and went up there to the old farm to find her and there she was, she had found her way home.

About this time I went to work for King Hillman. He owned a large cattle ranch in Swan Lake and was wealthy. During World War I he had made his money in sugar stocks. I worked for him all one summer. He had a son Saul that lived down in Clifton and we helped him in the hay crops, running buck rakes and stacking hay for the Hillman cattle stock.

When I was nineteen years old I was called on a mission by President Heber J. Grant to serve in the Mexican Mission. At that time the Mexican Mission was the only spanish speaking mission in the world. I never knew there was a Mexican Mission. I received my call in March 1920 to appear in June and be set apart as a missionary. I hadn't been to active in church but, Western Mander and I got our calls at the same time. We were the first missionaries out of the Preston Sixth Ward. I thought I was the first because I went to the post office and got my letter first. Elder N.C. Jensen ordained me an elder I went and had my endowments and went down to Edison and they had a farewell party for me. My parents wanted to see me off and my father went to Salt Lake with me and see me set apart as a missionary. We took the electric train and stopped in Logan. Horace Baugh and his wife were leaving on a mission too. I had never been in Salt Lake City before, when we arrived in Salt Lake we went to the church office and there they gave us a pep talk for a couple hours. Cy Hostz from Midville and a boy by the name of Ralph, The Baugh's and himself. There was five of us that were set apart for the Mexican Mission. Now in those days they didn't have any mission home, or language training or anything of that kind. I received my patriarchal blessing from the Church Patriarch. While at the church office we seen some of the Church Authorities. I met J. Golden Kimball and it was quite interesting. J. Golden Kimball had been one of the missionaries that was in Virginia when my mothers people were converted to the church. After being set apart they told us to catch the train that night and that was about all there was to being sent off from Salt Lake.

About nine o'clock at night we boarded the train. We traveled all day and night and arrived in Riverside, California. That was a long ride for us kids,, we had never been away from home before. Anyway when we got to Riverside, we had a lay over for most of the day. It was a very pretty place. That night we caught the train for El Paso, Texas, that was the mission headquarters. When we arrived in El Paso we were met by the mission office force and taken to a couple rooms where we spent the night. We were told to catch a street car the next morning and show up at the mission headquarters. We met President Rey Pratt who was the mission president.

It was Sunday and we had to go to church. We went to church and all day long the only word I heard and understood was "Salt Lake City." In the afternoon they took us across the border to another branch and

they had another set of meetings. They didn't even say "Salt Lake City" at all there and I didn't understand one dam thing. The spanish language was very difficult to learn. We met some very faithful saints among them was a Brother Eduardo Valdez. He was a barber in El Paso and was the branch president. He had a son named Eduardo, and he later became the linguist for the church in Salt Lake and helped translate some our church books and pamphlets into spanish.

Now when we went to Mexico, the only thing we had was a Book of Mormon. We didn't have the Doctrine & Covenants. We had the Bible of course. Then you had three little tracks "Ray of Living Light" was two of them and the other one was the "Joseph Smith Story." and that is all we had that was in spanish, and that is what we had to work with.

On Monday we had a mission conference and some other meetings and then I was assigned to labor in Manasa, Colorado. We left the next morning by train going north and arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico the next day. We stayed over night, a little old woman came and met us and took us to our room, it cost a dollar a night. Staying in Santa Fe for about a day, we looked around this old spanish town settled by early Catholics and pioneers that came through here. The main streets were so narrow you could stand in the middle of the street and could almost touch the buildings on both sides. It was less that fifteen feet across.

The next morning we left for Colorado going through Albuquerque and northern New Mexico. It was a high climb on up to Manasa in timber country. When we got to the train station at Romeo this is where we got off. There was a sign on the station wall that said: "Pea's, Pig's and Prosperity." That's about all they had too. They raised peas and fed them to the pigs.

Now we stayed with brother and sister Colora. They took us in and were awfully good to us. It was about three miles over to Manasa. These Mexican's were quite different than the ones in Mexico. Their allegiance had always been to Colorado and when they spoke spanish it was kind of their own spanish. We met with the Spanish branch in a little old house with some of the windows broken out. The people didn't have much to get along on, but, the did their best. During the summer months, we would spend one week in the Spanish branch and one week in the English branch. Elder Stay , my companion didn't have very good health, and I spent a lot of time waiting for him to come and get on the ball. I did not learn much spanish, in fact I didn't learn much of anything at first.

When they started to have troubles in the colonies in Mexico they moved all the people up to Colorado and they made the headquarters for the mission there for a short time.

The original people from southern California, New Mexico and even Arizona were mexicans. When we took that territory over after the Mexican War they became American Citizens. The rebellion that we set down to quell with Poncho Villa was about four years before I was there. The hatred in that area was very bad. Jack Dempsey, the world's heavy weight boxer is from Manasa. After he came back from fighting the Frenchman we saw him.

I was in Colorado from June until October and then I was transferred back to El Paso. After I arrived I received a call to go over to Mesa, Arizona. A Brother Lisonbee was in El Paso and we rode back with him to Mesa. He drove a little chevy and there was not a sign of a road between El Paso and Mesa. We would stop and open the gates as we came to them and followed the railroad tracks all the way across. When a storm would come up water could come through those washes and there would be a guy there with a team of horses to pull us across, charging a dollar a pull. I have traveled that same route years later, and a beautiful highway goes through that country, but, it wasn't in the 1920's.

My new assignment was Mesa, Arizona. My new companion was Elder Leon Smith and we rode back together from El Paso. I also had another companion while in Mesa, his name was Elder Milo Bean.

The population of Phoenix was about 16,000 and Mesa about 4,000 people. There was four wards and a few outside churches but, weren't very prevalent. A few days after I arrived they dedicated the ground for the

Arizona Temple, and several of the General Authorities were present. Our apartment was only two blocks from the temple and I seen the walls of the temple go up before leaving Mesa. When ever we would hold stake conference in Mesa it was in the old Mesona Hall. I was in Mesa for about two years.

I then was sent back to El Paso for a conference and to get a new companion, however I was without a companion for two months. I had pretty good success. The next Sunday after the missionaries who were there had left, I had thirteen baptisms. I was in charge and I had to study hard and learn the ceremony. We baptized them in the bottom of the 2nd ward building. I was in El Paso from October until I came home in March 1904.

While in El Paso my companion and I was given the assignment of meeting the trains when a new bunch of missionaries came in. My companion would take half of them and I would take the other half and head out for the mission headquarters. My companion use to like to play tricks on the new missionaries. He would take a few tiny chili peppers and mix some with some peanuts. He would go along munching on them and say "have some" and if they would bite down on one of those chili's, that was the last time they would take any.

My mission came to a close, after spending three years in the Mexican Mission. I returned to Preston and was good to be home with family. There was one that made me sore. I was talking to Frank Merrill, he was a cop in Preston and he said to me "You have been in Mexico?" he say's "Oh boy nobody's worth while if you have been down there." I said "I have some good mexican friends down there and I got some good ones now." After I came back home I acted as an interpreter for the church in this area and also for the farmers. The mexican's used to come up here and work for the farmers in the sugar beets. They would come in these old cars and were in bad shape An incident that happened that I would like to recall. I was coming home in the milk truck and right by North Cache HS in Richmond, a mexican family run off the road and rolled the car. It was a family with a whole bunch of kids and a pregnant woman. They got Doc. Adamson down there too check her out, and I could understand and speak spanish pretty good, so I was speaking to them. Doc., looked at me and said " Where in the hell did a yellow headed kid like you learn Spanish.?" I had quiet a few experiences in my life time interpreting for people.

In 1960, Marlo Woodward and his father wanted to go to Mexico and ask me to go as an interpreter. Our wives also accompanied. Ma and I didn't have time to get all of our shots and blood tests required to travel, so we got part of them done after we crossed the border in Del Rio. We stopped at a little old mexican house that was the dirtiest place I ever saw and got the shots an got by. We had a nice trip into Mexico clear down to Mexico City. A guide took and drove all around the area and we stayed there three days. The trip was very nice and we had a good time. On the way back we went up the west side of Mexico an into Nogales. Maggie really got sick, I think from the water but, she was sick all the way to Mesa and on home to Franklin, Oh boy was she sick!!

Another trip Ma and I went on was to Seattle with Dennis Lowe and his wife. We traveled into Canada and we really enjoyed the trip and had a nice time. We always enjoyed going places together. We also traveled with Terry and Patti in their motor home going to Colorado and seeing Terry Lyn who was living in Ridgeway, CO. at that time.

Speaking about Maggie, I knew her before I left for my mission. She had come back from California and she had a job in the Foss Drugstore in Preston. She was staying with her sister and I met her then. There was not a lot of activities in those days but, they had allot of dances every Saturday night. I went to most of then in the old opera house. The musical was mostly from the fiddle. When we was dating we went in a buggy or walked.

After we were married and living Preston, I got on as a mail carrier. I passed the civil service examination twice. A mail carrier got a \$100 a month. That was a choice job. I worked ten to twelve hours a day when the regular carriers were off.

When Delmar was three months old we moved to Lava and that was a disaster for us and my parents. We couldn't make a living there and left there a year later in move back to Franklin. My parents stayed in Lava another year and they then moved back. I bought a gas station in Franklin, The old "Blue Bell" station.

I worked at the sugar factory a lot of years and had a milk route for some time. The depression was tough times. Later we bought the house in town and had thirty four acres out of town. There was about twenty five acres that was good land. Much later in town we started raising mink. At one time we had about 400 mink and a variety of different colors of fur. We finally settled on two colors, dark brown and black. The dark brown's were the best. We continued raising mink until about 1978 when the market for mink pelts really dropped.

I was ordained a High Priest by Henry Rawlings and was active in the High Priest Group in the Franklin ward for many years, and at one time served as the group leader.

(Reed passed away May 11th, 1982 in Franklin, Idaho. He was placed to rest in the Franklin Cemetery).