

THE DEATH OF BISHOP EDWARD HUNTER

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"It would require a volume to tell all that could be told, even briefly, of the life and character of this good and noble man. Honest and straightforward in his dealings, and candid even to bluntness in his speech, his heart overflowed with kindness and he enjoyed the love and confidence of all who knew him. Childlike and humble in spirit, he was nevertheless shrewd and discerning, and no one ever succeeded in covering up the real design in approaching him. He was charitable and open-handed to all, even to tramps and vagrants. He would sometime quote them in his humorous way: "Hunting work, hunting work, yes, yes, but they don't want to find it very bad. Feed them brethren, feed them--mustn't let them starve." He was not only quick to perceive, but ready and witty at retort, and had an eccentric way, which many will remember, of turning a conversation sprung upon him, into a channel utterly foreign to the purpose of the other party, and as the visitor arose to leave, thinking he had come on a fruitless errand, would suddenly revert to the original theme and give the answer which he had all along been cogitating, while his speech was pursuing an entirely different course. He was a great exhorter to faithfulness, particularly in the payment of tithes and offerings, and other temporal matters with which he had immediately to do. His familiar speech at the Bishop's meetings: "Pay your tithing and be blessed," has passed into a proverb.

"The death of the Bishop occurred on Tuesday, October 16, 1883, at ten minutes to eight o'clock p.m. The immediate cause was internal inflammation, an ailment from which he had suffered for years, and which he anticipated would finally prove fatal. His health had been feeble for a long time, though his mind was unimpaired, and for the last month he had frequently been absent from his office. Among those who visited his bedside during his illness were President John Taylor, Apostle Erastus Snow, Bishops William Thorne, Jacob Weiler and Alexander McRae. He expired in the presence of several members of his family, and it was thought

that his final words were "O my God." His funeral obsequies were solemnized at the Salt Lake Assembly Hall on Friday, October 19, at two o'clock p.m., when thousands who had known and loved him in life assembled to pay respect to his memory. So passed from this stage of action, where for over ninety years he had acted well and faithfully every part assigned him, a man of God as noted for his uprightness and unflinching integrity, as for his genial nature and overflowing kindness of heart. His name is written in the Lamb's book of life, never to be blotted out, and his memory on earth will endure as long as the great work with which he was identified, and which he labored so long and faithfully to establish.

O. F. Whitney"

Note: My father, Edward W. Hunter, said the place of the funeral services was changed from the Assembly Hall to the Tabernacle.

BISHOP EDWARD HUNTER'S FAVORITE POEM:

#### THE TINGLE OF THE SHINGLE

When the angry passions rising on my mother's face I see,  
When she leads me to the bedroom - lays me gently on her knee,  
Then I know that I will catch it and my flesh in fancy itches,  
As I wait for the tingle of the shingle on my britches.  
Every tingle of the shingle brings an echo and a sting,  
And a thousand burning fancies into active being spring,  
And ten-thousand bees and hornets neath my coattail seem to swarm  
As I listen to the tingle of the shingle, oh, so warm.  
In a sudden intermission which appears my only chance  
I said, "Strike gently, mother, or you'll split my Sunday pants."  
She stops a moment, draws a breath, the shingle holds aloft,  
And says, "I hadn't thought of that, my son, just take them off."  
Holy Moses, and the Angels cast your pitying glances down,  
And, thou, oh, family doctor, put a good soft poultice on,  
And may I with rogues and witches ever lasting mingle,  
If again I say a word when my mother wields a shingle.

"Treasures of Pioneer History" by Kate B. Carter-Vol. I p. 432.  
One of Bishop Edward Hunter's favorite poems which is submitted  
by Helen H. Winward, his granddaughter.

LETTER TO BISHOP EDWARD HUNTER FROM BROTHER J.C. RICH:

Carthage, Hancock Co., Illinois  
December 25th, 1868

Bishop Edward Hunter,  
Dear Brother,

Having a few hours leisure while awaiting the arrival of the train for Springfield, I feel that the time cannot be better appropriated than writing you, as I have recently visited places once familiar to you. I have recently visited Galesburg, in this state, where I stayed a week with Mr. John F. Edgerton, a portrait painter, who spent the winter of 50 and 51 in Salt Lake City, and Mr. John T. Barnett, an old settler of Nauvoo. They were exceedingly kind and sociable, friendly toward our people and particularly inquired concerning your welfare. Galesburg has grown to be a place of considerable importance, its citizens being thoroughly loyal judging by the number of "niggers" that infest the place and the Republican rule that a "nigger" is just as good if not a trifle better than a white man.

From Galesburg I went to Burlington in Iowa, where I spent a week, stopping the most of the time with J. Wilson Williams, formerly surveyor of Hancock Co., and of the city of Nauvoo. He also was very kind and wished to be remembered to you. Near his place I visited Mr. Matthew Peck, a son of Bishop Peck, who, I ascertained, had renounced Mormonism and grafted himself into the Methodist Church. They were very much opposed to polygamy & attacked me rough shod on that subject before I had been in the house ten minutes. They were so pious that their faces hung down longer than mules and their righteous groans resembled the woe-ful lamentations of a Pi-ute squaw in the loss of her last "pappose."

As they expressed great faith in the Scriptures I gave them a short essay on the polygamic history therein contained, but before I had proceeded far the lady informed her husband it was time for bed (about 8 o'clock) and to prevent any further discussion on religion subjects they had breakfast ready by half-past two the next morning and I footed it five miles before daylight to the railroad station. They were evidently determined I should not be too late for the train.  
Brethren let us pray.

From Burlington I came down the river to Montrose, stopping

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at the hotel kept by old Sister Bowen, who could not do too much for the son-in-law of her old friend, Bishop Hunter. She had a hundred questions to ask concerning yourself and family. She still continues strong in the "Salt Lake Mormon Faith" notwithstanding the prevalence of Josephites in that vicinity.

The next day I crossed over to Nauvoo, experiencing some little trouble as the river was almost blocked up with ice, which at times completely hemmed in our skiff. I went to the Mansion House for dinner and there, as all the time I stayed in the city, I experienced feelings that I never felt before. I always have venerated the name of the Prophet and the impressions made on my mind in reading the Church History have caused me to look upon Nauvoo and the places frequented by Joseph as almost holy ground. Judge then my feelings when I crossed the threshold of the Mansion House where once the Spirit of God seemed to animate even the very building itself. I stepped into the office where, angels once visited and there sat three men, two were playing checkers and the third, old Bidamon, the present husband of Emma, sat spitting tobacco on the stove. Pictures of the assassination of Lincoln and steamboat and railroad notices adorn the walls, while the furniture and general appearance of the room was old, unclean and decidedly shabby. Dinner was announced and I passed through the hall, once familiar to the Saints, into the kitchen. Here I beheld for the first time that I can remember, Emma, the youthful wife of one of God's most honored Prophets. I sat down at the table to eat, but my thoughts was on other times. Emma looks very old and broken; she never spoke while I was in the room only to give direction to the hired girl who waited on the table. While in conversation with Bidamon at the table, I stated in answer to his questions that I was from Salt Lake City at the same time telling who I was. I looked over to where Emma was sitting, knowing that she was well acquainted with my parents, but she never raised her eyes or said a word while I remained there. I could not help thinking what a change has come over that woman; Now she is the wife of a man whose character, even among his friends, is reproached as a drunkard and an adulterer. Only recently an illegitimate child has been sent him that calls Emma grandmother. My God, I thought, has not the spirits of martyrs the power in the spirit world to wield an influence over their dear ones on earth and then I knew while they were constant with them on earth it was all they could do to govern and control

them. Truly we are creatures of our own agency and are left to choose for ourselves between the good and the evil. The outside of the Mansion House looks even more dilapidated & forsaken than the inside. It does not seem that one improvement has been made since the prophet left it.

I next visited the Nauvoo House which still stands as it did when the work on it ceased. It has the appearance of recent work in its masonry. The bricks are as good as the day they were made and the finishing touch of the trowel indicates that it was done but yesterday. Old Bidamon claims to have purchased the property and expects in case of the removal of the capital here that he will yet experience from it a handsome fortune. The old Masonic Hall still stands, but looks old. Prest. Youngs house remains in good repair and Bro. Kimball's as good as the day he left it.

I went all through your home just below the temple, now owned by a German. It stands as you left it in splendid condition. The barn, though weatherbeaten and old, is still good and the 'old oaken bucket still hangs in the well. I stood upon the spot where once stood the temple of the Lord. "Not one stone is left upon another," a few fragments only remaining, while the cellar has been filled and a vineyard now luxuriates where the Saints once attended to the ordinances for their dead. The temple rock can be seen all over the city, converted into wine cellars and basements for stores, drinking saloons and residences. I took dinner with Doctor Wells, who also inquired about you. I visited the Old Mormon graveyard - now a complete forest of oak and hickory. There is probably fifty tomb-stones standing, among the number I found one to the memory of my sister. The fence around the graveyard is down and exposed. The ground was bought by the city in Mormon days from Wm. Marks, but no deed for it exists on record and many of the old settlers here at Nauvoo are anxious that a deed should be made either to the present corporation or some responsible party that the "Mormons" might name in order that the ground may be enclosed and held sacred from agricultural advancements. At present it belongs to no one and having a fine forest of timber thereon the probability is that are on some one will enclose it and forever obliterate its existence as a graveyard. Application has been made by Barnett, Chauncey Robinson and others to Marks for a quit claim deed to the property in order that it might be taken care of but he refuses

to make one, although he has once received his pay for the land from the old city of Nauvoo.

I stayed an hour or two with old Kreamer, who, flatfooted, asserts that you are an honest man. He is very friendly and would walk forty miles to shake hands with you. I also visited your farm on the Carthage road - the house stands good, but the barn and outbuildings show old age. The double ditch has been ploughed down and a young osage orange hedge taken its place. Cottonwood trees have grown up in the hollows and wet places east of the house but otherwise it looks as you left it. The settlers in this co. are generally of the opinion that land once occupied by the Mormons, no matter as to the richness of the soil, has never seemed profitable to the owners since the Saints were driven way. They say the curse of God is visibly manifested in the earth's production. I have told some of them that I wished to God it would refuse to produce even white beans, but I realize it would not do for me to judge these matters.

The old mob spirit has about died out and a general feeling of regret at the manner of treating the Mormons is very prevalent. Lawyer Morrill in Nauvoo says the mobocrats of this county are nearly all dead and in Hell, while the few remaining wish themselves there speedily, Old Tom Sharp is here but persons have told me that he has not ventured out after night for ten years for fear of being murdered.

I wish you would tell Heber John Richards that his mother lies buried in the southeast corner of the square where the old graveyard was, south of the temple. Last summer while an old Frenchman was making an excavation for a wine cellar he came upon the vault containing the remains of his (Heber's) mother. Everything was in splendid preservation, my informant stating that she had not decayed one particle, even the gloves on her hands being as clean and white as the day she was buried. She was removed to the above mentioned place easily designated as the slab engraved with name, birth, marriage and death remains over the spot.

Nauvoo does not progress in improvements; while the whole country is going ahead it stands still. Palmer, one of the two men who fired the Temple, is now in the Fort Madison penitentiary for life. The man that was president of Rigdon's Twelve Apostles, Butterfield by name, fell down in the street

the night I stayed in Montrose and broke his neck. I subscribed 25 cents to bury him. Dr. Bennett died in Iowa, a "vagabound on the earth." Carthage Jail stands as it did when the Prophet was murdered, but efforts are being made for the erection of a new building.

In the course of ten days I shall be in Kentucky, thence to Pennsylvania. I have not heard a word from Ann Eliza since I left or a particle of news from Utah except what I see in the papers.

Uncle Benny Riter is also your particular friend and says he is not "troubled a damd bit with the kind of divine grace they have in this country."

Kind love to all. As ever.

J. C. Rich

P.S. I sent you an engineer and survey work from Burlington for Edward, Jr.