

LETTER FROM
WILLIAM MORGAN, KANESVILLE, IOWA, NORTH
AMERICA, TO W PHILLIPS AND J. DAVIS.

Kanesville, Iowa, July 19, 1850.

DEAR BROTHERS PHILLIPS AND DAVIS,— I received the following cletter in the mail that came from the Valley this month, that is July, 1850, with a request from brother Jones for me to translate it and send it to the Trumpet. Here it is at the editor's service, but not without mistakes, which, I am confident, the editor will correct; but the melodiousness of the English version, as wrought by its famous authors, is out of the translator's reach.

“Camp of Israel, on the hills of the Sweet Valleys,
near Independence Rock, 649 miles from
Winter Quarters, September 21, 1849.

“Brothers W. Morgan and W. Davies, Presidents of the
Welsh Saints in Pottawatamie, Iowa, North America.

“Dear Brethren,— Our most sincere wish always is to give counsel, assistance, or suggestions that may be of benefit and ease to our brethren. Although we are so distant from you, we consider it suitable to offer for your consideration some things that we have learned through experience, which will benefit you if you adopt them, and not only you, but everyone else who may immigrate across the deserted and interminable plains to the Great Salt Lake Valley. We wish for you to understand that we are not taking upon ourselves any leadership or taking upon us your presidency, for that belongs to others. But we think after we have reached the end of our journey, it will be too late in the winter for the presidency in the Valley to give information to you this winter, and Bro. Hyde will forgive us for putting this to the attention of those who are under his direct presidency. In the first place, we wish to impress on your minds the great importance of your situation with respect to the offices you hold; you can set a good example for the Saints, namely, a straight path and pious direction in all your counsels and in your daily transactions; be patient, long-suffering, meek, temperate, virtuous, just, loving, and in all things worthy of emulation. In the choice of your animals for the immigration, we would counsel you to insist on those that are familiar with the yoke and easy to handle, not older than ten nor younger than five years of age. Be sure that your wagons are built from good materials, strong and light, and the wheels six inches higher than they usually are. They are good for crossing rivers by keeping the water from your supplies. The wheels should be one and-three-quarters inches in width, with two thousand pounds on one wagon, and three yoke of good oxen to pull it; but the most convenient load is four hundred and ten pounds on a light and strong wagon with two yoke of good

oxen; such loads will go across damp places without sinking and getting stuck on the spot as some of the heavier ones usually do. Never should you put over two thousand pounds on one strong wagon with three yoke of good animals; and be sure to have other animals besides those in the yoke, so that you will have ready assistance if one of those in the yoke happens to be injured or die. Take care lest your animals get whipped to excess or receive any other mistreatment. We believe that the gold seekers have lost more of their animals because of the whip and other mistreatments than because of their load, their journey, or alkali poisoning. The bones of their animals are scattered along the way of the trail, and it is astonishing to think of the loss as one looks at them. Let that be the freedom of those who are fond of flogging dumb creatures. When the hoops of the wheels come loose because of dryness or something else, instead of breaking the wheel as usual and then joining it as a shorter one, make a wooden hoop corresponding to the length and width; set it tightly between the hoop and the wheel and nail it so that it is secure; it serves the same purpose and does not require a lot of time to make. About the manner of your journey, we would counsel the one adopted by President Young, no fewer than 50 wagons in each band; no fewer than twelve good horses for the purpose of rounding up the animals and of looking for a place to camp, and they will be useful when the animals get out of control and run, goring each other; in short, without the horses you cannot follow the animals, overtake them and bring them back, etc. To keep the animals in order, we would advise you to tie them up each night until the grazing gets scarce, when each will prefer to look for his morsel or to rest than to threaten with his horn and shift himself. Be careful and watchful in all things; put from eight to ten faithful watchmen around your camp and your animals every night. Do not permit anyone's fine tale about your safety, such as, "There is no need to guard them— you are safe here—no harm will come to you, &c," keep you from organizing faithful watchmen as we have mentioned. Let each group have iron bolts, that is the biggest ones, together with the next size to them, pertaining to wagons, in case some break when the blacksmith's shop is far away, also linchpins, &c. Take care in the choice of men as officials for the immigrations that they be meek, patient, longsuffering and slow to be excited to bad tempers, slow, determined, and understanding. Do not be in a hurry to travel; if you go forward sixty miles each week, be content; driving animals hard in hot weather causes the black disease to spread and causes them to die soon. Allow your animals to go slowly when the grazing is good, so that they will be in good condition and strong when you go to a more sparse place. Through that plan, they will be enabled to go across the deserted and fruitless plains, when it is necessary to travel occasionally throughout the day without food or water. Be careful that your animals do not drink the waters of the poisoned alkali, which this part of the earth is full of from the highest crossing of the Platte to Independence Rock. In short, be sensible and cautious in all things, especially with respect to your animals in the crossing, for it is on them to a large extent that your temporal salvation depends. Another thing we consider of great importance and which we would desire to impress on your minds, is the use of strong liquor. Our brothers come from a

distant country where liquor is scarce and hard for anyone to get except for the wealthy, and so liquor is seldom used by the poor. But when they come to America where liquor is so cheap, not being accustomed to the intoxicating effect, they are very likely to make too much use of it, to their own harm and great loss. For that reason, we counsel everyone under your care to abstain completely, and refrain from making use of it, except when necessary in the case of illness. If you cannot get wagons, as we have suggested, insist on some as similar to them as you can. Tell the Welsh to buy good "Russian duck" in Liverpool to cover their wagons. That is the only material that will keep the rain from getting your beds and your supplies wet on your journey. Insist that your wagons be made like boxes on the sides and the bottom, so that no water can get through the sides or the bottom. Purchase those things that will be necessary in New Orleans or St. Louis, such as stoves, crocks, irons, teakettles, &c, which will be needed on your journey. Last spring we gave an order to the merchants of Kanesville to buy those things we needed for the journey; they promised to do it, but they failed to fulfill their promise. That is why we urge you to buy in other places, as you are able, those things you will need, lest others are disappointed as were we. Insist on a few good Americans who know how to drive and who are gentle with animals to be drivers in every group, and an expert guide to lead every group of immigrants. Do not depend on cows to be of any use in the yoke for the purpose of helping the oxen, but take along as many as you can, for they will be very useful in the Valley. Every group should have axletrees of hickory wood, lest some of them break, and some oak wood for spokes. Let everyone weigh his load, and refrain from taking anything he can do without. Buy some good grass ropes to tie up your animals; and have ten feet of rope for each ox. A herd of animals has stampeded before, and it is frightening and dreadful to behold them. Terror, running, the earth trembling, chains rattling, yokes snapping, wagons falling apart, watchmen trampled, some perhaps killed, and others wounded, are the effects that go along with a herd of animals in a stampede. Tell our friends in Wales to come to the plains of the Great Salt Lake as soon as they can; and as for those who cannot prepare to come to the plains, let them stay in Pottowatamie County, Iowa, where they will meet with friends and many of their brethren. The Welsh company is with us; they are going forward well with Capt. Dan Jones in their midst; they are happy and content and make the camp resound with their evening song.* They are enjoying health and a good

* I am an eye and ear witness of that. I think, as do the Apostles, that the spirit of music has descended on them from out of the evening before their departure from the territory of the Honuhous. About six o'clock Friday afternoon, Bro. Jones ordered me to call the camp together for the purpose of reading the rules of the journey; and in a short time each was by his post. I had the honor of beginning the first meeting for 1,850 years, at least, on that land, for the purpose of organizing the Welsh journey. Bro. Jones followed; and after that, the word was given out to close the meeting with singing. As we sang the first part of the verse, that is, "When the Saints shall come, etc.," we saw the English, and every one of the Norwegians, I would think, with their heads out of their wagons. With the second part, the wagons were empty in an instant and their inhabitants running toward us as if charmed. I heard good singing in Wales, but nothing like the strength and sweetness of the last song I heard from my brothers and sisters, cotravelers, on the land of the Honuhous. Some asked me where they had learned and who was their teacher. I said that the hills of Wales were the schoolhouse, and the Spirit of God was the teacher. Their response was, "Well, indeed, it is wonderful, we never heard such good singing before."— Wm. Morgan.

spirit, and undeniably have been blessed; and we say, May the Lord continue to bless them. We offer the foregoing suggestions for your benefit and for that of everyone else who immigrates to Great Salt Lake City. May the Lord bless you, and give you wisdom to be prudent and faithful stewards and shepherds over the inheritance of God which you have been placed to preside over, is our prayer. Amen.

"E. T BENSON,

"G. A. SMITH,

"DAN JONES."

To that which Brothers Smith, Benson, and Jones have written about the journey, and the preparations for it, I shall give the prices of several things that I suppose might be useful for the smallholders or the farmers. The price of an iron plough is 25 cents per pound, or a shilling and a halfpenny in the money of the old country. Understand that iron ploughs here are in one piece, the point and iron the same kind as the casting that is sold there by the ironmongers; the whole thing weighs about 30 pounds. The iron harrow, that is, the teeth, 8s. 4c. Files for sharpening saws, 1 lac. each; for a large saw, or a whip saw, Is. 6V2 c. A scythe handle, 4s. 2c; a scythe or a larger size, 6s. 6c. A spike for the hay, 2s. lc. Wheel rim iron, 2V2 c. per pound. Four iron wagon wheels cost, that is, the four rims as some call them in the old country, £1 14s., before the blacksmith puts his hammer to them. In my opinion it is better for everyone to buy his milk pitcher, that is, the tin kind, in Wales. The pitchers for keeping milk for making cream cost Is. 8c. each here; their size is between 12 and 13 inches in diameter in the widest spot, that is, the top; 8 3 / 4 inches at the bottom, and 3 3/4 inches deep. Pottery is close to three times as expensive here as it is there; the cheapest cup and saucer for sale in Wales costs 5c. here; and other dishes are proportionately higher. Bed ropes, Is. 5V2 c. each; half-inch ropes, Is. OV2 c. per pound. The ropes of the old country are better than the ropes of this country in general; the hemp goes black here before getting any use from it. I saw much of it in St. Louis half rotten, and I saw one steamboat full of it catch on fire, until it burned to the water level; but I do not think that that was a big loss to the public. I have not seen any sickles here, but they would be very useful; and I suppose that it would be well for the farmers when they come here for them to have brought their sickles from the old country, and not to sell them and leave them behind as did those who came first from Wales. Closed billhooks are useful in this country. The axes in this country are better and as cheap. Tongs, fire shovels, and bellows for blowing the fire in the morning would be very useful here; also knives and forks, brass candlesticks, soup spoons, and teaspoons. It would be best for the women who come, to buy parasols; women are not seen walking very often without them here; and truly a veil is something quite good— women are not seen very often without them, even some of the Welsh. The blue cotton that is sold for 4c. in Merthyr, costs 8c. here. I would counsel those who come to bring moleskins for everyday wear; they last longer than the other materials here. I shall make an end now on this end; in a previous letter I gave my thoughts about a few things that I considered beneficial for the emigrants

to come across the sea; and as far as I can remember concerning what I wrote, I have not changed my mind about the directions I gave, and I do not think that I will have to blush in the presence of the emigrants who make use of them; at least, my conscience is clear that everything originated from an intent to be of benefit to my Welsh-speaking brothers and sisters, and others also.

I received three issues of the Trumpet, together with a note from brother Phillips, and a letter from you to Capt. Jones, which I sent ahead on the 4th of this month. We have received letters from some of the brethren who are now in the Valley, that is, Daniel Leigh from Llanelli, D. Peters, and Capt. Jones. They are in agreement about the fruitfulness of the country; D. Leigh says that the valley of the mountains is the best place under the sun to raise crops. He says that one bushel of wheat planted in the ground gives the marvelous yield of 166 bushels, and one bushel of potatoes gives 133 bushels. "What is all the fruitfulness of the land," he adds, "in comparison to the teachings received from the apostles? They are worth more than anything I have ever seen." Evan Rees and Edward Williams are digging for coal, and Mrs. Lewis is living in the town. Elizabeth Thomas, from Waunfro, near Cardiff, married William Clark; perhaps Bro. W. Thomas will be glad to hear that he is increasing in family so far away.

There are some things in the old country that I would be glad to see here, that is, all the honest in heart wishing to do the will of God continually, and that which is owed me in the old country. One is as just as the other; if not, I do not expect anything from that which I may consider owed to me. I wish for Bro. Phillips to try to collect my notes, and I shall be thankful to him, and to those who pay.

Brother Capt. Jones has sent only a little piece by his own hand, but he sent in print an account of the conference in the Valley. That which you want will be in the Guardian, if it comes to hand. The substance of the letter of Bro. Jones was that I was being tested; "and it happens, dear William," says he, "that you are not tried by your best friends until you are at the end of your journey. Keep at it, great will be your honor, in spite of everything." He ended by saying: "I know not where I shall be when you come to the Valley, nor do I ask to know anything but that which is commanded me. All the Welsh are well. Remember me and Jane to all the Saints. —D. Jones."

I was in a hurry when I wrote the last time (as if there were a time when I was not in a hurry), and perhaps some will make use of that which I sent in a way I have not considered, although really it is not my official duty upon arriving at this side of the sea, and I do not consider there to be more strength in that which I write than there is in that which some other brother or sister writes from this place. Yet, perhaps there are those who have not forgotten that which brother Jones wrote from the Indian territory; listen to his counsel. Well, then, my opinion is that it is better for all who are engaged to be married to free themselves before starting from Wales, if one comes before the other; and those who are coming at the same time, and are engaged, it would be well for them to do the same or get married before starting. But perhaps better than marrying would be to break the engagement. The sea is free and the country they come to is free; and

between freedom of the sea and the freedom of the land, covenants are broken even by those who are traveling together. Well, then, it is better not to be under promise, in my opinion, in every meaning; for not much time is needed to get married here. They can see each other for the first time ever at nine o'clock in the morning, and if they wish they can become husband and wife according to the law of the land and the Church also, before twelve o'clock the samemorning.

Your letter says that there are many Saints who are coming across next autumn. Pratt will be there before that; but let them come whenever they wish, for I have nothing to do with the emigration; therefore, I shall keep my mouth shut on the subject of the time of the year. But I shall be thankful to you for sending a letter here a month or two before they come, mentioning their number of each skill, and the sum total, men, women, and children, and the day of the month they will be leaving Liverpool. If they come here, perhaps that will be of benefit to them. My paper is full, and I am tired, and there is not time to do any complaining this time. I shall close now by wishing for the gracious God to give to you and to all associated with you and under your care, wisdom, so that you will be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, in these latter days, in broadening the kingdom of God on the earth. Amen.

I am, your brother in the new covenant,
Wm. Morgan.

P. S.—All the Welsh Saints greet you.