

## CANADIAN TEMPLE EXPERIENCE 1931

In a letter to Andrew Roghoar, a Netherlands missionary whose father had recently passed away.

It has been a long time since I sent you my last greeting. It is rarely possible for me to get an evening at home and it is in the evenings that I like to write best and when I have the most time. So tonight when I should be with the Sunday School officers and teachers on a watermelon bust, I have hid to the office and giving you my time and attention.

On the twelfth of July I called at your home to see your father for I wanted to see how he was and to see him before I went on an extended vacation. For I was not sure that after being away for three to four weeks that it would be possible for me to return and see him alive again. It seemed to me then that he was very ill, the end did not seem so soon.

Three days later, my wife, Ralph, Della and Gladys left for Yellowstone Park. After spending four pleasant days there we left for Great Falls, Montana, and from there to Glacier National Park. Our next stop was at the temple in Cardston, Canada. We had headed for the temple knowing that on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd of July the Saints and Missionaries of the North Western States Mission would gather there. These people travel in Caravan, by auto Caravan, from all over the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and British Columbia for the purpose of doing temple work. Some use their own cars, some pile in with those who have cars, others try it in newly purchased used cars. And someone has said that only the pioneers could know what nerve it takes to travel a thousand and more miles in a worn out used car. And still some of the Missionaries start from their fields of labor miles away and two weeks or so ahead of the caravan and walk, tracting as they go to the temple.

We arrived ahead of many of the caravan people by getting to Cardston on the morning of the 21st, found a tourist cabin with one room, and one bed and the five of us bunked on the bed and the floor for the three days. On the afternoon of the first day there I went to the temple to leave my names so they would be ready when we entered for temple work. When I handed my recommend to the doorkeeper he said, "You are Mr. Eelnap". And added "The stenographer wants to see you". I wondered, "What can the stenographer want of me, surely no one here knows me or that I was coming". But I went to the young lady and asked if she was looking for me. She said that the telegraph office was looking for me. You may rest assured that I wasted no time in finding the telegraph office; nothing could have happened I thought to cause anyone to want me, save an accident to one of the children we had left at home or a sudden passing of your father. And so I reasoned as I trembled in the office. Instead of it being one of these the telegram read something like this; "Had a bad fire today. Fire started in Japanese sheds west of our yard. Burned both our yard and Smoot's out completely nothing is left except our office. Just as well finish your vacation. If you can find a job for two then send for me. Signed Von".

It was certainly a relief to know that none of the things I had thought had happened but it was surely a bombshell to our party. None of us knew just what to do. So we drove thirty five miles out of Watertown lakes in Canada to see these beautiful lakes and rugged mountain peaks, while trying to clear our brains.

We decided to stay for the Caravan and then leave for Spokane, Washington and instead of going over to Seattle and the other places of interest on the North West, to go directly home. We reached home just two weeks after leaving, and the first thing to greet us after seeing our children was to have them tell us excitedly that Brother Luke Roghoar had passed away that morning.

In talking with your mother that evening just a few minutes after arriving home, I couldn't help but recall, that two weeks ago I had left home on what

was to have been a wonderful journey, but had had it rudely broken into by the news that all my investment and savings of the past few years had been wiped away, and that I stood today without employment, without ready money on hand with which to feed my family and winter about to close in upon us. And while it had seemed that the world had closed in about me, yet my sorrow was not to compare with hers and that I was glad and thankful that God had only taken earthly possessions from me. Whereas he had taken from her a wonderful husband and father.

Oh how glad I was that it had come about that I should arrive in time to assist in the arranging of a service in his memory, for there is no man's service I should like to attend more than your father's. Few men in all my acquaintance have been more faithful, loyal, devoted, humble and persevering than your father and more deserving of respect and honor than he. And so, while it was a misfortune to me that brought our party home, it was a greater misfortune to lose such an earnest dependable worker.

Well do I recall on that Sunday visit, the last that I had with him, his anxiety for you. He was asked if he wanted you to return home and we (the Bishopric being all present) thought that there might be some who would want you to return, but your father held them off by saying, "Yes, I would like to see Andrew, it would be a pleasant meeting, but after that, what good could it do. He couldn't help me and after the first few days he would be left to find his way among the army of the unemployed. Conditions are not good here and if he were alone, something worse might happen to him than can happen to me. No, under no circumstance is he to come home, I want him to do his duty and to stay there until the Lord wants him to return. He's doing good where he is and I want him to do good and be good, living a clean honorable life, etc."

And I thought of a conversation you and I had in the rear end of the recreation hall in its unfinished condition and you promised me that you would go into the field, get the spirit of calling, and live an honorable life being a credit to your family and the church.

After receiving the fire news at Cardston, I knelt that night before God and asked him what we should do. Should we go home at once or should we remain to the Caravan sessions in the temple? And if we stayed, would God give us assurance that we were doing the right thing and take from us the sorrow of our souls so we could stay, attend the sessions and have our testimonies greatly strengthened. Cause that as we slept through the night that inspiration would come so we would know what was the best for us. In the morning we arose and without further discussing I said, "I have been awake much of the night and I have been thinking what we should do. It seems to me that the proper thing for us to do is to stay here during all the sessions of the Caravan for that is what we came for. Then leave here the day after<sup>5</sup> Spokane, get our mail there, do what we planned there and instead of spending more money, we had better go home and prepare for winter". Everyone agreed to it readily even though we disliked missing part of our trip.

And I want to tell you, that from that time on until we left Cardston none of us thought of the happenings at home, but that we found in the spiritual food given there far more than we had expected and enough to keep us entirely occupied.

The Caravan used two sessions daily of the four scheduled. It is now eleven o'clock and for trying to think clearly I can hardly make this old machine behave, so forget typographical errors and get the main drift. The first one is at nine in the morning and the other is at five in the afternoon. Each session begins with a devotional service in the assembly room before dressing for the temple work. We went into the temple at nine in the morning came out in the afternoon at four and back at five and there we stayed until one in the morning the first night and the second night we came out at three in the morning. Now if you were to stay out that way you would surely be taken to task rather sharply.

In the first session President Woods of the temple said, "If there are any

here who have a desire to receive a gift and then have desire it in faith and have prayed over it, and if they have faith for it I am convinced as I see these caravans pass through here, that these gifts will be given. And so I say to you, that if you desire a gift and will pray for it earnestly here, that you need not go away without getting it". That thought held with me all through the temple session but it was taken off me by thinking of a man about my age who was going through for the first time. This man was from Sandpoint, Idaho, was dressing in the same dressing room with me (there is room for two in the private dressing rooms in this temple) and he was suffering with neuritis in one leg. He confided in me that he had prayed all the way to the temple, that he might be rid of this trouble. All the way to the temple he had to grit his teeth for the pain was so severe he could hardly drive the car. Each session in the temple the pain would leave him, but returned just before going down to dress, and at some periods in the temple the pain was severe, but in the main one the pain left.

We came to the last session or rather devotional session and it was here that two instances happened that repaid me and our party for staying to the temple. I can't tell you all the details for it would be too long. President Woods repeated the statement as I recalled it above, a couple of times during this service. At the beginning of the service a woman crippled badly was led into the temple from the prayer rooms of the presidency of the temple, along with the workers who attended the devotional services. I kept watching her all through the service and feeling sorry for her. There were sixty six missionaries present, and sixteen of them were called before the assembly by Mission President Sloan and released. Each spoke briefly and sadly in the main to think of leaving, but gratefully that they had come into the field and had been watched over by the mission father and mother, and for the opportunity of service in the field.

President Woods took the floor and said that a large number of local people had desired to attend the last session of the caravan but that many had to be turned away. But the fame of the caravan sessions was spreading and many wanted to come for they felt that they could be healed or they had had to restrict it to the Caravan, but this sister who was crippled had desired to come and some other sister he called by name who had been bedridden and he called for her. And for fully five minutes he stood silently waiting while two brethren went into the corridor and got a young woman (perhaps 35 years of age) and carried her into the service, right up in front where the workers were seated at the side of the pulpit. She was a very thin woman, her limbs hanging pitifully. It seemed she had little control of them and she had wasted away until her arms and limbs that were visible to the knee, could not have been more than the bare skin and bone. She was seated and the session went on. President Woods said that today he had received the most direct revelation that he had yet received while doing work in the temple and that he wanted Grandma Newlin from Tacoma, Washington to come to the stand. Grandma Newlin, a woman of about 60 went to the stand. And this is his story as I remember it, "I have asked Grandma Newlin to come forward for I want her to hear what I am going to say and to let you know what took place here today. Besides Grandma, there are others who can tell whether I am telling the truth or not. This morning in the sealing room Grandma Newlin was on one side of the altar and a companion acting proxy for her dead husband was on the other side of the altar with hands joined across the altar. There were three young men and ladies on the other sides of the altar acting as proxies for the dead children. And as we were about to perform the ceremony that would seal the dead children to their parents, I said, 'Grandma, are these all your children' and she said 'these are all my children'. I said, 'Grandma, are you sure these are all the children you have'? And again she told me it was. This time the girl that I saw spoke to me and said, 'I am Grandma Newlin's daughter'. So I said to Grandma (Grandma was the name by which she was known through the mission), 'Grandma, haven't you another child, a daughter that died very young'? And Grandma said, 'Oh yes, I did have another child that died when it was but twelve days old'. I said, 'What was its name', and she gave the name of Agnes. So the name Agnes was written down on the sheet (no name appearing there for the child) another girl was introduced at the altar as proxy for Agnes and the work was done for her.

And this good sister, (Grandma Newlin) who has come all the way from Tacoma, but who had forgotten the death of her infant child partly due to her old age, was able to accomplish the work in full that she had come here to do. Which except for the demand of the girl appearing to me, would not have been done". Then addressing himself directly to Grandma he said, "Am I right Grandma". And she nodded her head and said smilingly, "Yes".

President Woods repeated what I have said about the relieving of the gifts people had come for. He said, "I firmly believe I can say that the spirit of healing is in our midst today, and that these sisters (who he called by name but which I can't recall now) shall walk with lighter step tomorrow, and will arise in the morning feeling refreshed and not tired and worn out as they have done in the past". Other things happened and the session was closed and the brethren remained to be ordained Elders for the dead.

These sisters remained in the assembly room and as the ordaining proceeded, oil was sent for and President Woods and his Counselor Brother Jacobs laid hands on the head of the sister who had been carried into the temple. While I was too far away to hear what was being said for there was some noise with people moving about in the corridor, I could feel the spirit and I looked over and saw this young man who was dressing with me standing directly beside them. I bowed my head but felt to look up and as I did so, I felt with full confidence that when the hands were taken off her head she would be able to walk. I bowed my head and the strangest feeling I have yet had came over me, and awed me and I said to myself as the spirit seemed to whisper to me, that that girl will walk, and I raised my eyes again and looked and felt stronger than ever that she would walk for it seemed to fairly say to me, watch her walk, and as I looked at her the hands of President Woods, (who sealed the anointing) were not down at his side when that girl sprang to her feet. The two brethren who had carried her in were there to assist her and they put forth their hands to catch her but she took her hands and brushed them aside and started out past them, and in a brisk walk with tears streaming down her face she left the temple. President Woods stepped over where he could see her as she walked out of the temple and he said, "Isn't that wonderful. That young lady has not been out of her bed for six months and the doctors said they feared she would never walk again. This morning she called me to the house and she called the doctor and he came and we were there together. She told him she wanted to go to the temple, <sup>The doctor said</sup> and in her condition it might do her harm. But the girl insisted that she be permitted to come. So the doctor gave his consent but said that if she went that she would have to release him from all responsibility for he would not be responsible for anything that might happen to her. And here you see her walking out of the temple practically healed". For fifteen minutes after this I was awed by the spirit that clung over me and the others were in the same condition for there were fully thirty other brethren who can bear you testimony that I do not lie, but have told you an incident exactly as it happened. The news spread rapidly through the temple and when I saw my wife there a little further in the temple, she said, "Do you know that woman that was carried into the temple?" To which I replied that I did and she said, "They administered to her and she walked out of the temple". And I said to her, "I know it, for I saw her get up and walk out of the temple".

Then came the further lesson and one that the master taught. For when we went to our rooms that next morning (at 3 a.m.) the young man from Sandpoint, named Dieter, he asked me if I saw that girl walk from the temple and I told him I did, and that I had seen him standing close by. Then he told me a story about his leg and how he wanted to get healed and that he had been in the temple these two days and had not received his blessing. And that he had heard President Woods tell of the gift again and knowing that he had earnestly prayed for healing and that the President had said that the spirit of healing was in our midst tonight and oh how he had prayed that he would get it. But now that President Woods had said that the spirit of healing was in our midst, Brother Dieter said to me, "I looked over at that young woman who had been carried in and I felt sorry for her. And I said to myself, 'You're not so bad off after all look at that woman - helpless'. So I poured out my soul to God and I said, 'Oh, God you know how I have wanted

to be healed of Neuritis and that I have come here to receive this blessing and that I have heard your servant say that those who desired a special blessing and had worked for it should receive it. But Father, when I look at others in their condition my heart is moved and so I pray unto you now, not to give unto me the blessing I have cried unto you for, but give unto that helpless woman over there the blessing I would that you give to me. For I can go on in my condition, whereas she cannot, so give her my blessing if it is to be given to anyone at all'. And oh how my leg did ache, and it ached so that I could hardly stay in the service. But just as soon as that young woman got up and walked out of the temple, the pain in my leg left me and from that hour (6:30 p.m.) I haven't felt one bit of pain. And up in the celestial room where we sat on the floor, crowded and with legs bent under me for nearly three hours not one bit of pain did I have. And this is something that I have been unable to do for years. So I feel that my first lesson was to overcome my selfishness that I received my blessing, that I received my blessing, and not until then did I get the blessing I had come for".

We parted that night with the wonderful thought of the Savior - Deny Thyself. And in the denial of self and the over coming comes the greatest blessings of all.

You will permit me now to say good-night. And because of my faith in you and the desire you encourage you with increased faith I have written after this manner. So peace be with you, Andrew.

Good-night.



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Arias G. Belnap, ~~1972~~ July 31-1931