

Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847–1868

Source of Trail Excerpt:

Jaques, John, [Minutes of meeting at Devil's Gate, Nov. 9, 1856], in John Jaques, Collection, 1846-1920.

Read Trail Excerpt:

“Devil’s Gate, November 9, 1856: Minutes of a meeting of the Elders called at the request of Captin Grant to appoint men to remain in charge of goods left for storage at this place by captain Hodgett’s & Captain Hunt’s wagon companies. Meeting opened by singing and prayer by Elder Danl W Jones after which the following persons were appointed to remain—viz., Danl W. Jones, Thos M. Alexander, Benj Hampton, John Cooper, George Watts, Elisha Manning, George Allen, George Austin, William Hansley, John H. Latey, William Latey, John Shorten, John Wittaker, Edwin Summers, John Hardcastle, Henry Jackman, Rosser Jenkins and Elijah L. Chapple.

“On motion of Elder Cyrus H. Wheelock, Elder Danl W. Jones was appointed ~~Captain~~ Prest of the company remaining and Thos M Alexander and Benjn Hampton his councillors and John H Latey be clerk after which the following instructions were given.

Capt Grant addressed the meeting saying that we were met together to arrange matters relating to the safe keeping of the luggage left here. It was a great trust reposed in those men appointed to remain, and he wanted them to guard and care for it more so than if it belonged to them individually. He wanted no half or chicken hearted men to remain but men with large souls, men of integrity, men of God who would not do a wrong thing, would not steal one from another if any[.] if any such were among them, he wanted them to be passed through the Devils Gate and he did not want any grumblers or fault finders, and he did not want one of the company to be the butt of the others because he may not be so smart[.] He wanted them to agree together and be obedient to the brethren who have come from the valleys and were called to preside over them for they were good men[,] had been cradled in Mormonism and had the spirit of Zion burning within them. He believed the men remaining were good men and would not go to do anything wrong—Whished them to improve their time that they might come up to Zion in the spring with the spirit of God increased in them[,] wished them to attend to their prayers not only night and morning but on the mountain tops to remember to call on the Lord mightily that his mind might be revealed to them and that they might be blessed. anticipated they would have hard times but they need have no fear of starving[.] they could kill Buffalo and Antelope etc[.] He wanted the twenty left here to sleep with one eye open and one leg out of bed for there were devils, mountaineers and Indians round about here and a guard would be necessary if only one man at a time and if Indians were prowling about two men would be necessary and the guards he wanted to be vigilant and not to sleep on their posts for the lives of their brethren were in their hands[,] and if they were killed the blood would be on their garments[.] wanted them to be careful of fire and look sharp that their enemies did not put a torch to the buildings[.] wanted them to have water in their vessels at all times, wanted these old shanties to be repaired and made comfotable and good, the guns also to be kept in good order and loaded and not lying all in a pile but every

man knowing where to put his hand on his own gun and if Indians were prowling about[,] did not want them to fool with them. Word would be sent from the Valley before the spring and the provisions here he wanted to rationed out and take care of the flour in portion[.] Wished them to be obedient to the counsels of Prest Jones and he wanted Prest Jones to maintain the dignity of his calling and not joke too much or suffer himself to be joked with for he knew where a man in office joked with those under him so sure was he to lose his influence[.] Did not wish any families to remain here for if women and children remained there would be the devil to pay and there was not much prospect of anything for them to eat but meat, wanted those remaining to see that each other did not get lost and frozen to death. Wanted care taken of the wagons and cattle and not use the latter in hauling firewood but use the handcarts—expected the heifers left would improve in condition.

Elder Cyrus H Wheelock exhorted those remaining to be obedient to the counsel of Prest Jones and his councilors[;] spoke also on the necessity of leaving joking alone and of Pres. Jones maintaining the dignity of his calling and keeping his place as President and Captn of this [illegible] company[;] did not wish one to be a butt for the others to make jokes and fun of and if any was more dilatory than the others he wanted them to be chastised[.] he wanted the men remaining to busy themselves all winter, hunt buffalo, draw logs and build up these old shanties and that cheerfully and if they would not do it he would say put them through the devils gate

Elder John A Hunt felt that what had been said had been dictated by the spirit of God and felt that those remaining could have a good time, hoped none would [illegible] the counsels of Prest Jones and his councilors or the commandments of God, and not fall back in the faith or in other words go through the devils gate[.] hoped to see them come up to the vallies in the spring like young lions[.] did not want to leave anyone here who would not stand up to the rack, hay or no hay, flour or no flour[.] wanted them to attend to what Captn Grant had said. Keep themselves clean and pure and attend to prayers that they may go to the Lord with confidence and offer up a prayer that will be heard and answered[,] if they did not do so fear would seize upon them in the day of trouble[.] wanted them to be ready at all calls day or night and at short notice, to improve themselves in leisure hours, would use his influence in leaving all he could for their comfort and sustenance. Wished them to pray for and uphold Prest Jones & his councilors that they may have wisdom and discernment to see through those who may come about these shanties

Elder Burton would like before meeting closed to have minutes of same read and letter of instructions before they (the Elders) left, given to Prest Jones -- spoke on the necessity of guarding against Indians and especially white Indians and also against fire[;] wished Prest Jones or one of his councilors to be at all times about the buildings[.] also to attend to daubing the walls to preserve the goods left from wet[.] thought the counsels about joking excellent for when a man in office begins joking with those under him so sure was he to lose his influence. spoke on the necessity of attending prayers. Knew that those who stayed did so from a desire to do good and money would have no influence in inducing them to stay[.] Capt Grant had expressed his feelings about families remaining in this place.

Elder Webb thought plenty of instructions had been given and wished them to profit by it[,] felt to indorse what had been said by Cap Grant & Brs Wheelock, Burton & others and if they acted up to it[,] they would go up to Zion with their heads up and not be ashamed[.] urged the

necessity of the guards being vigilant for the lives of their brethren were in their hands and to sleep was a capital offense and if through their negligence[,] their brethren were killed the blood would be upon their skirts

Prest Jones wanted everyone remaining to provide themselves with soap and combs to keep themselves clean for anything like filth was an abomination to him and if those remaining with him were not cleanly they would chance to get duncked under the ice[.] down here he wanted them to be obedient to him as he had been to Cap Grant on this trip

Motion by Elder C H Wheelock that minutes be received and copy taken which was carried unanimously

Meeting closed by prayer by Elder C G Webb.—

[Taken from hand penned copy of John Jaques.]