

REMEMBRANCES OF THE 75th BIRTHDAY OF HANS ULRICH BRYNER

(Dictated by himself to his niece, Annie, the daughter of his brother Casper.
There are a few lines missing at the beginning.)

Father was strict and made us mind,
Mother was good-hearted and very kind;
Father was a shoemaker by trade, and I had to carry them here and there,
Sometimes I did not come home when he wanted me to come back,
and for this I got many a scolding.
He took out his watch and gave me time to come back and go to
school again.

When I was ten years old, father bought a large farm,
Mother was told to quit weaving and spinning shoe thread yarn.
Father taught me to prune, to plow and to mow,
Mother took my sisters into the garden and taught them to hoe.
Knitting, spinning and weaving had to be done at night.
Father fixed the shoes and I had to sit by his side.
He gave me the Bible and gave me a light,
I had to do something, to read or to write.
They did not allow us to spend our money for dances or show,
But when there was real pleasure, they allowed us to go.
We went to school from six to twelve,
And in this we did very well.
Father and mother were good to provide,
We always obeyed and stood on their side.
And now we feel happy that is the way way we have been raised,
For that is more than gold and silver are worth.

I will tell you now what happened to me,
In January of eighteen hundred and forty three,
I was sick and lay in my bed,
One of my school-mates who was always at my side, took very sick and died.
When they told me, it worried me so that I thought that I
might be laid by his side.

I will tell you now what I did see,
A heavenly vision came to me,
A man came to me and took me by the hand,
And led me in darkness half round the world,
I did not see him, no mountain nor tree,
No street, no city, no light, until we came on top of the earth,

And heaven opened above our heads,
Then a bright light came down, and behold I did see,
The city of Zion was shown to me.
It shone like gold, like silver, like glass,
No one can have an idea how pretty it was.
I saw a big wall and three gates therein,
Where the righteous and holy were allowed to go in.
I wanted to climb up and go in there too,
The man held his hand before me and said, "That you can't do,
The time is not yet granted for you,
But the time will come if you are faithful and true,
'Twill be granted for you to go in there too."
I looked at his face and noticed his size,
His gray whiskers and peculiar eyes.
He was a man I had never seen before,
After that he never said anything more.
That vision came to me by day and by night,
And I could not forget that wonderful sight,
I always thought it meant a dark night,
I did not know that I was going to be blind.
I wondered what would become of me,
But it was not revealed before eighteen hundred and fifty three.
After that sickness I was healthy and stout,
I worked hard for ten years and learned to provide.
For all kinds of labor to do we were willing,
For this fetched us in many a shilling.
We assisted our parents and we are glad we did that,
For if we had not, we might be in the old country yet.
I worked at my trade and learned to provide,
I chose my companion and married my bride.
We lived happy together and she bore me a child.
They were in my favor, I loved them and felt to rejoice.
Two happy years passed by, we were happy and free,
When the child was twelve years old, she was taken from me,
And buried in the place called Harmony,
The only one of twenty I ever did see.
She is now in heavenly care,
Now we know her mother is there,
Who was taken from me on the first of September of ninety-
three.
I will tell you now what happened to me,
I received a stroke in my eyes in the winter of fifty-three,
That was an awful accident to me;

I lost my sight and could not see,
No one was able to comfort me.
One day my wife and child sat by my side
We felt so bad we had to wipe our eyes.
My wife and my parents divided their tears with me,
They felt so bad because I could not see.
We felt so sorry we were afraid our future happiness was
destroyed.
My mother-in-law came in and said, "You can do nothing but
pray,
Maybe the Lord will open a way,
I believe the Lord has his hand in that,
It's something we cannot understand yet."
She said, "It's always a whispering voice says to me,
Don't feel sorry that Bryner took blind, he is not left,
It's good for you all, but you don't know it yet."
She went out, and came in again and repeated over again,
"Don't feel sorry that Bryner is took blind, he is not left,
It's good for all, but you don't know it yet."
Then she went out.
My parents, brothers and sisters were kind to me,
They were all willing to provide for me,
But life was no comfort to me,
I could not feel happy, and have no more joys,
I felt that the Lord had thrown me aside.
Four sorrowful months passed by until the latter part of July.
One morning I told my father and mother to listen,
For last night I had a wonderful vision.
My father, mother, brothers and sisters did listen
When I explained my wonderful vision.
I found myself in a great dark room,
It was as dark as it would be in doom.
Three fires appeared of a different size.
I opened my eyes and beheld a man stood by my side.
I looked in his face and noticed his size,
His gray hair and peculiar eyes.
He was the same man I had seen before.
Who led me half round the earth ten years ago.
He had an open book in his hand I had never seen before.
He crossed out my sins from the book, and they fell to the
floor.
A voice told me "That middle fire you will have to go through,"
I said "I am able to stand that too."

The walls cracked open so wide we could go through,
The light came in as bright as day noon;
The road to Zion was shown to me,
And to get there we crossed the sea.
With my wife and child, we crossed the sea, and a great company.
We landed at Boston, happy and gay,
We called at New York which was on our way.
We had a long journey, I think it was that great prairie
Into the mountains, the same place I had seen before.
A lady who had listened wanted to interpret my vision,
She said we would go to America to hunt a physician.
This did not satisfy my interpretation,
As it did not correspond with my former visitation.
Father said he would be willing to go,
But we always thought we would like to learn more.
The interpretation was not given before
February, eighteen hundred fifty four,
When we had a man from America to our city come,
A Mormon elder, George Meyer by name.
My sister went out to hunt for him.
I told her to see if it was the man I had seen in my dream;
She could not find him, he had gone again.
Next Sunday he held his first meeting there,
And with my father and sisters, there were six to hear.
I described the man I had seen in my dreams.
As quick as they saw the elder, they knew it was him.
They invited him to come next day to our home,
He preached to us many things we had never known;
I said to myself "We have always read but never understood,
But all he did say, we could not dispute.
We thought he had preached to us a new gospel,
We found it corresponded with the teachings of the ancient
Apostles.
All our family was anxious to hear,
When he said an angel from heaven had appeared.
He said the angel Moroni had appeared to a young boy,
Joseph Smith,
He gave him all the revelations he did need.
Four years he did visit him,
Then the golden bible was given to him,
Which was the history and bible of this continent.
The doctrine in it corresponded with the Old and New
Testament.

He said the church of Christ must be organized,
The people must repent and be baptized.
The judgments of God have commenced,
The Lord wants to gather the Latter-day Saints.
To Zion you must go in order to be saved,
For those who will not obey will be destroyed.
Then in the family of Bryner and Mathys, twelve were baptized,
We all felt happy and rejoiced.
My mother-in-law came in and said "Can you tell me a man
That looks like the man you saw in your dream?"
I told her his name and she said "It is the man I have
picked too.
And now we know your vision is true."
Now our sorrowful tears were wiped from our eyes,
We felt happy and thanked the Lord and wept for joy.
We see now that the Lord accepted our prayer,
When we heard that heavenly messenger missionary.
In a few days the elder laid hands on me,
To restore my sight, so they anointed me,
He wished none in the room but mother and me,
But there were two ladies who wished to see.
Our faith was strong and the Lord heard our prayers.
His power was made manifest, and I could see a little next day,
I felt so happy and contented in mind,
I did not care if I had been taken blind.
The daily news stated "If this man gives Bryner his sight,
We will believe and be baptized."
Next day as I lay in my bed,
An evil spirit came very near choking me to death,
I felt as if in my head he had made a hole,
And I cried out loud "In the name of Jesus Christ let me alone!"
I arose from my bed to find out where the spirit came in,
My parents awoke and I told them what had happened to me,
They said "Oh, go back to bed, it is only a dream."
Next morning I tried to see, as I had done the day before,
But was frightened to find that I could see no more.
I went upstairs and told one of the ladies who wished to see,
She said "The same spirit came and oh, how hard he choked me!"
I had to promise him, if he would let me alone,
I would have nothing more with the Mormons to do,
And the spirit left." And she never joined the church.
They did not weaken my faith,
I kept God's commandments, as was my desire.

For it was shown in my vision
That I should go through a fire.
I bore my testimony to all my brothers and sisters.
After this they wanted to ordain me a teacher.
As I did not feel able, so I refused it,
But after a while I found I had missed it.
Another vision was shown unto me.
I was standing in a meadow and
I saw a fire a half mile from me,
I walked up to it and wanted to see.
Therein was a man's face, he looked at me,
I had to run back so the fire would not catch me.
I ran and fell down, and a man's face above me I could see.
A voice came from above and said, "Will you always do what is required of you?"
I answered "I am willing to obey whatever you say."
At a public meeting I related my dream.
The elder wished to know if I was ready to be ordained.
It had been revealed to me that I should go through a fire before,
Then I resolved to refuse no more.
When we emigrated to Zion we went the same road
Which was revealed to me in my vision before.
In a sailing ship we crossed the sea,
Forty-two days we had to remain in the sailing ship of Enoch Train.
We landed in Boston happy and gay,
We were called to New York for that was our way.
As near as I remember
We started from Florence the first of September.
From there across the prairie one thousand miles we had to go,
And by ox team, they went so slow.
The latter part of our journey,
The ground was covered with snow.
My legs were frozen, and my teamster's too,
So my dear wife was left with three sick,
The cooking and driving to do.
Before we came to Devil's Gate, people and oxen were frozen to death.
We were compelled to leave wagon and everything.
Brigham sent teams from Salt Lake and they took us in.
If Brigham had not sent help,
A great many more would have left this world.
When we came to the mountains there were nine feet of snow.
The people had to tramp it before the horses could go.
Three months we had travelled, hardly a house could be seen,
And we never met anyone who would tell us to come in.

We travelled through rain, mud, wind and snow,
Our wagons being the only shelter where we could go.
My brother and sister emigrated the year before me.
When they heard of our coming, he came a hundred miles to meet me.
He missed us and did not find our way,
He never knew if we were alive or dead
So he had to go back to Salt Lake City again.
We came in the same night my brother came in.
The night was so cold a kind family took us in.
Next morning he came, and when I heard his voice
I could not speak, for I had to wipe my eyes.
Thirty miles to Lehi we had to go.
It was a very cold day and the ground was covered with snow,
With a hayrack wagon and an ox team we went so slow.
My sister and my wife's brother were there,
Were kind to us and willing with us everything to share.
Together we all had much to say, we were so happy to meet again.
Next summer father, mother, my sister and my son came in.
They also had to travel with an ox team.
It is hard to imagine how happy we felt.
We all felt to rejoice that our lives had been spared.
My sister related what had happened to them on the plains.
The cholera came and took away many of the saints —
About two hundred people. Some died on the road,
Some of their names were found written on a board.
Many accidents took place, many died and were buried
Without a coffin in the grave.
The same year they came, the grasshoppers destroyed nearly everything.
I also told them what happened to me.
We had a stampede and a woman was killed.
My wagon tipped over and an old lady and my child nearly killed.
From the effects of this hurt the old lady died.
We called the elders and they administered to my child.
They said the Lord would not take her from me,
For she would be my guide.
At the last crossing on the Platte river we were snowed in.
Three companies came together and eleven days we had to
 remain,
The handcart company being a half mile ahead.
One night there were sixteen persons frozen to death,
Some more died on the road.
The ground was so hard no graves could be dug,
They were covered with snow.

In Devil's Gate we divided the teams,
To the handcart company we gave thirty teams.
Two families in one wagon must go,
For those who had charge of the companies ordered it so,
For the oxen had died and teams we did lack,
One third of the wagons were left back.
Many things could be gathered up on the road,
Which people had thrown from their wagons to lighten their loads.
And we could tell many things more.
Father and mother had many things to tell
Of their trip, and many experiences as well.
One day they had a big stampede,
A dog came by and frightened the team,
The oxen ran away and a man and a woman were killed.
Father's team ran away, mother and my son were in,
Father was hurt and was picked up for dead,
The team was stopped. Father came to his mind all right again,
But his arm was broken, and what a bad fix they were in.
This way he had to drive his team,
But mother did all she could to help him.
Now we have all told our troubles,
And we think our children have no reason to grumble.
The Lord could see what trouble his people had,
So the world was stirred up so a railroad must be made.
And now the sectarian ministers were made to rejoice,
For they thought now the Mormons could be easily destroyed.
It was said that the government much money had spent,
For they thought now that an army could be easily sent.
But all their notions and plans did fail,
For other purposes the railroad was made,
For the Lord's power will ever prevail.
How easy now, speedy messengers are sent,
Now the judgments of God have commenced,
And how quickly they gather the Latter-day Saints.
In the fall of sixty-one we were called to Dixie land,
And we all obeyed Brigham's command.
And to get there we travelled through storm and snow,
Through rocks and sand we also had to go.
We were to build a city called St. George,
There we were to build the house of the Lord
In which will be an endless mission.
Blessed are those who will go and redeem their former relations,
And open their prison doors, Prepare for their resurrection

And even so for their own.
If we want exaltation we will have to do so.
What a great mission we should be willing to do,
For our former relations number millions
And Latter-day Saints are but few.
If this great work should be neglected,
Some of our blessings would be rejected.
How happy will be our meeting again
With those whom we have redeemed behind the veil.
I hope then to see you all inside of Zion's City wall,
Those whom I have never seen before,
When we shall be allowed to walk on the golden floor
In the City of Zion I have seen before.
The Dixie land we are now in
No house for shelter for us to get in,
We lived in tents and the red sand could blow in.
There were no stores for us to go in.
We had no money to pay a bill
And my father made me a spinning wheel.
We raised some cotton and mother gathered it in.
She also did the carding and it was ready to spin.
She spun the warp and the filling.
She did the coloring with dug roots.
After it was done it looked pretty good.
She spun the thread for the dress to be made.
Brigham said it was the best homespun thread he ever had in his hand.
Hundreds of yards she did spin with that old-fashioned spinning wheel.
In those days there were no machines in the land
And everthing had to be done by hand.
Nearly a century has passed since father and mother
 came on this earth.
My father went to rest in sixty-two, Mother's age was past ninety-two.
In ninety-six she went to rest.
They were clothed in their wedding dress.
From their sins they were pronounced free,
And they received the heavenly key,
Free from the blood of this generation
To come forth in the morning of the resurrection.
I wish my children every one
Would study and do what has to be done.
Go do the work while you are able
And do not wait until you are feeble.
Nearly half a century has passed

And we are grateful to know
That the Lord has blessed us so.
Remember your mother since she had died
For forty years she was your father's guide.
She was taken from me the first of September ninety-three.
All of our family who joined the church
Were permitted to Zion to go.
Only Mother Mathys – she went to her heavenly rest,
And told her husband to take my sister to Zion and give her a home.
They emigrated to Zion in eighteen hundred and sixty-four.
He showed his faith by his works
In helping to emigrate so many of the poor.
He was sick on the road, but sickened and died
In Lehi, January eighteen hundred and sixty-five.
Mathys did not only emigrate so many of the saints,
But he paid for the printing of one thousand copies of the Book of Mormon.