



John White & Harriet Prosser Manasseh Smith & Mary Ann White

John White was born on September 25, 1808 in Withington, Herfordshire, England. A census record shows that he worked as a laborer in a glass works.⁴⁷ He married Harriet Prosser (born October 28, 1819 in Holmslacy, Herfordshire, England) on April 8, 1839, somewhere in England. Little else is known of their early lives, but they were members of a religious congregation known as the United Brethren. In 1840, their leader, John Benbow, introduced Latter-day Saint missionary Wilford Woodruff to the group, and a short time later, almost the entire group was baptized. Elder Woodruff described these events in a letter:

I arrived at Froome's Hill, Castle Froome, Herefordshire, on the 4th of March, and was kindly entertained for the night by Mr. John Benbow, who received my testimony, and opened his door for meeting; and on the evening following, the 5th of March, for the first time I preached the fullness of the Gospel in that place to a small congregation, who manifested much interest in what they heard, and desired to inquire further into those things; and on the evening following I met a large number at Mr. Benbow's, and preached unto them the principles of the Gospel, namely, faith in Christ, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands; after which I administered the ordinance of baptism unto six persons, Mr. and Mrs. Benbow among the number. I also preached on Sunday the 8th and baptized seven, confirmed thirteen, and broke bread unto them. Several of those who were baptized were preachers of the order called the United Brethren.

⁴⁷ Census of England and Wales, 1871, West Bromwich registrar's South West District., FHL film 0838864.



The home of John and Jane Benbow⁴⁸

The United Brethren formerly belonged to the Primitive Methodists, but had separated themselves from the body, and chose the name of the United Brethren. They had from forty to fifty preachers and about the same number of established places of meeting, including two chapels.

Mr. Thomas Kington was the superintendent of the church of the United Brethren, whose members numbered about four hundred in all, divided into small branches and scattered over an extent of country from fifteen to twenty miles. This people almost universally appeared willing to give heed to the exhortation of Solomon, to hear a matter before they judged or condemned. They opened their doors for me to preach, and searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things which I taught were true; and on finding that the word and spirit agreed and bore record of the truth of the fullness of the Everlasting Gospel, they embraced it with all their hearts, which has brought great joy and satisfaction to many souls in that region.

I continued preaching and baptizing daily; the congregations were large and generally attentive. I was soon privileged with an interview with Mr. Thomas Kington, the superintendent of the United Brethren, before whom I gave an account of the rise and progress of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, and bore testimony of the truth of the great work which God had set His hand to accomplish in these last days.

⁴⁸ <http://www.lightplanet.com/mormons/daily/history/british.html>



Wilford Woodruff⁴⁹

Mr. Kington received my testimony and sayings with candor; and carried the case before the Lord, made it a subject of prayer, and asked the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, if these things were true; and the Lord manifested the truth of it unto him, and he went forth and was baptized, he and all his household. I ordained him an Elder, and he went forth and began to preach the fullness of the Gospel.

I also baptized about forty preachers of the same order, and several others belonging unto other churches, and about one hundred and twenty members of the United Brethren, which opened about forty doors or preaching places, where the fullness of the Gospel would meet a welcome reception, and all this during the term of one month and five days.

On the 10th of April I took my departure from the Saints in Herefordshire and adjoining country, numbering about one hundred and sixty; whom I left rejoicing in the fullness of the Gospel, and hundreds of others who were ready to be baptized as soon as a proper time and opportunity arrived. I arrived in Preston on the 13th, by way of Worcester, Wolverhampton, Burslem, and Manchester, a distance of about one hundred and seventy miles, visiting the churches by the way.

On my arrival in Preston, I was blessed with the happy privilege of once more greeting my brethren of the Traveling High Council and other Elders, and of sitting with them on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of April in the first council and general conference which they had ever held, as a quorum, in a foreign nation. After spending several days together, (during which time much business of importance was transacted for the Church,) it became necessary for us again to separate in order to labor in different parts of the vineyard which were now open before us. I left Preston on the 17th, accompanied by Elder Brigham Young, and visited the churches by the way, until we arrived among the Saints in Herefordshire, who were anxiously looking for my return. In a few days we were joined in our labors by

⁴⁹ http://www.lightplanet.com/mormons/people/wilford_woodruff.html, Photograph c. 1853; attributed to Marsena Cannon.

Elder Willard Richards. We took locations in different parts of this new field of labor, which extended through various places in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire.



Brigham Young⁵⁰

We continued preaching, and baptizing, and administering in the ordinances of the Gospel daily, unto such as would receive our testimony, and obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Truth was mighty and prevailed; the work prospered, and multiplied on every hand, until several hundreds, including more than fifty preachers of various sects, were rejoicing in the fullness of the everlasting Gospel, and felt to praise God that they had lived to behold the day when the Lord had set His hand to prune His vineyard once more with a mighty pruning, and to establish the Gospel in its ancient purity again upon the face of the earth; and in many instances signs followed the believer, according to the promise of the Savior. The Spirit of God accompanied the preaching of the word to the hearts of men. Whole households, on hearing the word, have received it into good and honest hearts, and gone forth and received the ordinances of the Gospel; and frequently we have baptized from eight to twelve the first time of meeting with the people in new places, and preaching the word of God to them.

Elder Young labored with us about one month, during which time many were baptized, confirmed, and numbers ordained to preach the Gospel—and while the Saints were much edified, and their hearts made glad with the teaching and instruction by Elder Young, I also obtained much benefit myself by enjoying his society, sitting under his instruction, and sharing in his counsel.

⁵⁰ <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cwpbh.01671>, Photograph taken between 1855 and 1865, forms part of Brady-Handy Photograph Collection (Library of Congress).

As it became necessary for Elder Young to return to Manchester, to assist in preparing a collection of hymns, and other matters, he took the parting hand with us on the 20th of May; and Elders Richards and myself continued our labors in the vineyard, in connection with Elder Kington, who had given himself wholly to the work of the ministry.



Willard Richards⁵¹

The Lord still continued to bless our labors, and added daily unto the Church. New doors were opening on every hand; and multiplicity of calls constantly reached our ears, many of which we could not answer for the want of laborers. Notwithstanding there were about fifty ordained Elders and Priests in this part of the vineyard, yet there were equally as many places for preaching to be attended to upon the Sabbath day. Thus we continued our labors in this region until the time drew near for the general conference in Manchester on the 6th of July.

But before leaving the Saints, we considered it wisdom to set in order the church, and organize them into branches and conferences, that they might be properly represented before the general conference. Therefore we held two conferences with the Saints before we took our departure from them. The first was held at the Gadfield Elm Chapel, Worcestershire, on the 14th of June, at which time we organized twelve branches, and transacted such business as the occasion required. The Second conference was held at Stanley Hill, Herefordshire, on the 21st of June, twenty branches of the Church were organized. The minutes of the above-named conferences I present you for publication, if you think proper.

On the day following, Elder Richards and myself took our leave of the Saints at Froome's Hill, Herefordshire; but before leaving we repaired to a pool three times to baptize and confirm numbers that came to us and requested these ordinances at our hands.

Elder Richards labored in this part of the vineyard about two months, during which time he traveled extensively, preached night and day, gave much instruction to the Saints generally, and had many souls as seals to his ministry. I received much benefit from the counsel which he gave in the organization of the churches, and it was manifest that he had

⁵¹ Public domain photograph from www.wikipedia.org, taken sometime prior to his death in 1854.

passed through a profitable school of experience during the three years of his travels in England; and the interesting seasons we have enjoyed together during these two months, will not be easily erased from my memory.

It was with no ordinary feelings that we took our departure from the Saints in Herefordshire on this occasion; for, less than four months since, I proclaimed the fullness of the Gospel in this region for the first time; but now, we were leaving between five and six hundred Saints, who were rejoicing in the new and everlasting covenant, and hundreds of others who were wishing to hear and obey. I parted from Elder Richards at Birmingham, who went direct to Manchester, while I visited West Bromwich, and preached several times to a small branch of the Church which had been raised up in that place by Elder Turley, who baptized several while I was there. I also attended a conference on the 29th June, at Hanley, in the Staffordshire Potteries, in company with Elder George A. Smith and others, after which I arrived in Manchester.

Wilford Woodruff.

Manchester, July 9, 1840.⁵²

John White's name can be found in the minutes (referred to in Elder Woodruff's letter) of the church conference held at Stanley Hill, Castle Froome, Herefordshire, on June 21st, 1840.⁵³

Among John and Harriet White's children was another of our ancestors named Mary Ann White, who was born on July 8, 1852⁵⁴ in West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England. According to a British census record made in 1871, she worked as a "japanner", or one that blackens boots.⁵⁵ She married Manasseh Smith (born April 17, 1853 in West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England) on June 18, 1871 in the Aston Old Church in Lancashire, England. Manasseh Smith was a brick mason, according to United States federal census entries from 1880 and 1900.⁵⁶

John and Harriet White sailed on the steamship *Idaho* leaving from Liverpool, England on October 22, 1873 and arriving at New York on November 5, 1873. The company continued by train to Salt Lake City, arriving on November 14, 1873.⁵⁷ According to the passenger list, several of their children traveled with them, including Mary Ann White Smith, who was traveling with her firstborn son, but without her husband, Manasseh.⁵⁸ He would not come to America until the following year. He

52 Extract from Elder Woodruff's letter to the editor of the *Millennial Star*, detailing incidents of his ministry, as cited in Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols., introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-1951], 4: 154).

53 *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, vol. 1 (May 1840-April 1841), Vol. 1, No. 4, August 1840, p. 86.

54 According to General Registry Office of England. Records passed down by the family indicated that she always thought her birthdate was July 2, 1853.

55 Census of England and Wales, 1871, West Bromwich registrar's South West District., FHL film 0838864.

56 Ancestry.com U.S. Census collection.

57 *Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. 2nd ed. Revised and compiled by Andrew Jenson, 1899, p. 91. (FHL book 289.309 J453c and fiche 6053255; 1914 ed. on film 599327 item 2 and fiche 6051314) as cited in *Mormon Immigration Index*.

58 According to the 1900 United States census, she immigrated to America in 1873, but her name was not near those of her parents in the passenger list for the *Idaho*. However, there was a Mary A. Smith on the same passenger list, listed as a wife,

came on the ship *Minnesota*, which left Liverpool, England on July 8, 1874 and arrived in New York on July 21, 1874. It should be added that Manasseh traveled with his father Thomas Smith, who was born on November 8, 1812 in Coseley, Staffordshire, England. His wife, Susanna Harback, had died March 8, 1857 in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, England. Thomas and Manasseh Smith and their company (led by Elder John Keller) arrived by train in Salt Lake City on July 30, 1874.⁵⁹

John White died on March 20, 1884 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. His wife Harriet Prosser White died on October 14, 1877 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. Their daughter Mary Ann White Smith died on June 7, 1919 in Granger, Salt Lake, Utah⁶⁰. Her husband Manasseh Smith died on July 8, 1906 in Granger, Salt Lake, Utah⁶¹. His father Thomas Smith died April 29, 1898 in Murray, Salt Lake, Utah.

without the husband present, and with an infant son named John Smith. According to the undocumented pedigree chart passed down to our family, her eldest son is named Manasseh Smith Jr., however, his original name on his birth record from the General Records Office in England is given as John Thomas Smith, with Manasseh entered after registration. Also listed on the same passenger list are George and Louisa Smith, Manasseh's brother and sister-in-law, who witnessed Manasseh and Mary Ann Smith's wedding. Without a better alternative, this seems to be the correct immigration information for Mary Ann White Smith.

⁵⁹ *Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. 2nd ed. Revised and compiled by Andrew Jenson, 1899, p.92. (FHL book 289.309 J453c and fiche 6053255; 1914 ed. on film 599327 item 2 and fiche 6051314) as cited in *Mormon Immigration Index*.

⁶⁰ State of Utah death certificate, <http://historyresearch.utah.gov/indexes/index.html>.

⁶¹ State of Utah death certificate, <http://historyresearch.utah.gov/indexes/index.html>.