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Title: **REC-Autob15**
Provenance: **Courtesy of Carol Nielson of North Salt Lake**
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Person:
Date:

calling me to a mission to Australia). I was riding "Dixie" and had my pistols strapped to me and my rifle in its scabbard fastened to the saddle.

This was the first word I had received about a mission. It requested that I reply within 10 days and have my reply endorsed by my bishop. I accordingly accepted the call and sent the letter to my bishop in Farmington. (I think father had whispered in the bishop's ear when he got to Farmington.)

I was supposed to leave Salt Lake April 3, but on April 2 I came ill with what the Dr. said was the "flu," which was still very much around. I was not very sick, but stayed in bed a couple of days as a precaution. I had already gotten passports, shots, missionary supplies, etc. I left Salt Lake on Southern Pacific on April 30.

In San Francisco I was met by Arnold D. Miller, Pres. of the Australian Mission, who had been home on leave to bring his wife who was ill. We also had three elders on the way to Australia: Elder Sterling Johnson, Lowell, Wyoming; Elder Robertson, Lowell; and Elder Harris from Lowell.

We sailed from San Francisco on May 6, 1919 on S.S. Sanoma, a 10000 ton ship. I found there was a sister ship (Ventura) and was to learn that these two boats were the contact with the U.S. and when I was further away in Australia (which I was) that the quickest one could write home and get a reply was 9 weeks.

The ship was small and rolled and pitched and nearly everyone got seasick. We arrived in Honolulu May 12. We hired a car and driver and went to Laie where the new temple was nearing completion.

A couple of days out of Honolulu we crossed the equator. That is supposed to be quite an event when you cross the first time. We had the regular ceremony. Father Neptune came on board. The Neophytes were put on a chair, back to swimming pool. You were lathered real good and Father Neptune shaved you with a three foot razor and the chair tipped over backward and you were duly initiated by a good dunking.

The "flu" was still very much around, so for 3 days before any port we all were tested and if there were any with a fever no one could leave the ship.

When we arrived at Pago Pago May 19, no one was permitted ashore because there was a flu suspect on board. [We were there] for six hours. I bought a bunch of bananas (about 300) for $1.00 over the side.

Between May 20 and 22 we lost a day when we crossed the international date line.

On May 27 we arrived at Sydney at 10 a.m. There were some real good, experienced elders when I arrived in Australia. There had been no new elders sent to Australia because of the war. I was one of the twelve permitted as replacements, so within about six or eight months all the older ones were released. That left twelve missionaries for six conferences or districts, two for each place.

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