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Pictures of Hyrum Clark's Mission to Duck River, Tennessee - Jon Clark

This past July 2010, I drove across the country to return home to Salt Lake from Atlanta, where I had been working for a year. Sometime before leaving on my long trip home, Dad sent me a copy of the small book that Grandpa O.M. Clark had compiled on his Father, Hyrum D. Clark. In the book, there are six pages that tell about Hyrum's mission to Duck River, Tennessee. These pages represent letters written by Hyrum and his companion and uncle, Edward Stevenson.

The book states that Hyrum was on his mission for only six months before contracting malaria and having to go back home to get well. Since his Father, Ezra T. Clark had already lost two sons on their missions, they felt Hyrum should return home to recover, rather than risking him dying on his mission as well. Hyrum always felt bad that he had to cut his mission short. So, later in his life, when he was called to serve another mission to California, he happily felt it was a way to complete the full term of his first mission.

One of Hyrum's brothers, Ezra James Clark, died in Albany New York on his way home from a three-year mission to England. Hyrum's half-brother, John Alexander Clark, died on his mission in Haifa, Palestine of smallpox. As you know, it was because of John Clark's death in Palestine that the church was able to later build the Jerusalem Center. Since Israel was not allowing new churches into the country, the church was able to prove through John Clark's headstone, that it was not a new religion, since missionaries had served there back into the 1800s.

On my trip home from Georgia, Dad encouraged me to stop in Duck River to visit that area of Tennessee where Hyrum served his mission in 1878. Dad told me that Grandma and Grandpa Clark had made such a trip earlier to visit where Hyrum served, back in 1965. Grandpa said that he felt that Hyrum's spirit was there during their visit. As you many know, when Hyrum left for his mission, he stopped in Richmond, Missouri, and met David Whitmer. David Bore witness to Hyrum of having seen the plates of the Angel Moroni.

Below are some pictures I took of where Hyrum served his mission in Tennessee. When I arrived in Duck River, I went inside the small country store, the only business establishment in this tiny town. I asked a girl who was working there if she could help me locate three other towns where Hyrum served: Centerville, Shady Grove, and Tolly's Bend. While I was talking to her, in walked an older gentleman whom the girl told me had lived in Duck River all his life and that he knew the area better than anyone. Mr. Anderson, as I recall his last name, was most helpful and very excited to talk to me about Hyrum and his mission. In fact, he told me that he was the fourth generation of his family to live in Duck River. He also said that his great-great-grandfather was the first settler in the area and that he had built the first home there in 1830. When asking about the other towns that Hyrum had served in, Mr. Anderson said that there was no "Tolly's Bend", as stated in book that Grandpa had compiled, but that the correct name is Totty's Bend, named after the Totty family who lived there. He also said that Duck River and Shady Grove are the same town today.Mr. Anderson told me that when he was a boy, he "coon hunted,"sometimes killing three raccoons a night in the surrounding forests. He said he knew coun-

try better in the dark than in the day when he was a boy. After leaving Tennessee, I drove through Missouri to see the church sites at Independence, Far West, and Adam-ondi-Aham. This was another highlight, since Hyrum's father, Ezra T. Clark, and his grandfather, Timothy Baldwin Clark, had lived in Far West and near Independence. I have included some pictures of this area as well.

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Image #1Shady grove, where Hyrum served his six-month mission in Tennessee. This sign is located just before entering the town of Duck River, which today is the same place as Shady Grove.Image #2Duck River, now the same town as Shady Grove, where Hyrum received and sent mail home. This old store, founded in 1939 is the only establishment town. This is where I met Mr. Anderson who told me that just up this road and to the right a few blocks is where an old log cabin Mormon church once stood that hehad remembered seeing as a boy. He said the logs had rotted and the rest of the church was eventually torn down. However, it was most likely the branch that Hyrum talks about as a missionary in his letters homein 1878.- - - - - - - - - - - - END OF PAGE 2 - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Image #3Just across the street from the store is this old fence that surrounds the hill where Mr. Anderson lives. Mr. Anderson told me that this stone fence was built in the 1860s by slaves. It was there when Hyrum served his mission and walked past it many times.Image #4This grave stone was probably Mr. Anderson's great great grandfather, the first settler in Shady Grove/Duck Creek to build a house. Hyrum most likely knew this man.3

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Image #5Mr. Anderson's great, great grandfather's home, the first one build in the Duck River in 1830. Although the roof and sides look a bit newer, the stone foundation still stands.Image #6Just a picture of the country outside Duck River. Hyrum took this route to get to Centerville where he also served.4

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Image #7Further up the road from Shady Grove and Duck RiverImage #8A picture of Duck River, where Hyrum said the fish didn't bite much although wrote that he caught a 10-inch fish one day.5

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Image #9"Totty Bend," rather than "Tolly's Bend," as written in the booklet on Hyrum, was named after the Totty family who resided in the area and whom Hyrum probably knew. The two people represented by the grave stones above would have been twelve years old when Hyrum was on his mission.Image #10Centerville, "17 or 18 miles north" of Duck River, as Hyrum wrote in a letter, where he also served on his mission.6

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Image #11The old town of Centerville, where Hyrum probably arrived and then departed six months later on

train.

Image #12A picture of the country near Centerville, TN.

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Image #13Another picture of the Duck River and Shady Grove area.Image #14I drove up a road outside Duck River and found this old cemetery where

many people are buried that Hyrum must have known while on his mission8

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Image #15At the cemetery in Duck River, looking out over beautiful country in the opposite direction.Image #16My stop in Missouri to see Adam-on-di-Ahman.9

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Image #17Adam-ondi-Ahman, where a temple will be built. Joseph Smith had also written up plans to build a city here.Image #18View to the north of Spring Hill, where Adam and Christ will Come.10

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Image #19Tower Hill- about a mile or two from Spring Hill. This is where Joseph Smith discovered the remains of old Nephite stone alter. Behind the trees in this picture and down the hill is the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, where Adam and Eve dwelt.Image #20Far West, Missouri Temple site, which as it says in the Doctrine and Covenants is "holy ground." The Spirit is very strong here.11

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Image #21Another picture of the temple site at Far West. This is where Joseph and the 12 apostles met in April, 1838 prior to their departure on a mission to England. The night before, they all stayed at the home of Timothy Baldwin Clark.Image #22Looking out to west of the temple site at Far West, Missouri. Of the 5,000 Mormon settlers, there are no remains of any log cabin left to see.12

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Image #23Temple site at Independence, Missouri. A corner stone appears near the bottom of the picture. Timothy Baldwin Clark, who was converted to the church by his close friend and our ancestor, Sanford Porter, in 1835, moved to Missouri that year. Timothy had a farm 12 miles southeast of Independence where he raised horses and cattle. Sanford joined the church in July 1830.Image #24One of the corner stones at the Independence, Missouri temple site.13