

Clark Allen Huntington

1831-1896



Clark Allen Huntington (also known as C.A. or Al Huntington) was born on December 6, 1831 in Watertown, New York. His parents were Dimick Baker Huntington and Fannie Maria Allen.

The following is the conversion story of Clark Allen Huntington's Grandparents, William Huntington Jr. and Zina Baker Huntington and how the family learned about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

"It was a cold night in the latter part of November, and in the home of William Huntington. The family gathered around the big fire place in the spacious kitchen. After the evening meal, when all the evening work was done, it was the habit of this family to get their instruments of music and sit around the blazing logs and play the old fashioned tunes and hymns, also tunes of more cheerful air, although they did not dance. 'Grandfather Huntington played the bass viol, his daughter Zina the cello, William, the cornet, and Dimick, the drum. There were five sons and two daughters, the oldest daughter, Presenda, being married, lived some distance from them. It was a happy New England family and they lived the clean, pure life of the Puritan stock. After the music ceased, a hush fell on the group and a knock was heard on the door and as it opened a strange old gentleman of medium weight, dressed in old fashioned clothes and carrying a bundle on his arm appeared and stepped into the room and said: "I usually bend my steps to some sequestered vale. May I find lodging here tonight?"

With cordial welcome he was invited in and given a place by the fire, in an old easy farm chair, and mother Huntington asked if he would like some supper and modestly he said he would. Then a good New England meal was spread before him, with milk, honey, maple syrup, cold meat, delicious home-made bread and butter. He partook of a light supper while the family spoke in soft tones. It was the custom to read a portion of the scriptures before going to bed. He again joined the circle, and father Huntington began to read from the Holy Bible, a portion of the New Testament, to which they all listened attentively. Grandmother Huntington made some comment on the fact that they would like to hear the Gospel in its fullness as explained and

taught by the Saviour. The stranger immediately took up the subject and began explaining the scriptures and quoting the sayings of the Saviour in what seemed to them a new light and greater beauty than they had ever thought of before. They sat in rapt attention listening to every word. Both father and mother Huntington agreed with his explanations while the boys exchanged glances of admiration and the daughter, Zina was spellbound and sat and gazed upon the stranger with admiration and reverence. After one hour spent in conversation upon this sacred subject, father Huntington had prayers, mother Huntington prepared a comfortable resting place for the stranger and he bid them good night, the boys going upstairs, father and mother Huntington to their bedroom which led from the kitchen, and Zina in her little bed heard her parents talking in low tones about the wonderful stranger and discussing the things he said. The stranger had filled them with awe and reverence, such as they had never felt before. In the morning everyone was astir bright and early as is usual on a farm when so much work has to be done, both outside and in.

The stranger sat placidly watching the remarkable family with whom he took breakfast. The family invited him to stay but he said he had other places to visit and he left them standing in a group as he closed the door softly. When father Huntington saw the stranger depart, he sent Dimick after him to tell him to come again. He immediately opened the door and they all looked out to see and call the stranger back but he was nowhere to be seen. When looking on the door step where the snow had fallen the night before, no trace of a footstep could be seen and the boys running from all directions said that he had vanished and could not be found. Father Huntington remarked that he was the strangest person that ever was and he could not understand where he went, but he had shown them the Gospel in a new light.

Mother Huntington felt that this stranger was some messenger from heaven and all the family were deeply impressed with his wonderful influence and beautiful way of explaining the scriptures.

When the Gospel to life and salvation was brought to them by Hyrum Smith and other Elders, they seemed to coincide with what the stranger had told them concerning the Bible and the restoration of the Gospel. All the family but one accepted the Gospel and prepared to emigrate in a few years to Kirtland; here they met the Prophet of God, Joseph Smith, and became his faithful and loyal followers and friends.

On an occasion when the Prophet Joseph was speaking of the three Nephites, Brother Huntington related this little incident to him. He laid his hand on his head and said: "My dear brother, that man was one of the three Nephites who came to prepare you for the restoration of the Gospel and its acceptance." (Assorted Gems of Priceless Value, by Nels Benjamin Lundwall. The article, called The Prophet Joseph Identifies The Stranger, contains the following note: While visiting in Portland, Oregon, during the month of September, 1938, President Wm. R. Sloan related the following incident to the compiler of this book.)

Clark Allen's family did join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1835. He was baptized in May of 1841 when he was nine years old. After his family joined the church, they left their home in New York and traveled to Kirtland, Ohio. They stayed there about a year, and then continued with the saints to Far West, Missouri and on to Nauvoo, Illinois.

Dimick, Clark Allen's father, helped in the construction of both the Kirtland and Nauvoo temples. He was constable of the settlements of Far West and Nauvoo. He was coroner of Nauvoo, and after Joseph Smith was murdered he helped prepare the body for burial. Clark Allen, at times, went with his father to assist him in his duties. (History of the Church, p.18, 308 and 428)

In 1847, Clark Allen, who was sixteen years old, along with his parents and siblings, began the exodus out of Nauvoo with the rest of the Mormons, crossing the plains, heading for Utah. When his father was called to go with the "Mormon Battalion", Clark Allen, along with his family, went with him. Dimick B. Huntington was one of the few in the battalion that took his family with him. The family was detached from the main group and went to Pueblo, Colorado. From there they traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, arriving on July 29, 1847. Dimick and Fannie Huntington had nine children, Clark Allen being the oldest. Four of his siblings died during childhood.

After arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, Dimick wrote,

"Through all my travels in the Battalion, to Pueblo, back to Laramie and on to Salt Lake Valley, I carried in my wagon a bushel of wheat, and during the winter of 1847, slept with it under my bed, keeping it for seed. For three months my family tasted no bread. We dug thistle roots and other native growths and had some poor beef, with a little milk, but no butter. Early in the spring of 1848, I (Dimick) rode one hundred and fifteen miles to Fort Bridger and bought a quart of little potatoes about the size of pigeon eggs, at twenty-five cents each. From these I raised that year about a bushel of potatoes, but ate none of them. I planted them in 1849 and have had plenty of potatoes ever since." (Heart Throbs of the West, Kate B. Carter, Vol. 6, p. 432)

When President Brigham Young was organizing the men to go out and help rescue the handcart companies that were stranded in Wyoming in 1856, Clark Allen Huntington, twenty-four years of age, joined that rescue party. He was one of the young men that showed his heroism by carrying hundreds of women and children across the icy waters of the Sweetwater River. They would break the ice before them as they waded from shore to shore. The strain was terrible, and Huntington developed a cough that stayed with him his entire life.

A quote from Clark Allen's patriarchal blessing states,

"You shall cause streams to break forth in many places, feed thousands in the wilderness by the power of the Priesthood, shall even raise the dead if it be necessary, shall have companions to assist you and sire a posterity that shall be very great in the Priesthood."

After the rescue party found the suffering saints and provided what comfort they could, the question remained how they would get them, and their possessions, to Salt Lake City. The rescue party met to discuss the possibilities.

“Steve Taylor, Al Huntington, and Daniel W. Jones were together when the question, “Why doesn’t Captain Grant leave all the goods here with someone to watch them, and move on?” was asked. When they all met together, Captain Grant asked if anyone had thought of a plan. These three young men presented their plan. Captain Grant replied, “I have thought of this, but there are no provisions to leave and it would be asking too much of anyone to stay here and starve for the sake of these goods; besides, where is there a man who would stay if called upon?” The answer came, “Any of us would.” The suggestion was adopted, and plans were made to evacuate the handcart companies. Their possessions were unloaded in a nearby fort; they took only a change of clothing, bedding, and light cooking utensils. Wagons from the rescue company were loaded with the sick and feeble. Then Daniel Jones and a few others were asked to stay behind with the goods until further rescue efforts could be mounted”.

(Written by David Kenison from the writings of Daniel W. Jones)

“In 1857 Clark Allen served as a scout for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at Lee’s Ferry, later being employed by Warren Johnson at the ferry. He returned to Salt Lake City where he was employed by Mr. Egan as a rider for the Pony Express.” (Our Pioneer Heritage, Utah and The Pony Express, p. 385)

In the DESERET WEEKLY Pioneer Publication of the Rocky Mountain Region, established June, 1850, an article called “In the Early Days”, written by H. J. Faust states:

“Pleasant Valley, Juab County, July 26, 1893-This Valley was discovered in 1859 by Howard Egan, Al (Clark Allen) Huntington and myself, while exploring the country for a mail route to California. We had been out in a storm for about a week in February—cold, snowing and unpleasant. When we got on the divide of the mountain the sun was setting clear. Mr. Egan turned to me and said, Henry, what will you call this place? I said Pleasant Valley. We went down to the valley and found a beautiful spring, fine grass and a good camping place.

Al Huntington took a ride around to look for Indian signs. He came across a fresh track and following it up, overtook an Indian who was running to get away, having seen us. Al gave chase, soon overtook him, and being a good interpreter, made the Indian understand that we were friendly and then brought him into camp, where we gave him something to eat and induced him to stay with us. He proved a valuable guide. We named him Egan Jack. He afterwards proved to be a bad Indian, killing people and stealing. We got him to get all the other Indians together and made treaties with them. The treaties lasted long enough for us to establish stations, but the Indians soon after broke out.”

On September 27, 1860 at 9:30 PM, Sir Richard Burton wrote a journal entry about Clark Allen Huntington and himself while they were at the Faust Station, riding for the pony express:

"We passed a pleasant day in revolver practice with Al Huntington and dined on antelope."

"For a short time Clark Allen was a body guard for Brigham Young. He was also a stock man in Utah. He was one of the first white men to master the Indian language in Utah. His father, Dimick, who served as an Indian interpreter for the LDS church, taught Clark Allen the language. Clark Allen was adopted into the Indian tribe and was made honorary chief." (Beth Allred, great granddaughter of Clark Allen Huntington)

The following quote refers to Clark Allen and others during the times of struggle with Black Hawk:

"After the war there were camp fires discovered in the night-time, on the west side of the lake, in the vicinity of Table Point. This was reported to General Wells, who ordered an investigation for peace or otherwise. In the execution of this order, a company of twenty-three, mostly young men, went out and found twenty-four Indian warriors. When they met, the Indians were very hostile, having just found the bodies of the twenty-three Indians killed in the battle at Table Point. One of these warriors, in his wrath, struck Al Huntington (Clark Allen), the interpreter, saying, "What did you kill my brother for?" The Indian chiefs also contemptuously inquired why, if they had come out to fight, they didn't "bring men instead of boys," of which the company was chiefly composed. But "the boys" with spirited temper quickly made the warriors understand that they could fight and were quite ready if fight was the order. After talking awhile the wrath of the chiefs was appeased, and the Provo troop divided their dinner with them, smoked the pipe of peace and then all went into the fort, where a treaty of peace was made. There were among these warriors four of the principal chiefs of the Ute nation-Tabby, Sanpitch, Grocepene (three of Walker's brothers), and chief Antero, cousin of Walker." (Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine. The History of Provo)

"While the Black Hawk war kept the attention of the settlers and the militia, Chief Tabby on the Uintah reservation was making his preparations to sweep west, join Black Hawk and thus cut off the isolated southern communities from further help until they would be destroyed. The only thing that kept Tabby from doing just that was the brilliance of Brigham Young and the courage of Al Huntington and William Madison Wall and a few of his company. Brigham Young was only too aware of the danger Tabby presented and so called Al Huntington to go along to Tabby's camp and prevail upon him to cease his raids and live in peace. Up to this point Tabby had little opposition in his raids against the settlements and stock of the Wasatch county settlers because all the settlements had been abandoned in favor of uniting in their common protection in Heber. Brigham Young as a seer and prophet of the living God promised Huntington that no harm would befall him if he undertook the task. With that promise in mind, Huntington did as directed. He went to Tabby's camp and attempted to deliver the President's message, but the Indians were too angry to listen to words of peace. Oddly no attempt was made at first to harm Huntington, probably due to the amazement that a white man would come alone to their village. But as he attempted again and again to preach peace to them, they became more and more angry until their anger was at a fever pitch, when a messenger arrived to tell them that Sanpitch had been killed. The Indians were now ready to kill Huntington in retaliation. Sanpitch's squaw

was screaming "Kill the Mormon, I want to eat his heart while it is still warm," But Sowiette, although old and blind, but still the friend of the settlers, rose to his feet and took the Indians to task for their attitude. One thing an Indian is always willing to acknowledge was courage. Sowiette reminded them that it took the utmost courage to come to their village alone, as Huntington had done. He told them that since the brave man had come in peace he should be allowed to leave in peace. With powerful words of Sowiette in their ears, the Indians let Huntington return to his home unharmed just as President Young had promised him." (Creer Family History: William Madison Wall)

On June 8, 1865 a treaty was signed called the "TREATY WITH THE UTAH, YAMPAH UTE, PAH-VANT, SANPETE UTE, TIM-P-NOGS AND CUM-NM-BAH BANDS OF THE UTAH INDIANS." Clark Allen Huntington along with his father, Dimick B. Huntington, served as interpreters, and were signers of the document.(Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 5)

"During the mid-1850's, Lt. Col. Edward J. Steptoe, commander of the U.S. Army in Utah, was ordered to survey for a direct wagon road from Salt Lake City to northern California. The first of these surveys was completed in 1854 by O. B and C. A. Huntington (Oliver B. and Clark Allen), and John Reese, the builder of the first permanent Euroamerican building in Nevada, among others. They began by following Beckwith's route in and through Nevada. On their return, they explored the area east of Carson Lake." (Exploration and Early Settlement in Nevada Historic Context by Terri McBride, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office)

C. A. Huntington spent a great deal of time traveling the country of Utah, Arizona and Nevada. During his travels he spent some time where later "Lee's Ferry" was built. In 1857 he carved his name in a rock in this area. While this date has been questioned by some, there is no doubt of his extensive travels in dealing with the Indian situation and other assignments from Brigham Young. (Photo from Utah State Digital Collections)



Clark Allen, because of his extensive experience living in the West, working as a pony express rider and as an Indian interpreter, became very familiar with the country in Southern Utah and Northern Arizona. He was an excellent hunter and marksman. Clark

Allen was a scout for many trips and hunting expeditions. He went on a hunting trip as a scout for Buffalo Bill (William Cody) and a party of two English Lords. (Photos and names in possession of SUU Special Collections)

Clark Allen and Rosanna Galoway lived in California for a period of time. Their son, Alexander Wiley said they moved a lot and that Clark Allen wanted to go back to Utah, "to be with the saints." His wife wouldn't go, so he left her and the children in California. He eventually went to Lee's Ferry in Arizona. There he found employment with the Warren Johnson family, helping run the ferry. Warren Johnson, with his family, had been called on a mission to go to Lee's Ferry in Arizona, and run the ferry across the Colorado River. Jody Johnson (daughter of Warren Johnson) said, "Daddy Huntington (Clark Allen) lived with us for about fifteen years.

There wasn't much communication between Clark Allen and his family and for quite some time Clark Allen thought that his son, Alexander Wiley was dead. It isn't known when Alexander Wiley left California but he eventually went to Lee's Ferry and found his father.

Jody Johnson wrote the following experience:

"During Clark Allen's stay at Lee's Ferry, he didn't know where his son, Alexander Wiley was. It worried him. Alexander Wiley had run away from home and they didn't know what happened to him and they thought he was dead. One morning Clark Allen got up and told the folks that Alexander Wiley wasn't dead. It wasn't long before Alexander Wiley came to the ferry. He had a mule. This made Clark Allen very upset to think that a son of his would be such a person as to roam the country on a mule. Clark Allen was always proud of his horses and always had good saddle horses".

Jody Johnson writes of another experience involving Clark Allen:

"Jerimian (Jerry) Johnson, and Al (Clark Allen) took a bunch of calves out to the Buckskin to sell to Anthony W. Ivins. They had to cut back some of the calves to bring back. They camped at Jacob's Pool, at House Rock Valley. The next morning, Al told Jerry that there would be an accident in the family and to prepare himself for it. A short time after he said this, father (Warren) was in an accident, breaking his back, and was paralyzed from the waist down. Al knew that father was going to get hurt. Al had other inspirations or foresight. He was a typical pioneer. He moved out from the ferry and helped take care of father. He was just like a father to us kids".

Lydia Johnson Spencer of Glendale, Utah said, "Al used to tell them (Lydia's family) stories and entertain them all the time. He used to make toys and things for them." He told her one time that, "He had a little girl just about her size that he loved very much and missed." He was talking about his daughter, Rosanna. (Story told to Beth Allred, great granddaughter of Clark Allen)

Brent Turek, a great-grandson of Clark Allen Huntington had the opportunity to visit with Frank Johnson, son of Warren Johnson, who personally knew his great grandfather:

"During my freshman year at Dixie College, my mother, my Aunt Ada and I met with Frank Johnson, one of Warren Johnson's sons and discussed the period of time that Clark Allen Huntington (Al) lived with the Johnson family at Lee's Ferry and in Kanab. The following is an abbreviated version of this conversation. Mr. Johnson said that despite Al's (the name he typically went by) many adventures in Indian wars, exploration of Utah, serving as a body guard to Brigham Young and serving as a special messenger to the Indians for Brigham young, he was very warm, friendly and easy to like. He got along well with their family, and most others, especially the children. He served as a surrogate father during the time that Johnson's father, Warren, was away from home and after Warren was invalided when he broke his back. He taught the boys many skills of life. The one the boys liked the best was that of shooting, in which Al excelled. Frank said that Al was a perfectionist when teaching it. The boys were always trying to get Al to do shooting tricks and would do his chore of chopping the wood if he could do marksmanship tricks that they deemed impossible. " I think we chopped the wood most of the time."

Frank said that Al was quite spiritual and able to know of events that were to take place in the future. He claimed this occurred a number of times. Two of these were when Al predicted his son Alexander coming to visit him and the debilitating accident to Warren Johnson. Clark Allen suffered from severe coughing spells for most of his life. These spells started after his experience of carrying the Martin Handcart Saints across the Sweet Water River in Wyoming in 1856. Frank indicated that Al spent a number of days in the fall getting wagon loads of wood for widows and those in need. Bishop Richard McAllister of Kanab is reported to have said: "Clark Allen Huntington was my ideal." Al was a good friend to the Indians and spoke several languages fluently. Toward the end of his life the Indians would come by to see him and would bring him fresh meat, especially venison, which Al really liked."

Alexander Wiley was with his father much of the time during the last three years of his father's life. He said that Clark Allen contracted a cough when he had helped the people at the Sweetwater and that it stayed with him all the rest of his life, eventually causing his death. Clark Allen Huntington passed away at the home of Warren Johnson and was interred in the cemetery in Kanab, Utah on November 16, 1896.