



## Lakeview Church and the Nauvoo Brick

by Diane Johnson Stokoe

When Sister Zulma Gonzalez steered her General Authority husband toward a small group of onlookers after a ground-breaking ceremony for the Orem Temple, she had no idea that a brick from the original Nauvoo temple was housed across the road less than a mile away. The brick had been prominently displayed in the Lakeview church for over sixty-five years. (White brick pointed to in photo.) It was Nathan B. Johnson, a great grandson of John Johnson and nephew of Dean A. Johnson who, with son Chad, retrieved it before the Lakeview church was torn down in 2020.

Perhaps, President Russell M. Nelson did not know when he selected the site, about the rich history of Lakeview, the little farming community on the shores of Utah Lake. Here is the story:

*“Provo, the county’s first settlement, was incorporated on February 6, 1851 and the Provo Stake was organized a few weeks later. . . The small farming community of Lakeview at the mouth of Provo River was settled in 1855. In 1861 floods from the river and rising lake water forced the people to move to higher ground. Lakeview citizens were assigned to the Provo Third Ward until a local ward could be created in 1877. The first settler of Lakeview was Peter Madsen, a young Danish immigrant and skilled fisherman who was able to help feed hundreds of residents of Utah County during the famine years of 1855. PIONEER magazine - Volume 67 – 2020. Madsen was the first bishop of Lakeview. He served as bishop for fifteen years.*

Lena Johnson left Norway on June 7, 1849 and together with her family, crossed the ocean in a large sailing vessel called “Monarch of the Sea.” They traveled across the plains in Patriarch John Smith’s ox-train arriving in Salt Lake City in October 1864. Her family settled in Provo. Her brother John Johnson hired out to work for different men in Lakeview. He helped build the Peter Madsen Fort close to the mouth of Provo River and served as guard against the menace of the hostile indians in the area. John was baptized at seventeen by Bishop Madsen who was also his brother-in-law as he married Lena who was Madsen’s fifth and youngest plural wife.

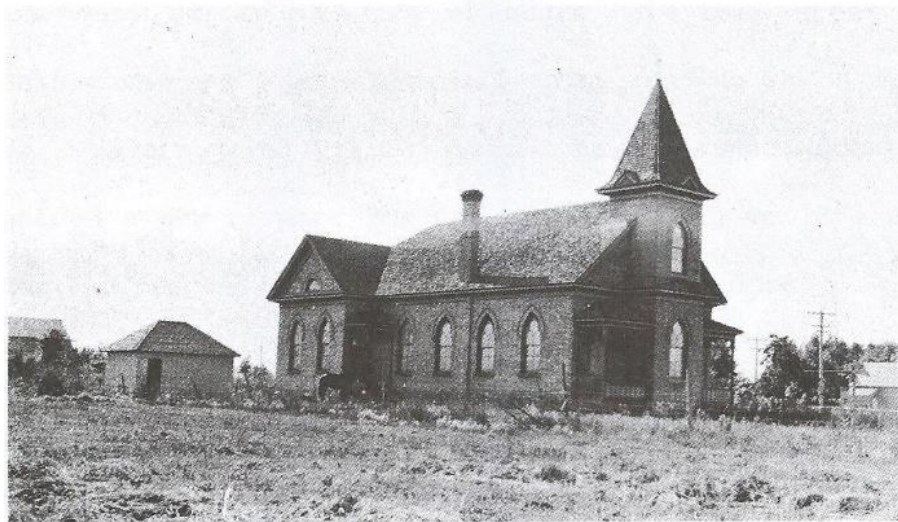


***Peter Madsen***



***Lena Johnson Madsen -- mother of nine children***

In 1868 John was sent back to the terminus of the Union Pacific railroad by Brigham Young to bring the last group of immigrating Saints to Salt Lake Valley. After receiving an inheritance from his father's estate in Norway, John bought 47 acres in Lakeview with a small adobe house and a good corral. When Lakeview Ward was organized in 1877, John was called to be the Presiding Teacher. In October 1889, he left wife Inger, six daughters, and son Alfred to run the farm while he served a mission in Norway. Elder Johnson labored in Frederikshald, Ejdavoil and Christiania before being called to preside over the Christiania Conference. When John returned in February 1892, he was ordained a High Priest and set apart as bishop of Lakeview. A position he held for twenty-three years. In 1902 the church building was completed. It was similar in architecture to the Provo Tabernacle. In 2014 the tabernacle was destroyed by fire; the outer walls were not damaged so it was remodeled and is now the Provo City Center Temple.



***Lakeview's first church***

John Johnson's youngest son August Jeremiah served as bishop of Lakeview from 1936 through 1940. He oversaw the remodeling of the church. The spire was removed, several classrooms added, and the building was painted white.



***John Johnson with sons Alfred H. (left) and August Jeremiah (right).***

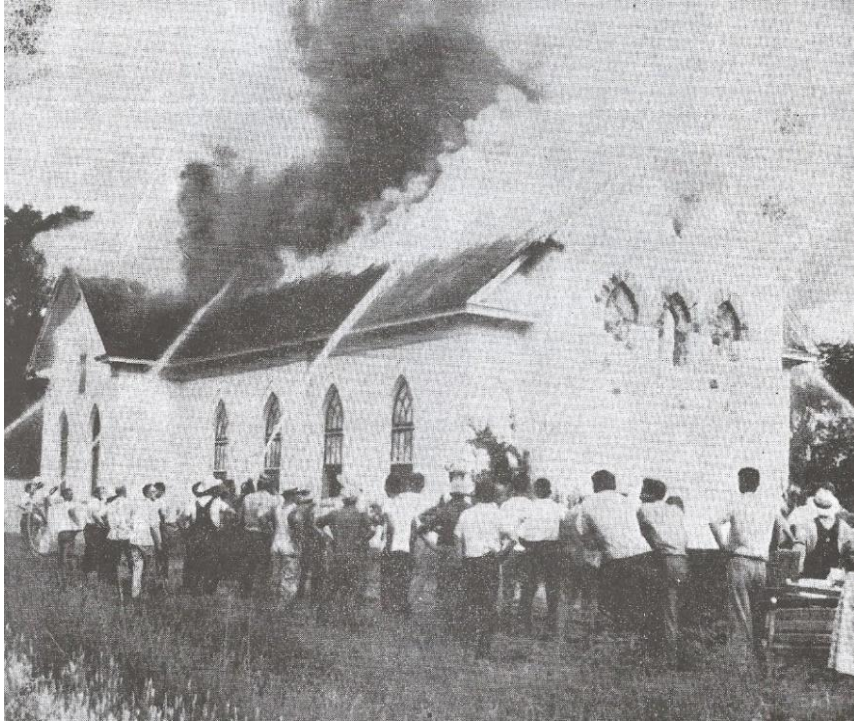
The church was dedicated by Church President Heber J. Grant in the fall of 1938. During the meeting, as Bishop Johnson observed his son Herbert at the sacrament table, a thought came to mind. "I wondered whose funeral would be first to be held in the new building?"



***Sugar beet workers in front of the newly remodeled Lakeview church***

Herbert enrolled at BYU and was waiting for a mission call. A few days after the dedication he suffered an acute ruptured appendix and died October 7, 1938. August said, "When Herbert died, I came to better understand the sacrifice the good Lord made when he sent his only begotten son to save us."

### In 1955 that church burned to the ground



The new building committee included Elvin Bunnell, Leroy Williamson, former bishop August Johnson and a future bishop - Dean A. Johnson. My dad had broken his back by falling from a hay stake so had attended meetings wearing a plaster body cast that went from his clavicle to his groin.

*August writes: "When I was Bishop the amusement hall, and the old church, was not very comfortable. It was depression days when a dollar was worth a dollar and very hard to come by. In the year and four months it took for the remodeling, it became a most inviting place. I want to express my gratitude for the loyalty of the Ward members to me and my Bishopric. In no other place could you find people more loyal and willing to work.*

*With the tears that were shed here when our Chapel was on fire, if they could have been put to use the fire could have been put out much sooner. The remodeling of our Chapel was done with mighty hard work. The people left their own work to help with the Chapel, and I am sure that we will do it again. If we put in our new church the same loyalty, we will have the same love for our new building."*

A few years before the church burned down, dad took our family on a motor trip to visit the Church-history sites. In Nauvoo dad found a white brick that had been part of the original Nauvoo temple and brought it home as a souvenir. Everyone knew he had the brick. When the church burned down, the building committee enthusiastically declared that the brick should be

included in the structure of the new church building. Eventually, when the building was condemned for demolition there was debate as to what should be done with the Nauvoo brick. Cousin Nathen Johnson, knowing that my dad was the brick doner, chiseled it out and offered it to me. Knowing that a new temple would be built across from his farm, I asked Nate to store the brick in his shed until we found out if the temple building committee would consider including it in the Orem temple structure.



***Lakeview Chapel after the Nauvoo brick was removed***

But back to our trip east in 1954. We enjoyed visiting New York, Washington D.C., the Sacred Grove, and Nauvoo. But the highlight for my father's trip was the Kirkland Temple which is owned by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ. It was there that dad had this amazing experience:

*I had greatly anticipated the day we arrived in Kirtland, Ohio. My interest was in the main room where the Melchizedek Priesthood officiated along with the Aaronic priesthood at the other end on the first floor. Church leaders sat at pulpits arranged according to the office they held. I've always had a great desire to place my hands on the pulpit; or lean on the place where Christ had once stood. When I asked the guide if I could go there, he responded: "No, we don't allow visitors beyond the rope. That area is reserved for the Presidency of our Church and they are the only ones who are permitted there. Even then they only go there on very special occasions."*

*Very reluctantly I left and as I was getting into the car, "Ask the man again!" came a whispering voice to my ear, "Ask the man again?" Why ask, I silently answered. I have already asked him*

*three times and he's refused. The voice seemed to almost take control of my whole being, and almost against my will, I found myself getting out of the car and retracing my steps back toward the Temple. I went up to the guide who was just locking up and said:*

*"Sir, I am a high Priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood of the Mormon Church from Utah." He answered, "I recognize the authority of the priesthood which you hold" and took me back into the main floor. He removed the rope and motioned me up to the place where I wanted to go.*

*I placed my right hand on the pulpit, my left elbow also, and with my head bowed into my cup shaped left hand I offered up a very reverent prayer of thanksgiving to my Father in Heaven. Never at any time in my life have I experienced the Spirit of the Lord to the extent that I did at this time. I was so overcome and overpowered that it seemed I was almost beyond all things of an earthly nature. I think I know somewhat of what the Prophet experienced when he would write or say, "being in the spirit." I prayed for I know not how long but when I obtained my natural self once more, I found that there were tears streaming from my eyes and dropping down to the pulpit. Tears had run down my left arm and my entire face was wet. As I looked into the face of my dear brother, I found that he too was experiencing the same kind of heavenly Spirit. His head was bowed, and tears were falling from his eyes. I reverently descended the steps down from the pulpit. I thanked the good brother again for his kindness. He answered: "Don't thank me; I had nothing to do with it. I was being led by a power that I could not resist, nor did I want to resist. This experience means as much to me as it did to you."*

Dean A. Johnson served as the bishop of Lakeview from 1960 to 1964. **Lakeview ward Bishopric photo included those standing L-R are clerks Merrill Olsen, Francis Camara, and LeRoy Nelson. Seated Elvin Bunnell, 1st counselor; Dean A. Johnson, Bishop; and Sheldon Madsen, 2nd counselor.**



1963 was a very trying year for our family. On Thanksgiving Day Corinne was in an automobile accident which crushed her spine leaving her paralyzed from the waist down. She writes: “My father had enormous faith, many spiritual experiences, a strong testimony of the gospel, a knowledge of its truthfulness and great faith in the hear-after. I know this helped me in my recovery. Dad was one of the hardest working men I have ever known, and he expected all of us to work just as hard as he did.” There was more to follow. Three years later my mother, Jessie Eva Farley, developed stomach cancer and died on March 12, 1966. Six years later my father died of a malignant brain tumor January 12, 1971.

The faith of my parents and pioneer ancestors has been a great strength to me throughout my life. Hard work, solid values and a commitment to gospel principles sustained me through difficult times. And growing up in Lakeview was sometimes even magical. I remember Christmas morning 1949. My dad, two sisters and I always rose at 4:00 a.m. to get the milking done before neighborhood festivities. I remember trudging through grandpa’s hay field that morning to reach the barn and hearing a choir of beautiful voices singing. I thought some radio station in Provo must be broadcasting music out over our little farming community. When I reached the barn my dad asked, “Diane, did you hear the angels singing?”

***In early 2020 the Lakeview church was demolished***



Letters were written to church leaders suggesting that the new temple be called the “Lakeview Temple.” Orem might be appropriate based only on location. However that name does not reflect Lakeview -- the leaders, values and pioneer heritage. Lakeview was not mentioned once

during the recent groundbreaking ceremony. So I'm suggesting a more appropriate and accurate name. Let's call it the "Orem Lakeview Temple!"

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### **FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES**

- *City of Orem a Centennial Benchmark, by Charlene Winters. Printed by the city of Orem which became Utah's newest city on May 15, 1919. Prior to that it was called Provo Bench. . . People on the bench considered downtown Provo to be their city center. p. 23. In 1919 the Provo Bench Commercial Club considered name suggestions including Timpanogos, Sharon, Canyon City. In the end the club's president Britt Woodward recommended Orem. . . Clyde Weeks Jr, former postmaster suggested that since the Salt Lake and Utah Railroad would be building an electric interurban line through the bench it might be advantageous to name the community after Railroad owner Walter C. Orem. This would be a high honor for the railway owner. (Walter C. Orem resided in Salt Lake. He never lived on Provo Bench nor in the city that bore his name.)*
- *Nathan Johnson's dairy farm has been designated as a Centennial Farm -- it's been in the Johnson family for five generations. It is located across the street from the temple. The Nauvoo temple Brick is stored with him in hopes it can be used in the construction of the new temple or perhaps displayed in the Visitor's Center with this information.*
- *Pioneer Magazine, 2020 – Volume 67. Number 2 – The Settlement of Utah County. 7-8.*
- *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pp 4-5.*
- *August Jeremiah Johnson by daughter Natalee J. Stratton, March 1996, - Family Search.*
- *John & Inger's DNA and John & Inger's Gallery – Two private Facebook Pages. Most of the photos appear at familysearch.org – in memories - without my text. Please note familysearch.org does not allow imbedded photos. I opened two Facebook accounts and post information for descendants. All my histories contain imbedded photos.*
- *Dianestokoe.com click either "Publications" or "Family History" to find the following:*
- *Autobiography of Dean A. Johnson "Family History" section.*
- *Alfred H. Johnson Family History – John and Inger's DNA – private Facebook account*
- *Alfred H. Johnson Family History – John and Inger's Gallery – private Facebook account*
- *Autobiography of John Johnson" – 24 minute video developed for 1996 Family Reunion.*
- *The Circle of Life – John and Inger's Centennial Celebration – 1 hr. 15 min video*
- *Diane Stokoe's private collection – A Book of Remembrance Binder include John Johnson & Inger Sward; Alfred H. Johnson & Murl Holdaway; Dean A. Johnson & Jessie Farley family stories.*
- *History of Lakeview Ward 1855 to 1951 by Christian Jeppesen Jr. published by J. Grant Stevenson, copyright 1969.*



- “Temple groundbreaking in Orem links past, future” by Scott Taylor, Church News, September 13, 2020: “Niels Williamson, a Latter-day Saint immigrant from Norway, first settled across land in present-day Orem in 1870. . . property divided between his three children. . . later going to daughter Margaret Camp. . . her descendants selling the majority of her property to the Church in 2004.” This is correct but the article claims to ‘link past to present.’ It does not mention Lakeview, its leaders or it’s rich pioneer heritage. The area above I-15 called Provo Bench was a fruit growing. Her mother - Jessie Eva Farley - was born there to Carl Farley a fruit farmer. People living west of I-15 were generally dairy farmers, including Dean A. Johnson, his three brothers, father Alfred and Uncle August. Nathen Birk’s centennial farm is across the street from the temple site. His address was 2225 North Geneva Rd. Provo until Orem annexed the area in 1978 leaving half of Lakeview in Provo, and half in Orem and Nate’s address became 1356 Geneva Rd., Orem.*
- Photo of the John Johnson and Inger Sward family** - All residence of Lakeview, they, their children and grandchildren were mostly dairy farmers. *Clockwise: **Alfred** (Murl Holdaway & Francis Madsen); **Tenie** (Martin A. Clinger; **Emma** (Conrad Maag); **Julia Inger** (H. Edward Hatton); **Josephine** (William W. Goodridge); **Nora** (William W. Taylor); **Anna Goldie Sward** (Halverson, adopted daughter of Inger Johnson’s sister); **Ellen Bergitte** (Leslie I. Bunnell); **August Jeremiah** (Ruth Tylor & Beatrice Henderson,) August seated between his parents.*



**John Johnson** - born at Osterhaug Sveen (a farm) in Loiten Hedemarken, Norway on June 7, 1849 – He descended from six generations of Norwegian farmers. John's family joined the Mormon church, sold the dairy farm and left Norway April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863. They arrived in Salt Lake City on October 1<sup>st</sup> later settling in Provo. In the spring of 1868 at age nineteen, John was called as a teamster to go to Fort Benton on the north Platte, to collect the last immigrants and bring them to Utah in wagon trains.

**Inger Sward** - daughter of August (Aakeson) Sward and Elna Olsen, was born May 2, 1848 in Ostra Vram, Kristinstad, Sweden. Baptized a Mormon at age seventeen, Inger with her brother Andrew, left Sweden and emigrated to America. She and John first met at Fort Benton when he arrived to collect the immigrants. Three years later they married and later settled in Lakeview where they raised their children.

**About the author** – Diane Johnson Stokoe is a great-grand-daughter of John Johnson. She has a master's degree in Family and Local History from Brigham Young University. Her Thesis, "The Mormon Waldensians," at dianestoke.com is the basis for "Strength of the Hills" a historical novel by Karen Peterson Mosley. Diane Stokoe is the wife of Thomas A. Stokoe and the mother to six sons. She serves as both 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward and Willow Creek Stake Historian in Sandy, Utah.