

David Wyman Patten

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by **Alexander L. Baugh**

David Wyman Patten (1799-1838), son of Benenio (Benoni) Patten and Abigale (Edith) Cole, was born in Theresa, Jefferson County, New York, on November 14, 1799. He left his home at an early age and settled near Dundee, Monroe County, Michigan. In 1828 he married Phoebe Ann Babcock. They had no children.

Patten first became acquainted with the Book of Mormon around 1830. In May 1832 he received a letter from his brother John, who was living in Green County, Indiana, noting that he had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Patten journeyed to Indiana and was baptized by his brother on June 15, 1832. Two days later he was ordained an elder by Elisha H. Groves. On September 2, 1832, he was ordained a high priest by Hyrum Smith.

Until his death in 1838, Patten served almost continuously as a missionary for the Church. He established numerous branches of the Church on each of his proselytizing journeys and was renowned for his spiritual gift of healing.

On February 14, 1835, Patten was chosen as one of the Twelve Apostles and was ordained the following day by Oliver Cowdery. On May 2, 1835, the Prophet Joseph Smith directed that the seniority of the Twelve be determined according to the members' ages. Patten was uncertain of his exact birth date, and Thomas B. Marsh (born 1800) was mistakenly adjudged to be the older of the two, and thus was made the President of the Quorum.

During the latter part of 1836, Elder Patten settled in Far West, Missouri. Following Church action taken against the presidency of the stake in Missouri (David Whitmer, William W. Phelps, and John Whitmer) in early February 1838, Thomas B. Marsh and Patten were appointed as Presidents pro tem of the Church in Missouri. On April 6, 1838, Patten and Brigham Young were sustained as assistant presidents of the Church in Missouri, with Thomas B. Marsh as President pro tem.

In April 1838, Joseph Smith received a revelation instructing Patten to prepare for a mission with the Twelve the following spring (D&C 114); however, Patten did not live to fulfill the assignment. He died on

October 25, 1838, from a wound suffered in a battle at Crooked River when a contingent of Caldwell County militia, under his leadership, attempted to rescue three Latter-day Saints who had been taken prisoners by a company of Missourians from Ray County. He was buried in Far West, Missouri, two days later. In January 1841 a revelation was given to Joseph Smith in which the Lord indicated that David W. Patten "is with me at this time" (D&C 124:19, 130).

Bibliography

Jenson, Andrew. Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pp. 76-80. Salt Lake City, 1901.
Wilson, Lycurgus A. Life of David W. Patten, the First Apostolic Martyr. Salt Lake City, 1900.
Source: http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Patten,_David_W.

David Wyman Patten died October 25, 1838 of wounds suffered at the Battle of Crooked River in Caldwell County, Missouri. Had he survived, he would have become President of the Twelve with the excommunication of Thomas B. Marsh. As it was, he suffered the martyr's death, the first of the General Authorities of the Latter-days to do so. The following is from his own words as printed in the Millennial Star:

"Sept. 12, 1834, I started in company with brother Warren Parish to go into the world to preach the Gospel, traveled through Upper Missouri, preaching by the way. At La Grange I took steamboat for St. Louis, and from thence by steamboat to the mouth of the Ohio, where we landed October 2nd, and proceeded to Paris, in Tennessee; where we tarried about three months, preaching the Gospel in that vicinity and the region round about, we baptized twenty, during which time several instances of the healing power of God were made manifest, one of which I will mention, which was wrought upon the wife of Mr. Johnston F. Lane, who had been sick for eight years, and for the last year had been unable to walk, she hearing of us, and the faith we preached, prevailed on her husband to send for us: I went with him immediately and taught them the Gospel, showing what power was exercised by the Lord upon those who had faith; she believed with all her heart all the words which

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I spake unto her; and I laid my hands upon her and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke this disorder, and command it to depart." I took her by the hand, and commanded her to arise in the name of Jesus Christ, and be made whole; and she arose, and was made whole every whit. I then commanded her to go to the water and be baptized; she walked down straightway the



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same hour, and was baptized. After I had baptized and confirmed her I told her she should amend and gain strength, and in less than one year she should have a son (she had been married some twelve years, and had no children,) which came to pass according to my words, and the parents called the child David Patten; she afterwards bore several children"

Source: <http://www.gapages.com/pattedw1.htm>

Battle of Crooked River

In response to this and other rumors, Captain Samuel Bogart of the Ray County militia decided to patrol the border between Ray and Caldwell counties with a company of men. While he was authorized in this action by his superior, General Atchison, he overstepped his bounds when he led a group of men across the line into Caldwell County. Here the militia harassed several families and took three men prisoner. Bogart's actions have been blamed for the fight that followed. His previous participation in mobs had already earned him a reputation as a "thoroughgoing mob character" among the Saints he was harassing. Peter Hardman Burnett, a Clay County resident, said he "was not a very discreet man, and his men were of much the same character." His actions produced suspicion and fear from the Mormons in Ray and Caldwell Counties. On October 24,

1838, word that three Saints had been captured reached Church leaders in Far West. Elias Higbee, a judge in Caldwell County, authorized the Caldwell County militia to retrieve the prisoners and quell what they thought was a mob.

A company was formed in Far West and left for Ray County under the direction of David W. Patten. About dawn, as Patten's group ap-

proached the militia camp, a sentinel guarding the camp hailed the Mormon troops and then fired on them, injuring one of the men. General fighting broke out. Initially, the Mormons were at an extreme disadvantage. They stood on almost open ground at dawn, making easy targets for the Missourians, who were shielded behind the cover of brush and trees. As a result, several Mormons were hit with gunfire almost immediately. When David Patten realized the situation his men were in, he ordered a charge, which his men responded to with shouts of "God and Liberty." The charge sufficiently scared Bogart's men, who retreated, crossing the river in haste, the Mormons in pursuit. The brief battle ended in a Mormon victory, but resulted in casualties on both sides. Gideon Carter, a Mormon was killed during the melee, and nine other members of Patten's group were wounded. Two of the wounded, David W. Patten and Patrick O'Banion, a non-Mormon who was assisting the Saints, died from their wounds. Moses Rowland, one of Bogart's men, also died. Additionally, the Mormons took one prisoner, Wyatt Cravens, who was released on their way back to Far West.

Source: Historic Liberty Jail Site Guide, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, page 67.