Concerning the Prophet's preaching, I have heard father say that although he was a powerful speaker and could hold his audience spellbound, he seemed to feel an inability to make them really comprehend what he taught them, and showed great anxiety to do so. Here are a few points that father heard him teach:

It would have been contrary to the oath and covenant that belong to the Priesthood for Lot and his family to have been destroyed with Sodom, so the Lord sent an angel to get them out, as Lot held the Priesthood.

Concerning the work for the dead, he said that in the resurrection those who had been worked for would fall at the feet of those who had done their work, kiss their feet, embrace their knees and manifest the most exquisite gratitude. We do not comprehend what a blessing to them these ordinances are. Father was so impressed with these teachings that he spent the last ten years of his life working in Temples, and has transmitted the same inclination to his posterity. We have worked for over 5,000 of our dead and have as many more to do.

"At a conference one time in Nauvoo, he predicted that some day polygamy would be practiced in this church. This caused such consternation among the saints, that at a later meeting he soothed their feelings by explaining that the gospel had to be "preached to every nation, kingdom, tongue and people." If preached to them many would receive it, also what would be the use of preaching it? Since most of the earth's inhabitants now practice polygamy, what would a man with two or more wives do when he joined the Church? Would he have to discard all his family but his first wife and her children? No; the gospel is not to break up families. They would all be received into the Church and continue to live as they always had lived in that respect as there was no crime in having more than one wife.

While living in Nauvoo they became very well acquainted with the Prophet Joseph, and I have heard my father repeat many of his teachings and describe his personal appearance, all of which seemed to have impressed him very much. My grandfather, James Cummings, became one of his intimate friends and being a master Mason, officiated in conducting the Prophet thru all the degrees of Masonry.

"To his surprise and pleasure, the Prophet seemed to understand some of the features of the ceremonies better than any Mason and made explanations that rendered them much more beautiful and full of meaning. It was evident to grandfather that he knew more of what was given in the Temple of Solomon than did the Masons who claim that their ceremonies originated there."
Salt Lake City, Utah,
Jan 17th, 1933.

I was born at Elkader, Clayton County, Iowa, Sept. 6th, 1862, raised as a farm, lived there till I was 22 years old, then married. My father was a brother of Joseph Smith the Prophet; his name was William Smith. I had one own brother and one own sister. My brother’s name was William Bosh Smith; my sister’s name was Leila May Smith. My mother’s maiden name was Eliza Eliza Sanborn. They were married in Penn. My brother 4 years my senior was born in Pennsylvania and from there removed to Iowa where I was born, also my sister and at the present date they have been dead, my brother two years and my sister 5 years ago. He died in Sanborn County, S. D. My sister in Delaware County; Iowa.

At about 30 years of age I was baptized a member of the Reorganized Church of Latter-day Saints by Elder I. N. Roberts who was one of the seventies of said church and soon after received credentials as an Elder of said church. Removed to Barron County, Wisconsin, and took charge of a branch of said church for a few years. Received a visit from said Elder T. H. Chatburn, a member of the seventies who informed me that the revelation on plural marriage was first received by Joseph the Prophet and that he practiced polygamy, also Hyrum and my father William also. He asked me if I knew it. I said no, and I do not believe it for my father taught me differently. Well said he it is true and is well known by the present leaders of the church. The son of the prophet Joseph Smith junior was then the president of said church. Well I said, why is it I have been misled. He said they repeated it and from that time on I felt burdened in such that I lost an interest in the work till Elder Whitaker, the presiding elder called upon me and asked me how I felt in the work. I said I am getting skeptical. He said about what? I said about the whole thing, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and so forth. He then demanded that I give up my credentials which I did and so I never felt right about the work afterwards for about 30 years and was a wanderer in spiritual darkness, not knowing which church I ought to be with except as the one designated as the kingdom of God. I preached Christian union for a short time but soon found out it was utterly impossible to get so-called christians of different denominations to become united even in spirit let alone doctrinal differences, till I finally took up the study of spiritual chenomics and consolled myself that way, which of course was very misleading. Meanwhile I had wandered from Wisconsin to the far west, the state of Washington. I was located at Olympia, the capital. I became a member of the so-called Christian church but soon lost interest in that. The minister of the Christian church took quite an interest in me, especially as I told him I was a nephew to Joseph the Prophet. The so-called depression was just dawning after the world war. I had worked in lumber camps and lumber mills and upon railroads and also farmed a great deal.