

Sabbath Baptism

Robert Rees

In 1886, Sister Sallie Stephensen
of Fairview, Idaho, was possessed
of an evil spirit for a sabbath of weeks.
The congregation fasted and prayed, but
the sprit persisted, so the elders
were called—and came—eleven in all.
Pouring a goodly portion of olive oil
on her head from a little blue vial
that had crossed the ocean,
plains, and mountains,
they commanded the spirit out—
but still it wouldn't come, so
after consulting with the bishop,
they baptized her once a day for seven days.

At the Sabbath meeting eleven elders stood
and bore witness to the power of the priesthood,
after which Sallie stood and testified
that the spirit was still in her.
When the benediction was over,
they took her to the river
and baptized her seven times in a row.
It took four of them to put her struggling
body under each time. The remaining seven
stood by to witness that no hem of her
blue muslin dress nor tress of her long red hair
remained unimmersed.

When they brought her up the seventh time,
gasping, water spewing from her mouth, she exclaimed,
whether from exhaustion or actual relief,
“Enough! It has gone from me.”
She lived to be ninety-two and was present
at the baptism of all her children, her grand-children,
and her great-grand children,
but she never once stood again in testimony meeting.