

The story of  
ERASTUS BINGHAM, JR.

Taken from a story form copy of a journal and from records in the possession of Howard Blaine Cragun, the son of Blanche Rebecca BINGHAM Grundy Cragun Smith, the grandson of Lorenzo Freeman BINGHAM and the great grandson of Erastus BINGHAM Jr..

Born 30 September 1822 in St. Johnsbury, Caladonia, VT.  
Passed away 5 April 1905 (06) in Tucson, Pima, AZ or Maricopa, Az.

This is also the story of  
First wife OLIVE HOVEY (FREEMAN) BINGHAM  
Born 8 January 1820 in Waterford, VT.  
and  
What is known of second wife  
Susan GREEN (daughter of Benjamin P. Green and Lucy WISDOM)

*Just as his father's is, this also is a truly INTERESTING historical of the trek West made by Pioneers who weathered SO much in their struggle to maintain the religion which meant everything to them. It is taken from a story form copy of a journal and from records in the possession of Howard Blaine Cragun, the son of Blanche Rebecca BINGHAM Grundy Cragun Smith, the grandson of Lorenzo Freeman BINGHAM, the gr. Grandson of Erastus BINGHAM jr. and gr. grandson of Erastus BINGHAM*

Erastus Bingham, jr., the third child and second son of Erastus Bingham and first wife Olive Hovey FREEMAN, was born 30 September 1822 at St. Johnsbury, Caladonia, VT. and died 5 Aril 1906 in, Tucson, Pima, AZ – or Mesa, Maricopia, AZ. His burial was 5 April 1906 in Mesa, Maricopa City Cemetery. He was baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints November 11, 1833 at St. Johnsbury, Vermont by Elder Evans.

He was 14 years old when he left Vermont with his parents. He participated in all the travels and persecutions of his parents, and their final move from the state of Illinois. In the year 1843, he was married to Olive Hovey FREEMAN. He had his endowments in the Nauvoo Temple 3 January 1846.

When the exodus from Nauvoo took place in the spring of 1846, he was called to go ahead and make roads, build bridges and plant crops. He went as far as Mt. Pisgah, Iowa, and then returned to meet his wife, who he had left in the care of his parents. They met somewhere between La Harpe, Illinois and Mt. Pisgah, Iowa.

During his absence, his wife gave birth to a son, the second child. He returned with his family and the Saints to Mt. Pisgah, Iowa. From there they traveled westward with the Saints. Prior to their arrival in Council Bluffs, Iowa, the call came from the United States Government for a battalion of 500 soldiers to fight in the war with Mexico. He enlisted, along with his brother Thomas and his wife's brother Elijah Norman FREEMAN and they recruited in the Mormon Battalion at Council Bluffs, leaving his family to be cared for by his father and mother.

When the Mormon Battalion reached Pueblo, Colorado, Erastus Bingham, jr. was detained there with Captain Brown's sick detachment, to care for the sick. He remained there the following winter, and in the spring of 1847 he cut across the mountains and struck the Pioneer

trail near Fort Laramie on the North Platt River a few days behind President Brigham Young's company. He followed this company into Salt Lake Valley.

Erastus Bingham jr. helped build several log cabins and on August 26, President Brigham Young, and a company of 100 persons started on a return trip to Winter Quarters. Erastus Bingham, jr. went with them until he met his family with the Pioneers of the second company on the Sweetwater River and he returned to Salt Lake with them. It had been a year since he had left them. His wife had been ill and confined to the wagon most of the time. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley 19 September 1847. He located in Salt Lake City and farmed until the fall of 1849 when he and his brother, Thomas, went to California to find gold.

While he was with the Mormon Battalion detachment he did not go to California but he had heard, from those who did get there, all about the gold and he was anxious to go. President Brigham Young said they could go if they would promise to use what they got in helping to build up Zion.

He was not very successful and returned in 1851 to find that his family, along with his father's family and friends, had moved to Ogden, Utah and were living in Bingham's Fort.

He tried to do some farming north of the Fort but because of so much trouble with the Indians, he was not very successful. In 1855 he married a second wife, Susan Green. In 1857 he took some cattle to herd into Ogden Valley. There was no road into the Valley at that time and he took them over an old Indian trail.

About this time, Johnston's Army was on its way to Utah and he, being an ex-member of the Mormon Battalion and a member of the Utah Militia, was called immediately to the Army. He had to leave before he was able to deliver all the cattle that he was herding to their owners. He was soon made a Major and with Lot Smith and his son, was doing all he could to annoy Johnston's Army and delay its march toward Salt Lake.

Erastus Bingham jr. was a member of the cavalry company sent to harass that portion of the Army which had left the main road near Hamm's Fort. Erastus Bingham jr. had 100 men under his charge. He came back and was sent for the winter to Echo Canyon, where the main body of Johnston's Army was forced to winter.

He often related to his children how General Well, from the camp at the Red Butte, could look, with his spyglass, a hundred miles all over the country. That was a hard winter for the family of Erastus Bingham Jr. His two elder children, Louisa, 13 and Perry, 11 years of age, had to go to the river bottom for willows and to the sand hills for sage brush to keep fire enough to keep out some of the bitter winter weather.

It was not an easy job to keep warm, as there were so many cracks in the log house. The next spring, when the order came to move south, Erastus jr.'s family went along with his father's family and camped on the Payson bottoms, west of the town of Payson, Utah.

He and his brother Thomas, and his brother-in-law, (Isaac) Newton Goodale and some other men, were left in Ogden on detail duty, as has been explained previously. When the trouble with Johnston's Army was settled, the Bingham families all returned to their homes in Ogden, or Bingham's Fort.

In the winter and spring of 1860, Erastus Bingham jr., with his second wife Susan Green, and her two small children, moved to Slaterville, where he armed and continued to herd cattle. The following spring he began work building a canal to Plain City to obtain a water right. His older son Perry, also worked with him. They drove five or six oxen on a scraper. This scraper was fifteen feet long. One side was made to follow the furrows the other side plowed and threw

the dirt up on the bank They worked from Four Mile Creek to Plain City. Sufficient water was not obtained so the company extended to Mill Creek and later on to Ogden River. In 1861 he traded his farm and property in Ogden, where his wife Olive had been living, for a place in Slaterville, which had two houses on it.

Olive, his first wife and her children (Ruth: Lorenzo Freeman Bingham was Child #7) moved to one house and Susan, his second wife and her children, moved in the other. This farm was located between Mill Creek and the Weber River. He raised a good crop that year

About Christmas time a cloud burst at the head of Ogden Canyon caused a flood, which broke the dam at the sawmill and washed out the road and bridge in the canyon and came flooding through Marriott settlement and down to where Weber River and Mill Creek came together.

Erastus jr. was going to Ogden that morning to a meeting and as he had no alarm clock, he was up early waiting for it to get light enough to start out, when he heard water running into the well which was located between the two houses. He stepped outside and could see nothing but a sheet of water. He hurried in to awaken his families and (went) to his brother Willard's, who lived 50 rods away. They loaded the women and children on a load of willows, which was standing near by, hitched a yoke of oxen on and took them over to Willard's. As they were crossing a swale, the water came up all over the women and children. The children all cried as the water was very cold and they were in their nightclothes. They were all soon dry again, after reaching Willard's home. Just as they got there they looked back in time to see one of the houses, with all of its household goods and furniture, crash to the ground, It was an old adobe house, so it didn't stand the water The other house was left undamaged. They were thankful it was saved because besides their furniture, they had three hundred bushels of wheat stored in it.

They got some house logs they had on the place and pinned nine of them together and made a raft. By this time it was getting day light and they could see that the water had stopped flooding and was settling and freezing. That day Erastus Bingham jr. walked on the canal bank and other high places and went over to his neighbor Wm. Taylor, borrowed his boat and went to see if his animals were suffering. They were all right, but hungry.

By the next day, the water was frozen solid, and the two families went back to live in the house that remained. Three weeks later another big storm came and, fearing the other house might be washed away Erastus jr. moved both families up to Bingham's Fort for the remainder of the winter. In the spring he built a log house about a mile north of the farm across Four Mile Creek, and there his wife Susan and her family lived.

He planted grain on the farm, but the flood had left the ground so soggy that he didn't raise anything, He became discouraged and sold this place and bought a farm in Ogden. He left his older son, Perry, to farm this place and he and his wife, Olive, spent the summer in Huntsville, where he rented a farm and put up hay. When winter came, his wife Olive came back to Ogden to put the smaller children into school but Erastus Bingham jr, and his son Perry, spent the summer in the canyon getting out fence posts, sawing logs and anything they could sell to make a living for his families. Later he moved both of his families to Ogden Valley. He built a double two-story house of logs near the town of Huntsville, and both families lived there for a number of years.

He farmed and besides, spent much of his time in the canyons. Each summer his wife Susan, went with him to Wheeler Basin (now known as Snow Basin). There he operated a shingle mill and herded cows and sheep for other people, and his wife Susan milked cows and made cheese to sell.

His wife Olive, was a very fine seamstress and did her bit at making a living by sewing for other people. She taught her daughters to sew and they too became very fine seamstresses and helped to make their way with the needle. On 15 November 1873 Erastus Bingham jr. went on a short-term mission to the state of Vermont. He labored around St. Johnsbury during the winter of 1874 and visited, and presented the Gospel, to many of his relatives and returned home in the spring in time to plant crops and move back to the shingle mill. In about 1879 he purchased a farm at the mouth of South Fork Canyon, and the same time moved his shingle mill from Wheeler Basin to the White Pines, over beyond Monte Cristo.

He and his sons, Nephi and Erastus Alma, (Susan's children) cut logs and hauled them down and built the log house that still stands on the farm at the mouth of South Fork Canyon. He met with many reverses while trying to farm in Huntsville because of his crops being frozen many times, but he did better on this new place as it was closer to the mountains and seemed to be protected from the frosts. Here they had lovely gardens with the finest strawberries and melons and also sugar cane, from which they made sorghum molasses. By this time Olive's children were all married and Susan and her children had moved to the new South Fork home. So he sold the large double house in Huntsville and his wife Olive, moved to a smaller place which had belonged to his brother Thomas, who had moved from the Valley. When winter came, Susan's son, Erastus Alma Bingham, went and lived with Olive to help her with the outside chores of milking, chopping wood, etc., and he also attended school. Olive only lived there about one year and then went to live with her children, where she made her home.

Olive first lived with her two daughters, Lucinda and Cedenia. They had both married William Foy and were at that time living in the South Eastern part of the state called Rabbit Valley. About this time the U.S. Marshall began searching out all the polygamists so Erastus Bingham jr., was forced to leave home. He spent a year in Moab, then he sent for his second wife Susan and her children, leaving Susan's son Erastus Alma, who was 18 years old, to sell all of his property and follow. Susan and her younger children went to live in Blue Valley, in Wayne County. From there they moved to Macious, Colo. and on to Tucson, Arizona. He spent the remainder of his life in Tucson, passing away April 5, 1906, at the age of 83 years, six months and five days. He was the father of twenty-five children. (RUTH NOTE: the following list of children represents 24 children.)

His first wife Olive Hovey FREEMAN, the daughter of Isaac Farwell Freeman, was born January 4, 1820 at Waterford, Galadenia County, Vt. and was the mother of 10 children. (Ruth: The original material this is taken from states that Erastus jr. and Olive had ten (10) children, however these are the only children listed for them (9).

1. Olive Louise Bingham b. 3 Oct. 1844 at Le Harpe, Ill., married William WALKER
2. Erastus Perry Bingham b. 20 March 1846 at Le Harpe, Ill. married Emaline Clarissa ALLEN.
3. Lucinda Maria Bingham b. 1 June 1848 married William FOY
4. Lydia Roxena Bingham b. 6 June 1850 married George LISH
5. Isaac Farwell Bingham b. 20 Sept. 1852 died Nov. (?) 1853
6. Mary Ann Bingham b. 9 Feb. 1854 married Peter C. GEERTSEN
- 7. Lorenzo Freeman BINGHAM b. 7 Dec. 1855 married Sarah Rebecca GUTHRIE**
8. Diana Bingham b. 17 July 1857 married Wm. G. SMITH
9. Cedenia Ophelia Bingham b. 19 Aug. 1859 married William FOY

(Ruth: There is also a discrepancy regarding the below listed children of Erastus Bingham jr.'s second wife, Susan GREEN (daughter of Benjamin P. Green and Lucy WISDOM). The material states they have "sixteen children", however these are those listed (15)

1. Susan Melvina Bingham b. 23 Nov. 1856 married Winslow FARR
2. Nephi Bingham b. 9 April 1858
3. Lucy Ann Bingham b. 5 March 1860 married Joseph WHEELER
4. Marintha Bingham b. 26 May 1861 married Steward ECCLES
5. Edda Bingham b. 21 Jan. 1863 died 26 Jan. 1863
6. Enoch Bingham b. 7 March 1864 married Eliza GRAHAM
7. The original copy has this left blank
8. Harriet Adeltha Bingham b. 2 Nov. 1865 married Joseph WHEELER
9. Mary Jane Bingham b. 28 Sept. 1867 died the same day
10. Erastus Alma Bingham b. 28 Sept. 1868 married Susan Annie LORDS
10. Violetta May Bingham b. 30 May 1870 married John HOLT
11. Benjamin Wisdom Bingham b. Jan (?) died 11 March 1879
12. Myrtle Adele Bingham b. 2 Sept. 1873 died 30 April 1877
13. Clara Isabella Bingham b. 29 Aug. 1876 married Joseph WOODS
14. Zina Diantha Bingham b. 21 July 1878 married Joseph WOODS
15. Joseph Moroni Bingham b. 4 Nov. 1881



Erastus Bingham home, 249 West 2nd Street. Built in 1851. Still standing Ogden, Utah.

Erastus Bingham home