

HISTORY OF ISAAC NORTON

Compiled by Elven E. Hardy

Isaac Norton a Colonizer, Indian fighter, and farmer, was born in Shelby County, Mississippi 24 January 1837 to John Warren and Dorothy Osborn Morton. When Isaac was nine years old his mother passed away 6 Sept 1846 in Lee County, Iowa. When Isaac was fourteen years of age his father brought his family to Utah. This was in 1851. They settled in Little Cottonwood, later to Alpine, near Lehi, Utah. They moved to many places through out the state. In the mean time his father remarried and farmed the children out, he never got them together again. This made Issac quite bitter toward his father. In 1860 Isaac met and married first Mary Chadwick. They lived together for only three months. The same year, November 1860 he married Sarah Jane Cummings, she was the daughter of Salisbury and Sarah Pratt Cummings, Sarah Jane was born 19 August 1840 at Liberty, Franklin County, Massachusetts. She came to Utah with her father in 1859, her mother being dead. They settled in Provo, Utah County, Utah until she married Isaac.

It was said when they expected their first born (Sarah Elvina, my grandmother) Isaac walked to Salt Lake City for materials for her baby clothes.

They lived in various places in the state until eighteen hundred and sixty five. Then Isaac went to Richfield, Utah and built a home, at this point Isaac was in the Malitia as a Minute Man, (this was the Black Hawk War of Utah). They were required to equip themselves and pay for their own upkeep, and be ready for action on a minute's notice.

They lived in Richfield to 1867, the Indian troubles were so bad they had to leave. They went four miles north of Nephi, Utah and started a community of their own which they called Nortonville. Others moved to the area and Nortonville began to grow. From the canyons they procured the canyon streams by building creeks and ditches, there by having water for culinary purposes as well as irrigation. In the year of eighteen hundred eighty eight the Nebo School Distric Number Nine was estabolished at Nortonville, soon this school was over crouded, so on a acre of land they built a larger one. In this building at one time there was sixty six students, this school continued until nineteen eleven when most of the families moved to Nephi to give their children a higher education. Nortonville is now made up of ranches, they are productive and the people are prosperous. It might be of interest to know Isaac's root cellar still stands at the site of where Nortonville once was.

Isaac lived in Anabelle, Utah for about two years. Then he went to Grass Valley for about three years, then in various places through out the state. He also lived with his children in Idaho in his later years.

There was short time I knew Isaac and lived in the same towns as he did. I wrote a scetch on this period entitled, "Isaac Norton as I knew him."

ISAAC NORTON AS I KNEW HIM

By Elven E. Hardy

I only knew Grandpa Isaac Norton but a few short years. The first I knew there was a Isaac Norton, was in the summer of nineteen twenty three. I remember this well for it was the year my mother died. My sister Reva and I were living with our grand parents Joseph and Sarah Morton Babcock at Green River, Utah. Isaac had been living with his children in Idaho. We left Idaho for reasons I do not know and came to Green River to live with his daughter, Sarah Norton Babcock. He was an independent man. He couldn't stand for people making a fuss over him. He felt capable of taking care of himself. He rented a small two room house and lived there for most of his stay in Green River.

In the summer of 1924 Joseph and Sarah moved to Mt. Emmons, Duchesne County, Utah. A primitive little town at the foot of the Uintah Mountains, Isaac Norton went with them. Again he had to have a place of his own. He rented a log cabin from his grandson Isaac Leroy Babcock. The cabin consisted of two rooms and a sizeable plot of grounds, this being ideal for Isaac for he loved to garden. He raised the most beautiful vegetables I have ever seen. I might mention he would always send his vegetables to the Duchesne County Fair and always bring back a prize. (Usually first prize).

It would be a delight to walk you down each row, stopping at each variety explaining the best way to raise them. Further more he knew what he was taking about. The evidence was there before you. Though he was nearing ninety at the time he was active and always busy.

Sarah became worried about him living alone. She talked him into moving to where she could keep an eye on him. Isaac refused to move into their house, but was willing to live in their grainery if they would fix it into living quarters. So they lined the inside and made a comfortable one room and he was just a few feet from their back door where Sarah could look in on him.

In the late nineteen twenties Earnest Babcock (his grandson) talked Isaac onto moving to Price, Utah and live with him. He fixed his garage into a one room and Isaac lived there. The time was short lived for Isaac couldn't put up with Earns foolishness and moved back to Idaho to live with his people. This was the last I saw of Grandpa Isaac Norton.

I have told of where Isaac lived while in Utah for his last time, now I will tell a little about his character and appearances.

Grandpa Norton was a small man with a strong will, you might even say he was a little on the contrary side. He always wore a vest. He had a long white beard that flowed down over his chest. He carried a cane and always had a plug of horse shoe chewing tabacco in his pocket. These were some of his trade marks, for you would never see him with out them. Isaac was a kind man but a very lonely man.

He loved to tell of his adventures in the Black Hawk War. Let us not confuse this war with Chief Black Hawk of 1836. The one relating to Isaac was fought in the state of Utah, between the settlers and Indians from 1865 to 1868. At this time grandpa was in his late twenties and

early thirties. One of his adventures he told so many times stands out most vividly in my mind. I can still see him kneeling on the seat of his chair with his arms folded resting on the back, his cane would be hooked over them. Then he would tell his story. I will tell it as it was told to me many times:

“One day a half dozen of us was sent out to scout the area. We saw a few Indians and managed to avoid them. We had been walking a long time when we saw a area of grass and willows. We decided this would be a ideal place for a rest. We could conceal our selves among the willows so as not to be seen. We were there but a short time when we heard Indians coming up the draw. From the sound we estimated from four to six Indians. They would take a few steps and stop, then another few steps and stop again. We collected our guns and sat in readiness waiting for them to step into a clearing near by. We waited. The brush was rattling much closer now, we knew the time was near. We was in a position to take care of the situation, the tension was getting unbearable. The noise was near the clearing, we was ready. Then to our amazement a grazing cow stepped out of the clearing.”

Another trade mark Isaac had was his fly swatter. This consisted of a straight stick and a short piece of rubber tied to the top of the stick, like a flipper. He would stock a fly like a tiger stalked its prey. He would pull back the rubber and when he came close enough he would let it go. Ninety nine times out of a hundred he would get his fly. Why did I mention a little thing as a fly swatter? My answer is, it took all of these little things to make a Grandpa Isaac Norton as I knew him.

When Isaac came to Green River I was seven years old. I was one of those little monsters that like to torment. This is what I did to Grandpa Norton all though I knew when I did I could never get away with it. No not with grandpa, he was a patient man and abided his time. Then when I least expected he would have you (or me I should say) around the neck with his cane and pull me to him and take the short hair either on the back of the neck or the side burns between his thumb and fore finger and give a upward jerk. (Boy that smarted).

There was another little incident which accured after I had tormented Isaac: He went to Grandpa Babcock and told him I had gone to the toilet in the currant patch. This being a big no no with grandpa he questioned me about it. I let him know I had no knowledge of it. He took me by the hand led me to the place where Grandpa Norton said it would be. When we arrived on the scene Grandpa Babcock started to laugh. He laughed so hard the tears ran down his cheeks. When he got control of him self he pointed to what he had found and said: “Did you do that?” Again I denied it and then he said: “No, I guess you didn’t. It is bigger than you are.” I never knew how it got there but I have always suspected.

I tried to make amends with Grandpa Norton. In many ways I showed him I was sorry for what I did to him. He seemed to come around, but I don’t think he ever fully trusted me. Isaac was a modest man, and he respected the same from others, especially women. If he could see the calf of a womans leg it was disgraceful. One time Grandma Babcock ask him to loan her a quarter to buy a necklace for my sister. Isaac just couldn’t see eye to eye on this and he told her: “Before I will loan you a quarter to buy a necklace get something to cover her bare neck.” At the time my sister was wearing a typical little girls dress for that period.

Grandpa Norton would have my sister Reva run errands for him. Such as going to the store, or for that matter for any needs he might have. I believe she was the only one he thoroughly trusted to do these things. There was times he would let others but only if Reva was there to see that he wasn't cheated if it involved money. It wasn't because grandpa was stupid and couldn't do his own figuring but he didn't get away from the place enough to be able to know the prices on things. The last time I saw Grandap Norton in Price he as active and alert as he was when I first saw him in Green River.

Before we go into the issue of Isaac and Sarah Jane Cummings Norton I would like to set the records straight: He made three mistakes on his pension records. He may not have made them, it could have been a misunderstanding when his statement was taken down. It is hard to believe Isaac would make such a mistake as this when he had a memory of an elephant. So I will call them typographical errors. They are:

1. Sarah Jane Cummins did not die at Kaneville, she died at Cainville, Wayne, Utah.
2. His older daughter Sarah (my grandmother) her name was not Sarah Jane, it was Sarah Elvina.
3. Isaac's father's name was not William Warren. It was John Warren.

ISSUE OF ISAAC AND SARAH NORTON

Sarah Elvina born 14 October 1861 at Provo, Utah, Married Joseph Babcock 24 December 1881. Died at Mt. Emmons, Duchesne, Utah 10 February 1935.

John Wesley born 12 April 1862 at Provo, Utah, Utah . Married Hulda Woolman 31 January 1895. Died 1904

Tobitha Elther born 27 February 1865 at Richfield, Sevier, Utah. Married John Vest 13 April 1833. Died 9 June 1945 Idaho Falls, Bonneville, Idaho.

Mary Jane born 24 February 1867 at Richfield, Seveir, Utah. Married Erastus Snow Anderson 7 June 1885. Died 18 may 1949 Los Angeles, California.

Benjamin Isaac born 26 February 1869 Nephi (Nortonville), Juab, Utah. Married Elmer Huntsman 10 June 1891. Died 17 August 1957 at Woodville, Bonneville, Idaho.

Arvilla born 1872 at Nephi (Nortonville, Utah, Utah, child.

William Marade born 20 January 1873 Nephi (Nortonville), Juab, Utah. Married Hilda Hill 15 April 1901. Died 27 May 1939 at Wellington, Carbon, Utah.

Dortha Serilda born 19 June 1875 at Nephi, Juab, Utah. Married James Jones October 1895. Died 18 June 1953.

Miles LaFayette born 19 June 1880 Annaballe, Sevier, Utah. Married Sarah Elvira Mathews 10 June 1907. Died 12 January 1947 at Wellington, Carbon, Utah.

Isaac Norton died 30 July 1930 at Woodville, Bonneville, Idaho. This concludes a story of a great pioneer who contributed much to this fair state of ours. In what I have written about Isaac Norton may have sounded as if I might be critical. This was never my intentions. I was trying to let others see Grandpa Isaac Norton as he was in the days when I knew him. As I say this concludes my sketch but never the memories I have of Grandpa Isaac Norton.