

HISTORY OF UTAH
AS RELATED TO MY GRANDFATHERS HOYT AND STEVENS
by Alta E. Stevens

The "Mormons" may have been the first permanent settlers in what became the state of Utah, but they were by no means the first people to visit this area. There were several tribes of Indians here because it belonged to them, having occupied this area for thousands of years. They knew the area intimately, the nature of its land, its animals, what plants and trees could give them food. They took what they needed of plant and animal life to sustain them, so did not destroy any of them to extinction. It is not surprizing that after they realized these people coming in were not just visitors, but intended to stay and take their land, claiming it and fencing them out of their inheritance, killing their meat animals, almost to extinction, cutting their trees, and digging up their plants which they depended on for food and medicine, that they became less friendly. The wise ones realized what was happening and soon became not only less friendly, but tried fruitlessly to drive the "white" man from their possessions (which the white settlers labeled "savage attacks"). But so it has been since man inhabited the Earth, and it was fertile enough for one group to desire or need a better place to live than they had. The stronger group would drive out and possess the others' land, as the Huns, Romans, and even back in B.C., archeologists have found destroyed cities under a layer of another different culture.

Many fur trappers, explorers, and Catholic missionaries traversed most of what is now Utah, long before 1847. Most of these maps and trails helped future travelers to this area. Also, there were Indian trails, and trails where great herds of buffalo trailed to the lake for salt licks. Some of these were Hernando Alarcon (Spanish), who traveled down most of the Colorado River, in 1540; Father Escalante in 1776 on his way to the Monterey mission came up through the Utah area as far as Utah Lake and knew about the Great Salt Lake. He wrote profusely and in great detail about this area and made some excellent maps. In the spring of 1824, Ashley, Henry and their trappers were camped at Henry's Fork on the Utah-Wyoming line, on the Green River. Another of these groups was under Etienne Provost (how Provo received its name). He and his companions trapped on the headwaters of the Green River, there exploring the headwaters of the Provo, Weber and Bear Rivers in the Granddaddy Country. When winter froze the streams, Provost and his party descended the Weber River to the Great Salt Lake, making their camp where Ogden now is. Ashley and his comrades ascended the Duschesne River, then went westward and met the Utah valley trappers on Kamas Prairie, Summit County (now). In March 1826, Ashley left St. Louis with 100 horses and mules and 50 men accompanied by Jedediah Smith, Moses, Harris and William Sublette. His route went down the Green River, then crossing the divide of "Bald Peak", to a tributary of the Weber River, and from descriptions must have been near what is now Park City. The Weber must have been named for Pauling Weber, one of the group. Jedediah Smith left their rendezvous, headed southeast to upper Bear River, then crossed headwaters of Weber, and then by way of Salt Lake Valley to Utah Lake. Jim Bridger was an early trapper, trader, and scout, and worked for Jedediah Smith. They covered all the area mentioned and visited Salt Lake Valley and to Utah Lake. When he told Brigham Young he would give him \$1,000 for an ear of corn raised here,

he spoke from a trapper's knowledge, and as no irrigation was needed then in the east, perhaps knew little about it, although irrigation had been used since ancient times in the desert areas of the world. John C. Fremont, explorer since 1843, traveled completely through Utah from the north to the south and east to west. All made and had printed good maps of this area. These trappers were after beaver mainly, because beaver hats were the rage of men of Europe, and by their trapping, they almost annihilated this wild animal. Miles Goodyear was in the Utah area before 1847, and with Porter Rockwell, went ahead of the pioneers to find the best road for the first Mormon pioneers. So, although the crossing to Utah was rigorous and dangerous, they did have many helps in maps and advice. Then, too, the tragic ending of the Donner Party in 1846 warned them to find a better way to get through the Rocky Mountains, and to start earlier. The utterance of Brigham Young, "This is the place," was more of a confirmation than an inspiration.

Grandfather Stevens settled in Summit County, Utah. He was among the first to settle in what became the town of Oakley. He started most of the businesses of this town. He started a flour mill to save the farmers from hauling their grain long distances. He started a creamery to utilize the extra cream and milk, and made butter and cheese for the townspeople. He also started a store to bring in goods which could not be raised, and for a time had a post office in the store. All this, besides he had a large farm, raising hay, grain, beef cattle, and dairy cattle. Grandfather Stevens added a saw mill, because the pond was high enough to run both the flour mill and saw mill, and our father added a dynamo when he took over the mills, to furnish electricity for Oakley. Grandfather William Henry Stevens came to Utah, and settled in Wanship with his parents in 1860. He was then just 10 years old, one of eleven children. All of William Henry and Elizabeth Hortin Stevens' children grew to adulthood. Our grandfather left successful businesses to help his sons and some sons-in-law get a start.

Simon Stevens, born May 7, 1748, in Enmore, Sommersetshire, England, married Mary Kidner on November 15, 1770 (both were 22 years old). No occupation is recorded. They had ten children, the next to youngest, Thomas Stevens, was our great-great-grandfather. His father and mother would be our great-great-great-grandparents. His father and mother died in Enmore and were buried there, he in 1821, and she at the age of 81, which would be a very great age for those times.

Thomas Stevens was born on January 4, 1789, also in Enmore, and married Ann Locke (b.1798) at Cannington in Sommersetshire, March 3, 1819. He was 30 years old, and she was 21 (our great-great-grandparents). They had nine children, all christened in the Protestant church at Bridgewater, where they then lived. Their oldest son, William, was our great-grandfather.

William Stevens and his wife, Emma Crowden Stevens, (he was born on December 23, 1819, and she on June 17, 1823, both in Bridgewater) were married on June 17, 1845, when he was 26 and she was 22. They lived in Enmore and Durleigh, Sommersetshire, England. He was a blacksmith by trade and also did some farming. Emma Crowden was first married to William's older cousin, Joseph (as he is not listed in the family, he could have been a cousin), in 1842. I have a copy of their marriage; she was listed as a minor, being 19, and he as a bachelor. She signed her name with an "X". He died three years later of pneumonia, leaving her a rather large house in

Broomfield. (I have copies of Joseph's death, and a drawing of the house, which she rented and sold after she came to Utah.)

Emma Crowden Stevens (listed on copy of marriage license as a widow) married our great-grandfather, William, in 1845, at Trinity Church in Bridgewater. Her parents were Isaac and Charlotte Crowden, and her father was a tailor. William and Emma Stevens lived for awhile in Durlough, where their first two children were born, Sarah Anne in 1847, and William Henry in 1849 (our grandfather). They then moved to Enmore, where three more children were born, Ellen Christiana in 1851, Simon Percival in 1854, and Emaline Augusta in 1856. They left England with their five children sometime between 1857 and 1859. They landed on the East coast, perhaps either Boston or New York. In the spring of 1860, they started west with an independent company, headed by a Captain Brown. Independent company meant that they were not sponsored by the Mormon Church. There were professional men who knew the west and how to organize wagons, supplies, etc. These men were hired by a group to take them west. Emma was pregnant with her sixth child, and just before they crossed the Platte River, she delivered her child, a son named Theophilus Franklin. The group stopped for half a day, then loaded the mother and child in a wagon. As they crossed the river, the wagon they were in tipped over and the stove fell over them. They were rescued unharmed, and proceeded on their way. The troupe stopped at what is now Wanship, and decided to stay there, at least part of them, including the William Stevens' and Edmond Hortin's. The son born on the way was registered in Wanship. He was the one who died in his youth at nineteen. After they settled in Wanship, William Stevens started farming on the land he had homesteaded, built a home for his family, and lived there for 10 years. During these years he also homesteaded land to the south, which is now Oakley. He was helped by his oldest son, although only 11 years old when they arrived, who was very helpful to his father and by 1870 had homesteaded land in Oakley, too. Two other children were born to William and Emma Stevens in Wanship, Isaac Thomas in 1863, and Abigail Charlotte in 1865. By 1870, when his oldest son, William Henry, married Eliza Hortin, William was 69, so he turned most of his farming over to his oldest son, our grandfather. He and Emma C., his wife, lived the rest of their lives in the brick house built on the southeast corner of the large yard where our grandfather built the large pink brick house on top of the hill. Grandmother, Eliza H. Stevens, said that the last years our great-grandparents lived with them. William Stevens died on March 8, 1901, and Emma C. Stevens died the same year on December 4. He was 82 years old and she was 78. By now they had set aside a piece of ground for a private Stevens cemetery, and they were buried there.

William Henry Stevens and Eliza Hortin Stevens (our grandparents) came west with the same wagon group, one 11 and the other 12 years old. They grew up in adjoining towns in Summit County. Both went to Wanship school, but spent most of their teens helping their parents on their farms. Grandfather was the oldest son, and so his father depended on him to help run his farm. Grandmother's father was so crippled with arthritis that she and her mother did most of the farming for some years, although she was next to the youngest. Her older brother was grown when they came to Utah, so he started his own farm and her sisters went to Salt Lake City to work in homes to help the family finances. She did everything from milking cows to shearing sheep. Their young lives must have touched many times at dances in Rockport and Wanship, in sleigh rides, parties and any other simple entertainments available in small towns in pioneer times. I wish I knew the spark which brought their lives together and to their marriage on New Year's Day in 1870, in their early twenties.

3. From the Henry C. Stevens MSS. Box 4, 1900