

Two Biographies of HENRY GROW

LDS Biographical Encyclopedia, by Andrew Jensen, V3, p 94, paragraphs minor changes-Pam Wagner

Grow, Henry, a prominent Elder in the Church, was born Oct 1, 1817, at Philadelphia PA, the son of Henry Grow & Mary Riter. His great grandfather, Frederick Grow, & his wife emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania before the war of the revolution, took up a large tract of land and made it into five farms of 60 acres each, dividing the same among his 5 children, 4 sons, 1 daughter. This great grandfather was in the war of the revolution. Henry Grow was the youngest of 7 children: 5 girls, 2 sons. He learned the trade of a mill-Wright & bridge builder, after which he superintended the bridges, culverts, etc., on the Norristown & Germantown railroads, both in construction & repairing the works.

Becoming a convert to "Mormonism," he was baptized in the Delaware River, Philadelphia, in May 1842, by Wm Morton. He emigrated to Nauvoo, Ill in 1843, where he worked on the Nauvoo Temple until it was finished. He passed through all the troubles of those days & was a member of the Nauvoo Legion. He was one of the remnants that remained at Nauvoo after the departure of the Twelve, with the advance companies of the Saints for the West, but in April 1846, before the vanguard of the pioneers had got barely on their journey, the anti-Mormons began to rise & the mob outrages on the Saints were terrible.

Henry Grow was in the famous battle of Nauvoo. While this battle was going on, he heard a voice one night, distinctly say: "Get up & get out of here in the morning." He arose in the morning, hitched a yoke of cattle to his wagon, put in utensils, bedding & tent, leaving everything else in the house, got his wife & 3 children in the wagon, & had moved about 50 yards from his house when the mob fired a 12-pound ball through the house, which was a frame building. After the entrance of the mob into Nauvoo he crossed over to Montrose, Iowa, where he had his family in a tent during the battle.

Starting on his journey westward, he traveled alone with his family across the prairies of Iowa to Winter Quarters, then went to Kimball's 6 miles above, where he built himself a house & settled for a year, but in the fall of 1847, after the departure of the pioneer companies, he moved with his family into Missouri, locating on the Little Platte, 20 miles above Weston, where many of the old Missouri mobocrats dwelt. There he kept the saw & gristmill, called Lester's mill, in repair & did other carpenter work. In the spring of 1851 he & his family again came up the Missouri River, bound for the Valley; he was organized in Capt James Cumming's 100, Alfred Cordon's 50 & Bishop Kessler's 10. Orson Pratt commanded the other 50. On account of high water, the Sweetwater, below Independence Rock, the company was surrounded by a war party of Cheyenne's & had a narrow escape from being destroyed by the savages. The next day, above Independence Rock, they met a 1000 Snake Indian warriors waiting for the Cheyennes.

Henry Grow arrived in Great Salt Lake City on his birthday, Oct 1 1851 & located at Mound Fort, north of Ogden. In 1852 he was called to Salt Lake City by President Young to work for him in building mills, bridges, etc. In 1853 he built the first suspension bridge built in Utah across the Weber River. In 1854 he went to work at Sugar House to build the sugar works under Bishop Fred Kessler, and in 1855 he assisted in building the 2 saw mills in Big Cottonwood canyon, known as A and B. In 1856 he moved a saw mill from Cottonwood to the forks of City creek, 7 mi above Salt Lake City, for Pres Brigham Young, and the same fall he went up Big Cottonwood again & framed & put up Mill D, sawed 2 logs & left Dec 17, 1856, with 5 men on 7 feet of snow with snowshoes. It took them 2 days to get out of the snow at the risk of their lives. In 1857 Elder Grow built Mill E, at the head of Big Cottonwood canyon, near Silver Lake; in 1858 he went to Provo & put up temporary buildings at the time of the move; he also built the suspension bridge over the Provo River. In 1859 he tore the works out of the old gristmill at the mouth of Canyon Creeks & placed the cotton and woolen machinery in the mill for Pres. Brigham Young. This was the first machinery of the kind put up in Utah, and this machinery was afterwards taken down to St George. In 1861 he built a suspension lattice bridge across the Jordan River. At the time of putting up the theatre he built a water wheel on the water ditch opposite Dr Sprague's house to hoist all the rock & timbers for the theatre. He also made the heavy beams & principal rafters out of plank for the work & fitted up the footlights.

During the following yrs he did a great deal of millwork for Pres Young, & in 1863 Pres Young called on him in regard to the construction of the tabernacle in Salt Lake City; asked him if he could construct a large bowery after the same structural work as the Jordan Bridge, drawing the outline on the ground with his umbrella, & asked him how large he could build it. Br Grow replied, "150 ft wide & as long as you want it." They figured out the design & dimensions, & Br Grow built the Tabernacle according to the directions given him by Pres Young & was finished in 1867.

In 1868 the President called on Br Grow to put up the ZCMI building; Obed Taylor drew the plan; Henry Grow superintended the construction. From then until the spring of 1876 he had charge of all the carpentry work on the Temple Block.

In 1876-77 he filled a mission to the US, laboring principally in PA, DE & MD, visiting all his relatives & the old family homestead. On his return, he was engaged in tearing down the Old Tabernacle & erecting the Assembly Hall, superintending the practical work under Architect Obed Taylor, completed in 1879. Later Elder Grow built 2 blockhouses for Pres Taylor & superintended all the buildings & carpentry work for the Church, including the scaffolding & hoisting apparatus for the Temple.

In 1880 he was called by Pres Taylor to go east to see improvements of paper mills for the purpose of putting up a new paper mill. After visiting the principal cities in the east, he returned home, drafted & commenced building the new Deseret Paper Mill at the mouth of Big Cottonwood canyon, which was completed & in running order by 1883.

Br Grow became known as a skilful mechanic, an experienced practical builder, & was well liked by all the hands who worked under his supervision; of all his works, the roof of the Big Tabernacle in Salt Lake City is the most unique & stupendous.

Soon after he joined the Church, Elder Grow was ordained to the Priesthood, then a Seventy in 1844 at Nauvoo, & for many yrs acted as 1 of the presidents of the 30th Quorum of Seventy. He was a member of the 19th Ward, Salt Lake City, active in military affairs & served as a member of the Salt Lake City council from 1870-76. In the East he married 2 wives: Mary Moyer, who bore him 6 children & Ann Elliott, who has bore him 7. Arriving in Utah he md Julia Veach, who bore him 14 children; thus he became the father of 27 children. He died 4 Nov 1891, Salt Lake City, a highly respected citizen & faithful member of the Church.

Biography of Henry Grow, dictated to Elaine Poulter by grandfather, Wm Moyer Grow-1928 as a school project

Henry Grow, Superintendent of the Temple Block, was born in Norristown, Phil, Penn, Oct 1, 1817. His parents: Henry Grow & Mary Riter. His grandparents emigrated from Germany to PA before the War of the Revolution, took up a large tract of land, making it into 5 farms of 60 acres each & gave it to his 5 children. The estate is still in the family.

Frederick Grow was in the Revolutionary War. The British army camped within a mile of his farmhouse. Henry Grow, the subject of this sketch, was the youngest of 7 children-5 daughters & 2 sons. He served his apprenticeship as a carpenter & joiner of his native state PA. Later he superintended all the bridges, culverts, etc. on the Norristown and Germantown Railroads, both in contracting and repairing the work, under the direction of Geo. G Whitmere, President of the road and Ex Mayor of Phil.

Henry Grow was baptized in the Delaware River, Phil. in 1842 by Wm Morton. He emigrated to Nauvoo in March 1843, reached Nauvoo May 15. His first mark was building a barn for Patriarch Hyrum Smith, & then worked on Nauvoo Temple till it was completed. Here they received their endowments. He passed through the trials of those days with the other LDS. He served as a member of the Nauvoo Legion. He was 1 of 5 to remain behind after the departure of the Twelve with the advanced companies of the Saints to the Rocky Mountains. The covenant made between the 4 commissioners of the state of Ill, namely Gen. Worden of the State Militia, Sen. Douglas, W.B. Warren & J McDanyal & the Mormon Apostles gave ample time for the removal of the Saints from Nauvoo, but in April, before the Pioneers had scarcely started on their journey west, the anti-Mormons began their horrid outrages on the saints, notwithstanding the fact they were living up to their part of the contract, and W.B. Warren commanding the Ill. volunteers said in a report to Query Whig on May 20, 1846, "are leaving with all possible haste. During the week 400 teams and 1350 souls have gone & others are preparing to leave as fast as possible."

Notwithstanding this statement from their commander, a mob marched upon the doomed city Sep 19, 1846, began the battle of Nauvoo, which lasted 3 days, in which Henry Grow fought to protect his people under the command of Gen. D H Wells of Col. Butler. The mob of 200 well-armed men & 13 pieces of artillery, camped about 1 block in front of Grow's house. The 1st night they were camped there, while Grow was lying on his bed, he heard a voice distinctly say, "Get out of here in the morning." He arose, hitched up a yoke of oxen to his wagon, put in some bedding, a tent & utensils & a few things, leaving all his other earthly possessions, took his wife & 3 children & left. He had gone about 50 yds from the house when the mob fired a 12 lb. cannon ball at the house. They crossed the River to Montrose, Iowa, where the family remained in the tent during the battle. From the starting point toward the Rockies he traveled alone with his family to Winter Quarters arriving late in October.

He built a log cabin in Winter Quarters, then went to Kimbals 6 miles above where he built himself a house & settled for a year, but in the fall of 1847, after the departure of the pioneer companies, he moved with his family into Missouri on the Little Platt 20 mi above Weston, where lived many of the Mobocrats. While here he kept the Saw and grist mill in repair, & other carpenter work for 2 years for Col. Estel, who later sold out to Halladay & Warner, well known merchants in early history of Salt Lake City. Grow worked with them till spring 1851 when they made another start toward the Valleys of the Mountains. They were organized in Captain James Cummings 100, Alfred Gardens 50, & Bishop Kessler's 10. On account of high water the companies headed the Horn River, came on to the Pratt below Laramie on the Sweetwater below Independence Rock, here they were surrounded by a war party of Cheyennes. Kessler's 10 became separated from the other 10. They succeeded in getting a message to Capt Cardon who was camped with the remainder of his 50 at Independence Rock, and & relief to bring them together again. Next day, they met 7,000 Snake Warriors waiting for the Cheyennes.

1851-54: Henery Grow arrived in Salt Lake on his birthday Oct 1. He immediately went to work, 1 year on the Public Works under Miles Romney. He next worked on the old Tabernacle where the Assembly Hall now stands, also building a sawmill, as the winter was mild. In 1853 he built the 1st suspension bridge in Utah across the Ogden River for Jonathan Browning. In 1854 he began work at Sugarhouse to build the Sugar Works under Bishop Kessler.

1855-56: built Sawmills A & B in Big Cottonwood. 1856, moved a Sawmill from Chases Mill in the Big Field up City Creek 7 mi for Pres. Young. The same fall, went up Big Cottonwood, framed & put up Mill D, sawed same logs & left Dec 17 in company with 5 other men on snow shoes for home. It took 2 days to get through, as the snow was deep. They had many narrow escapes.

1857-58: he built Mill E at the head of Canyon near Silver Lake. 1858 he went to Provo and put up the temporary buildings for the Moore & also the suspension bridge across the Provo River. He tore works out of the old gristmill, at the mouth of Canyon Creek & placed cotton and woolen machinery in the mill by request of Brigham Young. This was the first machinery of the kind in Utah. It was later taken to St. George.

1861: he built suspension (Lattices) bridges across Weber & Jordan Rivers, still in use 35-40 yrs after. Then he built the first Salt Lake Theatre (which is still good & being used). He put up a water wheel in the ditch, by this the rock & timber was hosted to guild this theater. He also made the heavy beams & principle rafters out of plank for the building & fitted up the foot lights.

1863-76: he did a great deal of millwork at the request of Pres Brigham Young, at different places, & next year, Pres. Young called on him about the construction of the SL Tabernacle. He designed the shape, planned & put it up and finished it in 1867. It is the largest dome shaped building west of Chicago. The outside dimensions of this Tabernacle: length 250 ft., width 105. Inside it measures 232 ft by 132 ft, height to ceiling 65 ft. The roof rests on 44 columns averaging 20 ft high & is self supporting. The gallery extending around the building is 18 ft wide. The seating capacity is 9,000. In 1868, Pres. Young called on him to build the ZCMI (a large store in Salt Lake). The plan was drawn by O Taylor & superintended by Grow. From this time till spring of 1876, he had charge of the carpenter work on the Temple Block. Then he went to build the warehouse attached to the ZCMI.

1876-78: Oct. conference he was called to go on a mission to preside over the PA, DE, MD Conferences & left Salt Lake Nov 1, 1876. During this mission he visited the old homestead & relatives. He left Phil. for Salt Lake June 12, 1877 & on his return was immediately engaged to tear down the old Tabernacle & build the Assembly Hall (which is used now), superintending the work. O Taylor was the architect. The Hall was completed in fall of 1878. He built 2 houses for Pres. Taylor and superintended the carpentry for the Church including the Scaffolding and hoisting apparatus for the Temple.

1880: he was called on by Pres Taylor to go east to look improvements of Paper Mills, with the view of putting up a paper mill at the mouth of the Big Cottonwood, which was completed 1883 (the first in Utah). To get this necessary information he traveled through Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo NY, Springfield, Albany & Boston MA, Phil & Pittsburg PA. He came back & built the same.

For over 30 years he was employed in building out of State. He was known as a skilled Mechanic & practical builder. He served as city councilman with Mayer Daniel H Wells in 1870-1876. He was also active in Church work and social affairs of S L City. He died in Salt Lake Nov 4, 1891.