

The Saga of the Burton Families
Converts James and Isabella Burton
Their Son Robert
and Their son William Walton Burton
and His Wives, Rachel, Sarah Ann and Ellen Fielding
and Their Families

Written by Julie Cannon Markham, a great-great-granddaughter of William Walton Burton

The origins of the Burton Family

James Burton was born in a small hamlet in the center of England in 1800, the son of a man who produced woolen fabrics. His wife, Isabella Walton, was born two years later in a neighboring town. Her family was known to be Quakers, which is significant because it means they did not belong to the Church of England. James was the among the youngest of fourteen children with a brother Robert a few years older; Isabella only had an older brother, Christopher. As a child Isabella learned to spin and weave cloth. Fortunate to have a job, she worked in a factory from six in the morning until late at night, walking three miles to work each day. These factories were called “schools,” although today institutions like this would violate child labor laws.

James and Isabella married in 1825 and over the next twenty years they had twelve children, nine of whom survived to adulthood. The oldest son, Robert, named after James’ brother, became a blacksmith. Willie, our ancestor, was the next son to survive. Much later in his life he wrote that his father, “was poor and worked very hard.”

William’s Childhood

As an adult, William wrote a lot about his life, but it was often in the third person. “One day a very strange feeling came over Willie, and he thought of many men whom he knew could not read, and he knew that people called them ignorant – that they did not have much influence – did not know anything but hard labor; that if any place of ease and profit should offer itself they would not be able to fill it. Then, on the other hand, he thought of many who were filling easy positions, drawing high wages, enjoying a good influence, and respected by all who knew them. Among the rest he thought of his Uncle Christopher, head bookkeeper of a large firm, with an income of four hundred pounds sterling per year, while those hard-working, uneducated men had only about twenty . . .to thirty pounds sterling per year, dragging out a miserable existence, unable to sustain a comfortable home.

“These thoughts led little Willie to make a resolution. . . . He resolved that he would do his best to become a learned and useful man; that from that moment all his leisure time should be spent in gaining knowledge.

“Willie went right away to his father and told him his thoughts, and said, ‘Father, if you please will you give me money to buy a book, and I will go over to Mr. Lund’s book store and buy ‘Reading Made Easy,’ for that is the name of the book, and this very night I will commence to learn?’

“‘Yes, my son,’ said Willie’s father, ‘I will give you money with which to buy a book. I very much approve of the plan that you have chosen to adopt, and I will do all that I can to help you

carry it out.’

“Willie got the money, went to Mr. Lund’s store, purchased the book returned home and commenced his task.”

The Burton Family Joined the Church

Before Willie was born in 1833, the family had moved to the nearby town of Bradford, a large community known for the manufacturing of fabrics. In Bradford they found a congregation which had left the Methodist Church and were praying that they would be sent the pure gospel. In 1842 Edward Milnes and Henry Cuerdon, two British converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, were invited to preach a sermon to this congregation. Willie’s uncle Robert was among the first to be baptized. His parents were baptized soon after. Willie later wrote, again in the third person, “After this Willie went with his father to meeting every Sunday, and he was very fond of hearing the Elders preach. Sometimes he would go to some lonely place where he could kneel down and pray, and have no one to see him, and then he would ask God in the name of Jesus Christ to help him to become a good and useful man.”

The First Family Members Emigrate to Nauvoo

In 1843, less than a year after the family’s conversion to the restored gospel, James’ oldest son Robert, age seventeen, and James’ older brother, Robert, after whom the son was named, and Robert’s wife Ann, left England for Nauvoo. They sailed on the ship *Swanton* with two hundred other converts heeding the call to Zion. The ship sailed under the Priesthood direction of Lorenzo Snow, who was returning from a long mission in England. Writings from other passengers inform us that within a few days of leaving Liverpool, the members were divided into “two grand divisions” with “twelve officers appointed to attend to comfort and cleanliness.” At six every morning the bell sounded for all to rise, and prayer meetings were held each evening at seven. Sermons were preached on Tuesdays and Thursdays and twice on Sundays. “Peace and health prevailed among the people, though some were disposed to murmur a little.”

After six weeks at sea, the passengers “saw a large comet, and it continued visible for seven nights. . . . We rejoiced to see it as one of the many signs bearing testimony of the coming of the Son of Man.”

Also traveling on the *Swanton* was the young family of John Marriott. John joined the LDS Church a year before Robert Burton. Whether they were friends before the voyage, we do not know. John’s wife Susannah gave birth to a daughter before the ship left the dock, and sadly the baby died within a few weeks and appears to have been the only death during the voyage. John’s younger sister Elizabeth also traveled with them. She married Robert Burton two years after the voyage. Did a blossoming friendship and romance make the eight weeks at sea seem sweeter? I will be content to think so.

Elder Snow wrote that he felt the voyage was enhanced because early on the passengers made a vow to keep the Word of Wisdom. He also wrote of “a very singular phenomenon. It was in the evening. The sea and the waves began all of a sudden to emit sparkling and flashing light which filled the surrounding atmosphere. In a little time the ocean as far as the eye could [see became] perfectly illuminated, the ship was so illuminated that a person could see to read very clearly. I do

not know that I ever saw a more beautiful, splendid, and majestic scenery. The captain informed us that he had never seen anything like it but once or twice before, that Philosophers had never been able to agree upon its cause.”

A miraculous event occurred during the voyage which strengthened the faith of many of the passengers. The ship’s steward was well liked by the saints, but towards the end of the voyage he fell very ill after a blow by a crew member and drew close to death. Elder Snow was petitioned to bless the dying man. He anointed him with oil and laid his hands on the man’s head, rebuking the disease and commanding him to be made whole. Soon afterwards the steward walked the deck, fully recovered, praising God for his restoration. Upon landing in New Orleans, several of the crew were baptized, including the steward.

The prophet Joseph Smith met the steamer *Amaranth* that had carried the *Swanton* passengers up the Mississippi River. This was the first steamer of the year, so also traveling on the *Amaranth* were converts who had sailed from England the previous fall but had been unable to proceed upriver from St. Louis because of winter weather. Joseph recorded, “The steamer *Amaranth* appeared in the sight of the Temple, coming up the river, and about noon, landed her passengers at the wharf . . . consisting of about two hundred and forty Saints from England, under the charge of Elder Lorenzo Snow. . . . I, with a large company. . . was present to greet the arrival of our friends, and gave notice to the newcomers to meet at the Temple tomorrow morning at ten o’clock to hear instructions.” Another passenger wrote that the prophet “heartily grasped our hands” and spoke the words, “God bless you,” which “sank deep into our hearts, giving us a feeling of peace such as we had never known before.”

By the end of the summer of 1843, Robert’s uncle had been ordained an elder under the hand of Joseph Smith.

In 1845 at the age of nineteen, young Robert married Elizabeth Marriott just at the time the mobs forced the saints to leave Nauvoo and cross the ice-covered Mississippi River. Within two years, young Robert’s aunt and uncle both died on the trek to Winter Quarters. Robert and Elizabeth’s first three children, all born during this time, each only lived a few months. One child was buried with Robert’s Aunt Ann. Robert and Elizabeth crossed the plains with an overland wagon freight train accompanied by only twenty-seven members of the church, all related to John Marriott, Robert’s brother-in-law. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1851 and settled in the Ogden area. John Marriott took three plural wives within a few years of arriving in Utah Territory and had a large posterity that includes the founders of the Marriott hotel chain. One of his wives was Robert’s sister, Margaret Burton, who arrived in Utah in 1855. Robert took a plural wife in 1870.

Young William’s Desire to Gain an Education

Young William and the rest of his family were still in England in the 1840s. “Early on a Sabbath morning, long before the rising of the sun, Willie was to be seen walking toward the suburbs of the town in search of where he was not likely to be disturbed, and often he would select a seat in the shade of some large trees. After finding a suitable place, and getting comfortably seated, he would take from his pocket the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, or some other book containing useful information; which he would read with a prayerful heart, asking God to give him understanding and to bless his efforts to gain knowledge. In this way he learned to read

well, and gained many fragments of knowledge to which he would have remained a stranger, had he been confined to the small round of his own thoughts without the aid of books. This practice widened the field of reflection, gave him much pleasure, and increased his thirst for intelligence. Thus, step by step, he made advancement; inch by inch he climbed up out of ignorance. Each little difficulty overcome prepared him for new conquest. Little Willie did not enjoy the many great advantages of our young friends who read the *Juvenile Instructor*. He had not the opportunity of attending a good school, for he had to labor every day, early and late.

“Had you looked under the table when he was eating his dinner, you would have seen his book laid upon his lap spread wide open, at which now and then he would take a sly glance. In this way he learned many a lesson. When he had a little leisure time he would search out some person able to instruct him, to whom he would present his little difficulties and ask for an explanation. And often he felt extremely thankful for the assistance of able friends who took deep interest in him and cleared away the small but, to him, apparently insurmountable difficulties.

“Night after night, when the family were all in bed and sleeping soundly, Willie might have been seen sitting near a table bending over his book and diligently perusing his lesson by the light of the candle. There he would sometimes sit till nearly midnight, reading and pondering over new ideas and often till he went to sleep; occasionally he would wake up and find the fire out, the candle burned away and his book fallen from his hand to the floor. Finally a friend suggested that it would be better for him to quit studying at night, and rise very early in the morning and spend an hour or two in study before time to go to work. From this suggestion Willie received much benefit, for he found that in the morning his mind was much stronger, and consequently he was much more successful. After giving this method a fair trial he concluded that he could learn more in one hour in the morning than in three hours in the evening.

“About this time he got William Cobbet’s Grammar and commenced to write it out verbatim. If he happened to omit, misplace or misspell a word in any of the lessons, the paper containing such lessons was torn up and the task re-commenced. In this way, and with the assistance of his friends, he acquired a tolerable thorough knowledge of grammar. He now wrote letters, essays, or penned his thoughts on any subject that presented itself, not for publication but for self-improvement. Such pieces were laid aside for two or three weeks, and then he would criticize them, for he believed that, after they had been laid aside in this way, he could see their errors much better than when they were only just written.”

When Willie turned fourteen, he was asked by the branch president, Edward Milnes, (the elder who had taught his family the gospel,) to spend a few hours each Sunday distributing tracts. His friends mocked him in this endeavor until they realized his determination to continue. He continued in this effort for two years.

In 1849, Willie visited a favorite aunt, Mabel, his father’s older sister, and her family who lived fifty miles away. Shortly after arriving he received word that his father was ill and he should return home as soon as possible. He traveled the fifty miles as quickly as he could, but he arrived after the funeral. His father had died of cholera at the age of forty-nine.

His mother, Isabella, 47, was now a widow with eight children at home ranging from her oldest daughter, also named Isabella, age 21, to little Tom who had just turned three. Other sources show Isabella’s brother Christopher was a generous man, and it is likely he helped the family,

although we do know that Isabella provided some support to her family by knitting. It is reported that she could knit so fast that the needles couldn't be seen. Isabella's oldest son Robert, mentioned earlier, was at this time living among the Saints camped from Illinois to Iowa who had been forced from Nauvoo.

After his father's death, sixteen year old Willie took over the family business. He wrote about his trials in buying a horse that the family needed. He was deceived by the trader and had bought a sick horse, but he chose to make do with the horse and be grateful that he had only been deceived and that he was not a deceiver.

Shortly after this he took a shorthand course, which at the time was called phonography. He excelled in this and was chosen to lead his classmates until they could write up to one hundred words per minute. In the days before electronic recording devices, shorthand was a valuable skill. Eventually Willie was able to write one hundred and fifty words per minute. He said that this was a benefit to him for the rest of his life.

He wrote about visiting his cousin Thomas, son of his uncle Christopher, in Pontefract. Thomas had received an excellent education, and during this two week visit Willie asked Thomas to tutor him in languages and botany. Frequently in his writings he described his love for learning and his determination to better himself. During this trip, Uncle Christopher arranged for the two boys to visit the coal mine where he was a bookkeeper.

Willie described the mine in detail, stating it was three hundred and sixty feet deep. They stepped onto a cabin on a platform and descended rapidly. At the bottom they were given a candle which they stuck in a piece of clay. Willie saw about fifty horses working in the pit – some very large and some quite small. The small horses, which Willie learned were Shetland ponies, pulled the cars of coal through low caverns and the large horses worked in the higher tunnels. The teamsters seemed content and sang and whistled cheery tunes. The guide told Willie and Thomas that some of the horses had been in the pit for years and had become perfectly accustomed to the darkness. Willie remarked to their guide that he thought he was seeing telegraph wires. The guide confirmed that they did indeed have a telegraph system in the mine that was a mile long. Willie was also astounded to see railroad tracks in the pit of the mine. He learned there was a over a mile of track and this is how the coal was moved around. After five hours he and Thomas were tired and ready to leave the pit although they had not seen half of the works.

Willie recorded that he was ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood at the age of seventeen. It was an interesting experience for him because he received a premonition that this responsibility would come that morning in church. He was immediately filled with fear that he would be called to speak and would embarrass himself. He wanted to leave, but his faith prevailed and he remained in the meeting. When the list of names of those to receive the Priesthood was read aloud, his name was the first, and he was indeed asked to speak. He wrote that he felt that the adversary had tempted him to leave his post of duty, but he had resisted.

William's LDS Mission

When William turned eighteen, the president of the Bradford Conference felt impressed to call him on a mission to northern England, but he knew William was supporting his family. He spoke to Isabella, however, and through her faith she said, "If the Lord wants him, I am willing he

should go.” The call was issued to William, and with his own earnings he bought his mother a new dress and himself an entire suit of clothes. He carried a portmanteau, which is a bag with a long shoulder strap. He left for his mission on the 26th of April, 1851, the same year his brother Robert arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley. Even though Willie had money, he left it home, traveling as he felt he should, “without purse or script.”

He walked to his mission assignment, and along the way he stopped to preach. Arrangements had been made for him to be met by another elder, but the meeting did not take place, so he traveled alone. He described an event that occurred on this journey. “Willie visited a village named Spofforth and walked through the streets watching for an opportunity to introduce himself to the people and to preach the gospel to them. He felt very undecided as to what would be the best course to pursue; finally he was impressed to stand in the middle of the street and read aloud the hymn commencing:

“I saw a mighty angel fly,
To earth he bent his way,
A message bearing from on high
To cheer the sons of day.

“Willie carried out the impression, overcame his diffident feelings and read the hymn as loudly as possible. The people gathered around and looked at him in great astonishment.

“When he had finished reading the hymn he borrowed an old chair, on which he stood and preached to those who had gathered to listen. The Lord poured out His Spirit upon him, insomuch that he felt astonished at the freedom with which he was able to speak.

“When Willie closed his remarks, a preacher from the Methodist congregation came to the chair, asking many questions, and offered some opposition. Willie, in his simple, boyish style, answered the questions to the satisfaction of a majority of the audience, and through the blessing of God, many friends were raised up who administered to his wants. At the close of the short debate a Methodist class leader invited Willie home to take supper with him.

“Soon after this Willie visited Spofforth again. He found an increased amount of prejudice among some of the people. The ministers were united in persecuting the Saints and opposing the truth. It was night. Willie was very tired and hungry, having walked all day without food. In this condition he called upon nine different families and asked for lodging, but none were willing to entertain him. One old lady inquired if Willie was hungry. He told her that he was. She then set a bowl of milk and some fruit pie before him and said, ‘Eat quickly, for if the minister passes while you are here we shall lose our farm.’ Willie did justice to the pie and milk, bade the lady good-by and left in haste.”

William described his journey to the north of England with interesting details. He was humbled when he realized he had to rely on the kindness of others for shelter and food. “On he traveled till he came to a small hill, and being foot weary he sat down to rest near a thorn hedge. He soon became sleepy, placed his portmanteau under his head for a pillow, and stretched himself upon the grass. After sleeping some time, in turning over he rolled down into the bottom of the hedge among the thorns.”

He mentioned that in all this walking, he wore holes in the soles of his boots. He found lodging at the home of a member of the church whose wife, while opposed to the Mormons, was kind to him. That night he prayed that "God would put it into the heart of some person to get his boots mended." The next morning the wife noticed the boots and said to her husband, "If I were a member of a church in which the preacher wore such boots...I should be ashamed and try to get them fixed." She then called "up a little boy and sent him for the shoemaker who answered her summons and thoroughly repaired Willie's boots. The circumstance reminded Willie of his prayer the night before, and he felt to thank God not only for getting his boots mended, but for this direct answer to his prayer. He thought that this was a plain evidence that God acknowledged him in his mission, and listened to him when he prayed, which was a source of great comfort to him in his labors."

William was finally assigned a companion, the husband of the aforementioned wife, who distributed tracts with him on occasion. He described proselyting in ancient British towns which still had stones that were laid when the Romans were in England. He wrote of his dependance upon the citizens for food and lodging, and of missing meals and sleeping in hayfields. But, many strangers were kind. "Willie and his companion went to a town called Thirsk. They held a meeting in the open air and preached to a good congregation, and made an appointment for another meeting one week from that date. The congregation treated them respectfully, and a gentleman of the Methodist persuasion conducted them to a house of entertainment, engaged a bed for them and paid for their lodging for the night."

After a time William's companion returned home, leaving William to work alone. He was discouraged and saddened by that decision, but he determined to be faithful. He had learned of a man named Mr. Stanger in a small village named Faceby who had read a Book of Mormon and wanted to speak to Mormon Elders, so he walked to that town. Eventually he found Mr. Stanger, whose sister "was keeping house for him," and was fed a hearty meal. After the meal, William helped Mr. Stanger in the hay field, and word spread "like wild fire that a Mormon Elder had come to Mr. Stanger's, and was then actually working in the field, and that he was expected to preach on the morrow. Many came during the afternoon whose object appeared to be to try to get the dimensions of a Mormon, when they discovered that Mormon Elders were like other men. That evening four persons invited Willie to dine with them next day, and many showed him marks of great kindness. Willie felt that the Lord was giving him great comfort where he had but little reason to expect it. This encouraged him, and dispelled the gloom that the circumstance of his companion leaving him had thrown around his path.

"Next day it was arranged that Willie should preach at a farm house a little farther up the village, belonging to Mr. James Stanger, a brother of the first Mr. Stanger. Meeting was appointed for 2 o'clock p. m. When the time arrived the house proved to be too small for the congregation, consequently the meeting was held in the open air. The people appeared to be well pleased, and many invited him to visit them at their homes, for which purpose he remained at Faceby the following day. His visits afforded him much pleasure; for many families gave him kindly greeting, and bade him welcome to their comfortable rural homes.

"It was known that Willie was to leave Faceby the next day, and that he was traveling without purse or scrip, therefore some of the ladies, fearing that he might not have a timely call to dinner, in their extreme kindness, made tarts, pies and turn-overs, and insisted that he should place them in his portmanteau. In this way he was actually loaded down with their kindness."

One month later William returned to Faceby and was received with great kindness. He was invited to preach a sermon at Mr. Stanger's home, and a local Methodist preacher attended the meeting and frequently interrupted William's sermon. "Willie told him that he thought it would be more compatible with the character of a gentleman if he would cease these interruptions, and listen till the close of the discourse; and on condition of his compliance with this suggestion he should have a hearing at the close of the meeting." After William finished his sermon, the Methodist preacher stated that baptism was not essential to salvation, only faith. He spoke for fifteen minutes and then announced that he would close the meeting with prayer and knelt on the ground without allowing William to rebut his remarks. Mr Stanger's nephew "took hold of his coat collar and raised him to his feet, telling him that he had a hearing, and raised some objections, and that the meeting would be pleased to hear the answer." The preacher raced out the door, followed by the nephew, but the nephew soon returned alone, unable to catch the man.

"That evening John Etherington, a warden of the established Church of England, said at the close of the meeting that he believed Willie had preached the truth, and made application for baptism. The night was dark, the hour was late, and some distance had to be traveled in order to gain a suitable place, nevertheless, the warden was baptized. That night Willie retired to rest with his heart full of gladness and thanksgiving for the many blessings that heaven had strewn upon his path."

During the next few months of his mission, William became more sure of himself and of the doctrine of the LDS Church. He described an encounter with a Methodist minister who disagreed with the LDS doctrine of baptism of the dead, but upon further inquiry by William, he learned the minister also did not believe that baptism for the living was essential for salvation. William and the minister had this conversation in front of an invalid woman who had invited William to her home. The minister told William about the jailer who asked Paul what he needed to do to be saved, and the apostle only replied, "Believe in Jesus Christ." William pointed out that the jailer was baptized later that evening, but the minister was adamant that the jailer was not commanded to be baptized. The minister then argued that baptism would be against the scriptures, specifically in the case of the invalid woman whose health might be further damaged by immersion. He then quoted "Do thyself no harm," and "Thou shalt not kill," and asked if those were both scripture. With that logic he stated that baptism could not be essential, for it did not apply in the case of this invalid woman.

William replied by asking if he could quote scripture "in the abstract" as the minister had done to prove that the scriptures commanded that the minister was required to hang himself. The minister was intrigued and told William to go ahead. William quoted, "and Judas went out and hanged himself," and asked if it was scripture. The minister replied in the affirmative. Then William quoted, "Go thou and do likewise," but the minister would not answer. William followed with, "What thou doest, do quickly," and the minister ran into the street, leaving the invalid woman and William laughing.

William felt that the Methodist ministers in the area poisoned the minds of the people, who at first were friendly towards him, but after a few months had become enemies.

"Hungry, faint and weary, Willie left this village, and after walking some distance sat down to rest beneath some tall trees that were growing by the fence on the side of the road. While sitting here one of his teeth commenced aching, which afflicted him very much. Dark clouds were gathering

overhead, and the rain had already begun to fall. Every circumstance seemed to aid in deepening the gloominess of Willie's condition. The tempter thought this his most favorable opportunity, and whispered, 'You would do better to go home than to remain here in this plight, wandering from town to town like an outcast. You are hungry and faint and no one will give you food. It is stormy and you are cold and wet, and no one will give you shelter. You are without money and without friends. Go home or you will perish. Besides you have talent, and were you to go home you might perhaps obtain a good situation, have plenty of pocket money, enjoy life, and mingle with the young men who were your companions in your boyish days. Now, reflect before you go farther; weigh the matter well. Here is pain, there is pleasure. Here is want, there is plenty.'

"Willie now thought of his resolution never to return home until recalled by those who sent him, and he still felt determined to carry it out; nevertheless he felt much cast down in his feelings, and it also occurred to his mind that although he had been on his mission for a considerable length of time, he had only baptized one person, the church warden of Faceby. Willie could not see that he had accomplished much during the many months he had been traveling, and he now knelt down upon the grass, and, in childlike simplicity and heart-felt words, he prayed to God:

"O Father, why are there no fruits to my labors? What is the reason that nearly all my friends have forsaken me, that nearly every door is closed against me? Is the fault in me, Thy servant? If so, show it unto me and I will repent of it. Reveal unto me the right way and I will walk therein. Witness unto me that my labors are accepted of Thee, and by Thy help I will remain at the post of duty though all the world hate me. Give unto me Thy favor, and my soul shall be satisfied.'

"A gentle whisper came, as though it was from his guardian angel, 'This is the day of trial, be faithful and it will soon be past.'

"Willie rose to his feet feeling much refreshed, and with a testimony in his heart that God and the hosts of heaven were his friends. He now went to a place called Skelton. Here friends were raised up who administered to him in his necessities, and the Methodists invited him to preach in their chapel. Willie accepted the invitation and bore a faithful testimony to the truth. Many persons in the congregation wished him to make another appointment and preach there again, but the minister objected. A gentleman invited Willie to preach in his house if they would not allow him the chapel again, and an appointment was made accordingly for the following week. A number of other houses were opened for preaching in the villages for three or four miles around Skelton, and whenever Willie had an appointment to preach, [a gentleman], Mr. John Cummings . . . was sure to be present, who invariably invited Willie to accompany him home."

Mr. Cummings enjoyed discussing gospel principles with William, and where he formerly spent his earnings on liquor, he had now "become sober" and had ceased drinking alcohol at all. "His reformation and the increased benefits enjoyed by his family were apparent to all the neighborhood."

Interestingly, Mrs. Cummings' "heart was hardened by the power of Satan." One night Mrs. Cummings told William that she'd had a unique dream the previous night, where William was running after her and finally caught up. William prophesied that the dream would be fulfilled when he baptized her. She vowed that would never happen.

William had an appointment to preach in Longthrope, a village three miles from Skelton. "A

report was circulated that a learned minister of the Baptist church was going to attend the meeting to oppose Willie and put down Mormonism in that region. [Mrs. Cummings], who determined never to become a Latter-day Saint, felt particularly to rejoice over the prospect of the downfall of Mormonism, and although in a very unfit condition for walking, on the night of the meeting, she walked to the village where it was to take place. A full congregation convened, but the Baptist minister did not appear. The Lord poured out His Spirit upon Willie, and he preached to the people in great power, and strange as it may appear, that night Mrs. Cummings was convinced of the truth. That evening, as usual, Mr. Cummings invited Willie to his home.” On their way to the house, Mrs. Cummings said, “John, what do you think about being baptized tonight?”

Mr. Cummings answered, “Hannah, I am hardly ready yet, but if you choose to be baptized you can do so.”

She answered, “I feel what I have heard is the truth of God, and that if I do not receive it I shall be condemned. I feel that there is no rest for me till I am baptized.” They traveled an additional mile and a half to reach water, and Mrs. Cummings was baptized at midnight.

The very next Sunday William preached a sermon in the village of Knaresboro. Over the next four months twenty-eight people were baptized and a branch was organized.

William recorded that the other church leaders were “very much alarmed” at William’s success, and they determined to kill “Mormonism, and then preach its funeral sermon.” These church leaders united and sent for men from other cities to preach in Knaresboro against Mormonism in a format of a “trial sermon” with William defending the church. A man named John Theobald who lived two hundred miles away was selected to come. William recorded that he was only nineteen years old and was lacking in confidence. He wrote his the British Mission Presidency and asked for advice, and they encouraged him to accept the challenge.

Ultimately, William agreed to this “trial sermon” on the condition that “Mr. Theobald would give his services to the people and labor without purse or scrip as he did, [and] if a charge should be made for admission, and an overplus should remain after defraying expenses, that the overplus should be given to . . . the poor of Knaresboro. The proposition was rejected, and Mr. Theobald concluded to deliver a course of lectures against Mormonism. He thought to get considerable money by this means, for he charged each person for admission.”

William attended the first lecture and explained “to the public the reason why they had the lectures in place of a discussion. When he entered the hall all eyes were upon him. He took his seat in front of the lecturer, who, at the close of his remarks, gave an invitation to any Mormon Elder to come forward for a debate.

“William walked to the stand, amid loud cheers, clapping of hands and stamping of feet. He very calmly told the audience that he had offered to meet Mr. Theobald in discussion to present them the other side of the question, but that Mr. Theobald had rejected his offer, thinking there was more money in the lectures than in the proposed discussion.” William added “that he was not willing to be used as a tool in procuring gain for him” and his words were followed by cheers.

In the closing lecture, Mr. Theobald announced a lecture he planned to give in the Baptist chapel, however no females nor males under nineteen would be admitted. William told the people that

since he was a few months shy of nineteen, he would not attend. As he left the chapel, he was surprised to find more than two dozen Methodists waiting for him in the vestry. They greeted him kindly and all shook his hand. They “wished he was a Methodist; others thought him capable of doing much good if he only had a good cause to advocate.”

He replied, “My labors are in defense of truth. The work of God is the cause I have espoused, and I deem no other cause worthy of being placed ahead of it.”

Other friends greeted him outside the chapel and presented him with a “Japan box, several fine shirts, a set of gold studs, and a silver toothpick.” He was also welcomed to their homes. “Within a few weeks five or six were added to the Church; houses were opened in all the country round for preaching, and friends were raised up in every direction, which made a change in Willie’s condition.”

For the next year William labored, “and did not lack much for neither food, money nor friends. . . . Many person had been baptized, branches of the Church had been established, and numerous friends were raised up for him who were ever willing to administer to his wants.” He also felt that he was being watched over and protected by a guardian angel.

After a time William entered the town of Helmsley, about thirty miles from Knaresboro. By the time he arrived, he was very tired, and he knew no one in the town. Upon arriving at “a suitable place for a public meeting, [he] borrowed a chair, stood upon it and began to preach; and in a very short time a large audience gathered around him. He preached on the principles of the gospel with great plainness, for the Spirit of God rested upon him abundantly, insomuch that he no longer was weary in body or mind, but felt that God was with him and that all was well.”

At the close of his remarks he was challenged by a Methodist preacher who “rehearsed some of the stories circulated against the Mormons by Madam Scandal.” William chided him on his accusations, and after his departure a Presbyterian minister, John Rolls, stepped forward, announcing that it was his solemn duty to oppose Mormonism. “It was now dark, and as it had been determined to continue the meeting, fifteen or twenty of the audience went to neighboring stores to buy candles, and returned with them lighted, holding them in their hands, and presenting a very singular appearance.

“Mr. Rolls said that the Mormons believed that God has a form like unto man, possessing hands and feet, that he walks, talks, eats and drinks just like mortal man. He compared this with his faith of God – an immaterial, undefined substance, filling all space and extending everywhere; without body, parts or passions. He spoke at great length against Mormonism and the Mormons.

“Willie answered his opponent briefly, acknowledging that he and the people whom he represented did believe in a God in whose image man had been made; in a God with feet, and the same God that visited Abraham, ate and drank with him, and had his feet washed; in a God with hands, and who placed his hand upon Moses in the cleft of a rock; in short, in the God of the Scriptures, The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and thought that the immaterial, undefined God spoken of by his opponent must be a relative of the unknown God of the Athenians, to whom the Apostle Paul made reference; and added, addressing his opponent:

“Now sir, take away the parts, the passions – love and hatred, for these are passions – take away

the body, and if there be anything left, please find us words to describe it.’

“Mr. Rolls proposed to close the debate, to be resumed on another evening, which was accordingly done.”

After the meeting, a gentleman named Mr. Potter invited William to his home for as long as he wished. “On the evening appointed for the continuation of the debate the Rev. Rolls was missing, and Willie preached to a large congregation and had a good time.”

William’s mission ended in 1853, and he returned to his family.

William Emigrates to the United States

In February of the next year, William traveled alone on the ship *Windermere* among four hundred LDS emigrants leaving Liverpool to Zion. He admitted suffering from sea sickness the first day. The wind was fierce, the sea was rough, and an old man died that night. The next day the *Windermere* sailed past “the remains of a wrecked vessel. Masts, sails and other fragments were floating around. Probably a few hours before many despairing souls had clung to these same objects, hoping for relief that never came. All had perished, and no signs of life remained, and the surging waves rolled over the bodies of the lifeless sleepers while the wind wailed its requiem for the dead.”

William then mentions that he saw flying fishes. “They would rise from the water and fly for a short distance and then drop into the water again.”

Two weeks into the journey at about eight in the morning, “an exceedingly fierce storm arose.... The masts cracked and the sails were lashed to pieces. . . . Willie saw a little child, about two years old, between decks, and being afraid that it might get hurt, he made a spring towards it to save it from the pending dangers, but just as he moved towards the child the ship gave a great bound upon the great waves of the stormy Atlantic, and heaved upon its broadside, dashing Willie upon the deck, and bruising his head so severely that other hands had to save the child.”

The captain feared that the ship would not survive, and he approached President Daniel Garns who presided over the nine wards on board, who in turn requested all to begin a fast and to call a prayer meeting. “Precisely at ten o’clock the prayer meeting commenced, and such a prayer meeting few have ever seen. The ship rolled from side to side. On one side the Saints were hanging by their hands, and on the other side they were standing on their heads. Then the ship would roll to the other side, which would reverse their positions. About this time the large boxes that were tied with ropes under the berths broke loose, and pots, pans and kettles rolled with terrible force to and from each side of the vessel. Although the prayers were fervent and earnest, as the pleadings of poor souls brought face to face with danger and death, they ceased their prayers to watch and dodge the untied boxes, and great confusion prevailed for some time.”

William and a friend chose to stay on the deck while all the other passengers were below. “The wind roared like a hurricane. Sail after sail was torn to shreds and lost. The waves were very large, and as far as the eye could reach seemed to be one angry mass of rolling white foam.” Having made the decision to stay on deck, it could not be reversed, and they remained there the entire day. This storm lasted into the night and then abated, but they sailed through stormy

weather for ten days.

In the midst of their journey, smallpox broke out, killing about a dozen passengers, some of them children. William described a morbid pastime of his, of watching the bodies thrown overboard. “Willie thought that he would get a good place from which to see the body thrown overboard, so he got outside the vessel and seated himself on the ledge extending out from the deck, placing each arm around a rope that led to the rigging. His feet were hanging over the ocean, and the ship was sailing about ten knots an hour. By this time darkness was fast setting in, but here he sat waiting to get a good view when the corpse should be thrown into the watery grave, where some said sharks were constantly seen following for prey. Willie went to sleep, and the funeral passed without his knowledge. The sound of feet walking on the deck behind him roused him from his slumber. A chill ran through him; his hair almost stood on end when he sensed his condition. Here he had been asleep, his feet hanging off the side of the vessel, which was rocking to and fro. He wondered how he had escaped falling overboard. It was now totally dark. He climbed into the ship and resolved never to [take such a risk] again.”

William described the tone of the ship with so many deaths from smallpox. “About this time the stench and smell of the small-pox were fearful in every part of the vessel.... The funeral services were very impressive, and Willie could not help thinking a funeral at sea was the most melancholy and solemn scene that he had ever witnessed, especially when the sea was calm. A stillness like that of death prevailed, while an old sailor at intervals would imitate the doleful tolling of the bell of some old church, such as he had heard in some parts of England. The funerals were becoming frequent, and were almost a daily occurrence.”

William described the scenes before his eyes, “At this time the *Windermere* had been about six weeks out from Liverpool, and the passengers had never seen land from the time that they had entered the Atlantic. The days were now generally mild and the weather very pleasant. Willie had never seen the sun set in such grandeur before, and then the bright, pale moon seemed to be straight above their heads, shining perpendicularly upon the deck, and had it not been for the sickness on board, this part of the voyage would have been very enjoyable.”

Land was spotted when they neared St. Domingo on the eighth of April. On the ninth, in sight of Cuba, a young man died of smallpox. “At the time of his death the wind had ceased blowing; not a zephyr moved to form a ripple upon the waters. The sea appeared bright and clear, and seemed as smooth as a sea of glass. The young man that had just died was sewed up in a white blanket, and at the feet was placed a heavy weight of coal. A plank was then placed with one end resting in the porthole on the side of the ship, and the other near the main hatchway. The body was then placed on this plank. Then the doleful tolling of the bell began. Elder McGhee made a brief address, suitable for the occasion, and offered a short prayer, after which the body and bedding of the young man were thrown overboard. The ship was standing perfectly still, and the body could be seen sinking in the water, until it appeared to be no larger than a person’s hand. Willie thought that it was seen sinking for full fifteen minutes; some other passengers thought it still longer; some said that it was seen fully half an hour.”

At this point they were very low on rations, each passenger being limited to a small sea biscuit [dried bread] per day. On the twentieth of April the ship entered the mouth of the Mississippi River. “Sometimes the Negroes would call from the shore and bid the emigrants welcome. . . . In the twilight the ship arrived at New Orleans. The weather was quite warm, and the fire flies filled

the air like so many sparks flying. As soon as the ship landed Willie went ashore to see if he could buy a loaf of bread, but could not find any to purchase, so he returned to the ship till morning, when he and three others went out into New Orleans, called at a restaurant, and had a first-class meal, for which they only had to pay twenty-five cents. Then they walked through the business part of the town, and returned to the river where they had left the ship, but the ship had been towed into the middle of the stream, where it was anchored and quarantined on account of having small-pox on board.”

The sick were taken to a hospital, and the rest of the passengers began their twelve hundred mile journey upriver in steamers to St. Louis. “The small-pox was all left behind at New Orleans, but no sooner had they left the latter place than cholera commenced havoc among the passengers, who were crowded into the boat with very little accommodations. This dreadful plague would do its work in a few hours, and as the unfortunate ones had their sufferings relieved by death, the boat would pull to shore and in the silent, wild and romantic forests that lined the margin of the Mississippi River for hundreds of miles, a ghastly grave was dug and the sleeper was rolled in a blanket or other clothing and by his or her sorrowing companions, without ceremony, was carefully laid in a final resting place.”

The steamers stopped at many of the towns built along the river. William described seeing signs advertising slaves for sale and his disapproval is apparent. Midway up the river, the passengers transferred to smaller boats. William traveled on the *Honduras*. By the time the boat docked at Kansas City early in the morning, William had contracted cholera. He wrapped himself in a large shawl of Scotch plaid and was taken ashore and laid on the banks of the Missouri River. Two other men were placed next to him and both died within hours. He thought of his widowed mother and siblings still in England who were counting on him to find his brother Robert and prepare a home for them.

“Would they ever meet on earth again? Would all their fond hopes be blighted? These thoughts wrung his heart. He could not endure them. The great love he had for his dear mother and his brothers and sisters at home inspired him to rise up from his bed on the banks of the Missouri. This was a terrible effort. Only such thoughts could have moved him under the circumstances. Without them he would either not have made the effort, or if he had, would have shrank back to his grassy bed on the banks of the river, and perished there. But he still continued to exert himself until with the pain and the effort the sweat began to roll down his face in big drops as large as peas. The more freely the sweat flowed the better he felt, which gave him encouragement. Willie continued to improve until he had fully recovered.”

William Begins His Way West

William traveled to Independence, Missouri, where a man kept about fifty cows with calves awaiting for the church agent to call for them. William remained there three weeks. “All went on smoothly until the time came for separating the cows and calves, which were mostly of the Texas breed, and extremely wild and vicious. The cows were driven to camp, which was about two miles from Westport, near Kansas. They were put up into a corral and closely herded. Next day they were to be yoked up. A good, strong force, including Willie, under the direction of a Mr. Irons, were assigned the task. Mr. Irons was an old frontiersman, and could swing the lasso in true Mexican style. This force went to the corral, climbed over the fence, but before Mr. Irons could get the lasso adjusted, five or six of the wildest of the cows raised their heads erect, with

eyes glaring fiercely, throwing their tails up, and with furious bound rushed at the approaching company. No one waited for any word of command, but each seemed to take a notion at the same time that he would like to see how quickly he could jump that fence. The feat was performed at exactly the same instant. Under other circumstances they might not have jumped so near together; it was done as though it was only one single effort. Now the operations were conducted from the outside of the corral. The cows were caught with the lasso, drawn up to the fence, and securely tied to a post in twos. Then the yoke was placed over their neck. None of these efforts aimed at their civilization seemed to be appreciated, for they put their tongues out, and with the full strength of their lungs bellowed at their captors. This work of subjugation lasted nearly all day. When all were yoked up they were let out upon the prairie to get acquainted with their yokes and exercise themselves in their new kind of employment. Quite a number broke their horns off, some broke their necks. Two of the cows freed themselves from the yoke and went back to [the] farm.”

William then tells of the escapade involved in trying to capture the cows. One of the cows outsmarted them and after trying to lasso or catch her, they ended up leaving her in some woods. Later that evening they bargained with a settler for a feast for fifteen of the men who had worked with the cattle. They the lost cow, plus five dollars and an old knife, for a fine chicken dinner .

“Several days were now spent in trying to tame the wild steers and cows which were mostly of the Texas breed, with wide-spreading horns. They seemed as fierce and untamable as the buffalo of the plains. Willie had agreed to drive a team for H. J. Jarvis, a merchant who let him have one yoke of cattle, about half gentle, and two three-year old yokes of Texans that were about the wildest in camp. In the afternoon of the 19th day of June, 1854, the wagons began to move out from camp. The wagon Willie drove was last to start.”

“All the wagons were now in motion and the journey of more than a thousand miles began over beautiful prairies covered with tall, waving grass, and the dreary sage plains, and lastly the rugged defiles of the Rocky Mountains. A storm came up suddenly and the rain came down in torrents, the road got slippery and Willie’s team got stuck while trying to climb a steep hill. Mrs. Jarvis was riding in the wagon, and Mr. Jarvis was trying to help Willie drive the team. The steers got their legs tangled in the chains and became unmanageable. Willie and Jarvis took firmly hold of the rope that was fastened to the head of the high steer, then unhooked the chain, but before they could get things right and the chain hooked up again, the steers bounded over the prairie with break-neck speed, dragging Willie and Jarvis after them.”

William and Mr. Jarvis spent all night in the rain, stuck in the mud. “Darkness began to set in, the rain still poured down in torrents, and no possible hope of moving on that night. Every wagon of the rest of the train had long since passed out of sight over the western horizon. On the frontiers of an Indian country, wet, weary, and discouraged, they settled down to pass the night as best they could, and anxiously awaited the dawning of another day. This night seemed almost like a month, but at last the day dawned upon them and the sun rose in splendor, inspiring the occupants of this belated wagon with hope. But the road was still wet and slippery, and Willie and Jarvis, with their limited knowledge of driving an ox team were unable to make a start.”

William then describes their Savior, a young black child who happened to come upon them. The boy asked if they had been stuck there all night, and they replied that they had. William excused their predicament by explaining that the road was slippery and the cattle could not pull the load.

The young boy assured them that he could get the cattle to pull the load. “And on being requested to try it, he made the cattle haw a little, then with a scientific shake of the whip, a loud crack and a slight touch with the lash where it was most needed, the cattle straightened out and moved on with the load at astonishing ease. Thankful for the timely help of the Negro boy, they pushed on their journey till they overtook the train.”

Job Smith, the captain on the wagon train, wrote, “Our cattle mostly wild with only myself and two others who had ever handled an ox whip in their lives you may guess we had a picnic. We moved a few miles only. Next day tried again.” Obviously, William was a factor in the “picnic,” but Brother Smith did happen to mention that W. W. Burton was the company clerk. The stenographer course was apparently a skill that was needed even in crossing the plains.

“During the time the company were in camp at Kansas many died with cholera, but as soon as they got fairly out on the plains, cholera left them, and the camp became quite healthy. While at Kansas trying to break in wild cattle, Willie, seeing many roll up their shirt sleeves, thought that he would do so too. So he rolled up his, but his arms were very tender, and the sun came out so hot that it burned them until the skin rose up in big blisters. About three days after this the company stopped to dinner near a small river, and Willie with several others went to bathe. He stripped off and jumped into the water. His arms now looked fearful for when he emerged from the water, the sore parts of his arms were perfectly raw, for the skin peeled off, and with his arms in this sad condition he had to look after the cattle, drive team and stand guard. However, they grew better much quicker than he expected.”

William described protecting the wagon train from wolves, and then their joy when they encountered a buffalo herd. “Two or three were killed and the camp laid in a good supply of meat. Up to this time there had been little variety in diet. The only change being bread and bacon and then bacon and bread.” The men of the wagon train did have to work hard to keep the cattle from stampeding with the buffalo.

Early in August the company reached the Platte River. There were several scares with quicksand, but all were rescued. Once the company had crossed, the captain realized that six cattle had been left behind, and because two belonged to William’s team, the captain asked him to cross the river and bring them over. William could not swim, so he asked the captain to let him take a small black pony who could swim. William explained to his readers that the pony had once belonged to the Indians and was very well trained. The pony swam across the river with William on his back. William found the missing cattle and took them to the river where he and the pony had crossed. “The first step into the water the cattle went out of sight all but their horns. Willie rode in after them and had considerable difficulty, but finally got them all safely over, and the train moved on.” There were 45 wagons in this company, and it seemed like William’s was always bringing up the rear.

When the company reached Laramie, Wyoming, they “passed a very large number of Sioux Indians. There seemed to be thousands of them they did not appear to be very friendly. It was afterwards learned that there were some differences between them and the soldiers situated at Fort Laramie, and next day it culminated in a fight, when one of the chiefs was killed.” The following day a Crow Indian, friendly with a post trader, warned him that everyone should flee as the Sioux wanted to seek revenge. The trader and the Indian visited William’s camp, but the “cattle had been driven off two or three miles to get feed. Willie and three others were sent after

them and brought them up with all possible speed. In a few minutes the cattle were yoked up and the wagons rolled out. The cattle also seemed to partake of the fear felt by the people, and traveled much faster than usual. About two o'clock p.m., they stopped at a swampy place, where the grass was good, and gave them a good feed, then rolled out again and traveled till sunset. A corral was formed, and the cattle with yokes were chained to the wheels inside. Many of the sisters especially were alarmed at fires seen on distant hills, which were said to indicate the presence of Indians. As soon as darkness came on the company moved onward again. The cattle seemed frightened, and traveled remarkably fast till nearly morning, and in this way the company succeeded in avoiding trouble with the Indians."

The company finally reached Salt Lake City and were greeted by friends and family who had earlier traveled to Utah. These people brought "supplies of bread, potatoes, etc., for the incoming company, who had been on short rations for some time. The night before Willie and some others gathered mushrooms for supper, their provisions having given out. The potatoes and loaves of bread that their friends had brought appeared more beautiful than would nuggets of gold. The company had been over three months crossing the plains from the Missouri River, during which time they had never seen any vegetables. Therefore, this first meal in the valley of Great Salt Lake seemed to be the sweetest and best they had ever eaten."

William's brother Robert had arrived in the valley four years previously and had settled his family in Kaysville, where William finally met him after a separation of eleven years. William lived with his brother for two years, during which time he taught school and helped with farm work. When his brother acquired 120 acres outside Ogden, Willie and a hired hand fenced the land. "This work made Willie's hands very sore; they blistered, and the skin came off, but he kept on and soon his hands became accustomed to the work."

During the winter of 1855 Robert's wife Elizabeth gave birth to a tiny, premature baby. He was so small that he fit in a quart cup. His mother wrapped him in a bundle and placed him on the oven door to keep him warm. Robert named this baby after his brother William and asked him to give the baby a name and a blessing. From a family record, "In the blessing, Uncle William promised that little William would grow to manhood, choose a wife to take to the temple, and serve a mission for the Church. After the blessing, Uncle William seemed amazed at what he had promised such a frail child and exclaimed, 'Oh Robert, what have I done?' Then he added, 'Well, so be it.'" The tiny baby grew to manhood, indeed marrying a wife in the Logan Temple, and became the father of four children.

William and Robert's Mother Isabella and Their Siblings Cross the Ocean

These two brothers got word to their mother, still living in Bradford, England, that they were together in the Great Salt Lake Valley and she could now bring the rest of the family. Isabella secured passage on the *Samuel Curling*, the last ship leaving Liverpool in 1855 with LDS British and Scottish converts. More than half of the 581 passengers' fares were paid by the Perpetual Emigration Fund, including the family of Widow Isabella Walton. By the 1850s, the LDS Church had vastly improved traveling conditions for the immigrants.

Another passenger recounted that there were no deaths, but three births on the voyage, so they arrived in New York City with more passengers than they started with. At the beginning of the voyage a letter was read from Elder Franklin D. Richards, who served as the President of the

British Mission, admonishing the Saints to do right. "It gave assurance to the Saints, that if they observed to obey the counsel of [Elder Israel Barlow, the president of the company of emigrants], that not one soul would perish by the way but all would arrive in life and come up on the land of Joseph, even the land of America and realize their long hopes and ardent expectations." Another passenger stated that "the ship encountered several storms in her passage across the Atlantic, but she passed safely through them all." He then related that during the worst storm the captain told Elder Barlow that he had never encountered a storm such as this and feared the worst was yet to come. Elder Barlow prophesied that "the storm was nearly over and would not increase in violence." The captain examined "his barometer and other nautical instruments and found that Brother Barlow was right; the storm abated almost immediately. Brother Barlow afterwards told some of the Saints that while the storm was raging he saw the ship surrounded by scores of angels who stood in a circle around it with joined hands. This was a testimony to the Saints that the Lord was watching over the ship, and that there was no danger."

While onboard, many passengers made tents and wagon covers in preparation for their overland trip west. After one large piece of fabric was completed, the saints chose to have a solemn procession underneath the tent, which was erected on the deck with the use of an oar and a pole. The hymn "Praise To The Man" was sung and the passengers passed under the tent organized in their various divisions. The sailors on board, with "no evil intention," chose to form their own procession. "One fellow with a red shirt . . . seated himself steadily on the shoulders of two of his comrades. . . [and he wore] a hat that would puzzle a philosopher to describe its shape, and in his hand he carried a pole. . . . The others who followed him bore in their hands poles [and] oars so they all appeared like the old English bailiffs. . . . The scene was so imposing that a few of the Saints [laughed]." Elder Barlow "restored order and solemnity to the waiting audience."

Matthew Rowan, a Scottish convert, was an observant fellow and a faithful journal keeper. He described the ward to which he had been assigned, "There are in my ward 45 berths, 19 men, 35 women, 24 boys, and 31 girls, all together, 109 souls. There are on board as passengers 578 souls about 500 of whom are going direct to the Valley of Great Salt Lake. All in my ward are Scotch, and those I used to labor amongst in Scotland, save two or three families." Matthew kept quite a few interesting details in his journal, including the speed of the ship each day. He added, "We lack not for music on board. We have both violins, saxhorns, cornepeans & accordions, playing merrily. We indulged in but very little dancing, however. The captain and crew are not so well pleased with us for preventing our sisters from associating with them." A tidbit he included was, "The galley was set on fire today by a Brother who was boiling a piece of pork and the pot boiled over and the fat running on the stove [caused a fire]. The mate of the vessel threw the pot and all its contents into the sea but he did not throw the man over who owned the pot. Curious! I am sure it was neither the pot nor pork that was the offense but this is none of my business."

Later he wrote, "I saw an iceberg today to our left. One was seen yesterday to our left. It is still very cold but fair." He commented several times about the tent making that transpired throughout the voyage. He said the sisters sang as they sewed and "it is delightful to see and hear them." Matthew later wrote, "All is well, only a few of our young sisters who will be friends with our gallant captain and some of our brethren say he (the captain) is not so bad a fellow after all, i.e. when he has just given them such a glass of brandy. Some would, I believe, call the Devil a complete gentleman for so small a compliment! as even an invitation to drink with him." While the ship was six hundred miles out from New York City, Matthew recorded that a flock of

sparrows visited them. A member of the crew remarked that this was a common occurrence. “The evening was beautiful and many of the Saints got up upon deck and sang some of their Mormon songs in the true Mormon spirit.”

Matthew then wrote, “Tuesday 22nd. 6 a.m. the land was sighted by a naked eye, and oh! how beautiful it did appear to the emigrant’s eye. All were electrified by the cry of land. Lamé, old, young, sick, and all ran up on deck to see it. It seemed like a fairyland. We first gazed upon what is called ‘Never Sink,’ then ‘Sandy Hook.’ then ‘Statton Island, to the left, then we feasted our eyes upon the beauty of ‘Long Island.’” Matthew wrote, “The captain is eloquent in extolling our conduct and propriety on board to the pilot, doctor, excise officers, and reporters. He boasts that for goodness and healthiness, there never was a better ship load of people brought into port. He and the crew wish we had further to go with them. Our company has been so engaging, they express their regret to part from us. The captain gets us to sing to strange officials when they come aboard. Oh! he is big about his passengers.”

Another passenger wrote that fishing was plentiful and many cod were caught on this journey, and they were so pleased with the services by the cook that they took up a collection before they reached shore and were able to reward him with seven pound sterling. They approached New York at two in the morning and this particular passenger wrote, “the high lands of America are in sight. I see a lighthouse by its light. It was two lights, one is standing and the other is revolving.” At nine a.m. he wrote, “the scene at this moment is grand and imposing. The houses are clean, light and cheerful. Indeed it is beautiful beyond anything I have yet seen. . . Here lieth ships of all dimensions. All is bustle and activity. The anchor of the *Samuel Curling* is let go!!! We are all safely landed in New York, America this 22nd day of May 1855. Glory and blessing be unto the Lord for evermore, Amen.”

A reporter from The New York Tribune went aboard the *Samuel Curling* and later wrote an article about the ship. “From a visit to the *Samuel Curling* we are enabled to lay some interesting facts before the readers of the Tribune respecting the order and management of the voyage. A large majority of the passengers are of the poorer classes of British peasantry, Ireland contributing but a small proportion, who are sent out to Utah at the expense of the Emigrating Fund. They are mainly in families, only a few single men and women were on board. The married people were of all ages from tender 18 to hale 80, and appear to enjoy good health and spirits. The vessel was the cleanest emigrant ship we have ever seen; notwithstanding the large number of her passengers, order, cleanliness, and comfort prevailed on all hands, the between decks were as sweet and well ventilated as the cabin, and the orlop deck [the lowermost deck above the hull] was as white as scrubbing brush and holystone could make it. It would be well if the packet-ships that ply between this port and Liverpool were to imitate the system of management that prevailed on board this ship. The passengers were under the Presidency of Elder Israel Barlow and two counselors, Elders Perry and Robinson. The company was divided into seven wards, each superintended by a president and two counselors, who together attended to the affairs of the ward, such as cooking, drawing water, morning and evening worship, looking after the sick, setting the watch, and in short, directing the affairs, temporal and spiritual, of the people committed to their care.”

At the end of the voyage, William Willes, secretary of the company, wrote back to the brethren in Europe. “I would beg of my dear brethren in Europe to bring only necessary changes and utensils, for the immense baggage has nearly broken our backs and our hearts too. Bring a little

and good. The great expense of sending this incubus would have rescued many poor Saints from bondage. Luggage, luggage, luggage, is like a dread spirit from the vast deep. If I had a voice of thunder, I would say to the Saints PRUNE YOUR LUGGAGE!”

These accounts of the voyage have been included because the widow Isabella Burton and seven of her children were on this ship. Did Isabella help sew the tents? Did her children sing with the other passengers? How much did they work to keep this ship clean? Did the crew make unwanted advances towards the daughters? Daughter Isabella was twenty-eight, Rosemond was twenty, and Margaret was sixteen. Sons who might have fished and scrubbed decks were James, age eighteen, Christopher, fourteen, and Thomas, age nine. Mary was eleven, and perhaps she found friends among the other passengers’s children.

Also on the ship was a twenty-five year old British convert, Samuel Rushforth. Apparently a romance blossomed between Samuel and Rosemond. Samuel crossed the plains in the same company as the Burton family, and he and Rosemond fell in love.

Isabella Burton and Her Children Begin their Trek West

The emigrants were met at the New York dock by Elder John Taylor and other brethren who were “missioned in New York.” Elder Taylor separated those who had paid for their own journey, called “Independents,” from those who were being supported by the Perpetual Emigration Fund. The *Samuel Curling* was the first ship of emigrants that did not sail to the mouth of the Mississippi River. Improvements in overland travel allowed the passengers to land in New York City, take a steamboat to Philadelphia, and then travel by train to Pittsburgh. From there they traveled by steamship to St. Louis. At that point they had been on land just two weeks. At Atchison, Kansas they joined the Milo Andrus Company.

This was the last of the PEF companies for 1855. The night before the company departed the encampment just outside Atchison, which was called Mormon Grove, Captain Andrus was assigned to lead the train. His specific assignment was to get the train to the Salt Lake Valley before snow fell. The emigrants were very inexperienced with cattle, and one emigrant wrote that early in the trip it took four men to drive one yoke of oxen. Captain Andrus was an experienced leader, and he fended off some challenges by US Marshals who tried to hold the train ransom for debts they claimed were owed by Brigham Young. Captain Andrus gave the marshal brandy and it appears they were allowed to proceed without any further difficulty. As the company did not leave Kansas until August 1st, Captain Andrus lightened the wagon train by leaving equipment and some wagons with a local farmer and “set a pace as hurried as he could,” by urging, pushing and cajoling “the group over the plains, up and down the mountains, through the canyons, across the rivers, and through the miles of the thick dust of the trains.” The wagon train encountered a stampeding herd of buffalo “that ran across our train,” knocking the horn off one of the oxen. While there were many encounters with Indians, there were no serious problems. On September 28, the wagon train was met along the trail by brethren from Salt Lake who assisted the passengers along the journey. By October 6th, they encountered snow in Wyoming. Animals were dying and on October 11th Captain Andrus sent word to Salt Lake “that he needed fresh animals and that many of the men, women and children were almost barefoot and very destitute of clothing.”

At this point the wagon train had reached Fort Bridger, just a hundred miles from Salt Lake City.

Isabella and her children had been traveling for six months. One family history described Isabella as a small, frail woman who struggled to walk the usual twenty miles a day and keep up with the fast pace the captain set to get them to Utah before winter. Isabella tried to ride in a wagon when she could, and at some point along the overland journey she fell from a wagon, breaking her leg. The bone was set and bandaged with whatever these poor people could muster along the plains.

Word had reached Robert and William that Captain Andrus' wagon train was approaching Utah Territory and their mother was injured. I'm certain Isabella broke down and cried when she saw her two fine sons waiting for her at Fort Bridger. She had not seen Robert for thirteen years, William for four. They took their mother and their siblings on to their home in Kaysville, which must have seemed like heaven. Daughter Rosemond and Samuel Rushforth were married the next month.

Isabel Walton Burton received her patriarchal blessing in 1857. The Patriarch stated that because of her integrity, she was beloved by the Lord. She was promised that her children would bless and honor her, that she should have peace of mind, and that her last days would be her best days, and perhaps they were.

The Burton Families Settle in Kaysville, Utah

Isabella spent the next six years in Kaysville. She lived to see daughter Rosemond give birth to four children. Her daughter Isabella married into polygamy two years after their arrival in Utah and began her family, having three children before 1863. Son James married Eliza Hooper, a young convert from England, shortly before Isabella's death. Margaret became the fourth wife of John Marriott, her older brother Robert's brother-in-law, having two children before her mother died. A year after Isabella's death, her son Christopher married John Marriott's niece, Susannah Stewart, who had crossed the plains with his older brother, Robert. Census records show Isabella's younger children living with older siblings and their families before their own marriages.

The latter part of her life Isabella lived in the home of her son William, his young wife Rachel and their four young children. After a trip in 1863, her son asked her how she was feeling and she replied, "Oh, I feel so fine I could jump over the moon." To everyone's surprise, she died the next day at the age of sixty. She was buried in a pine coffin made by her son-in-law, Samuel Rushforth.

William Meets Rachel Fielding

It is now time to return to William's narrative, which picks up in 1855, amazingly without mentioning the arrival of his mother and siblings in Utah. "Willie was now twenty-two years old. His eldest brother, thinking that he was inclining to be a bachelor, advised him to seek a suitable companion and marry, as he considered the marriage state indispensable to the complete happiness of every true man, both in this life and that which is to come." William wrote that in a passing conversation the names of Rachel and Ellen Fielding were mentioned. He knew nothing about them, but "a very peculiar sensation passed through his mind, and it seemed as though someone said to him, 'There is where you will find your wife.'"

William first saw Rachel when she was sixteen years old. He was involved with arrangements to sell a portion of his brother's farm to a cousin of Rachel's. William saw Rachel standing in her

doorway and at first sight felt that she would be his wife. Rachel invited the group discussing the purchase of the property into her father's home. A granddaughter later described Rachel's appearance, "She was about five feet three inches in height . . . her eyes were blue, her hair was black and waved beautifully about her face. . . she had nice skin and beautiful hands."

William then wrote something that has been passed down through the generations. As a young child I knew nothing else about William and Rachel Burton except the following, "During the evening, while Willie and her father were very much interested in conversation, Rachel privately whispered to her sister Ellen, 'If I ever get married, that young man is just such a man as I want.' Probably the reason why Rachel told her sister [this] was that some time before the two had entered into a covenant together that in marriage they would never be separated, so they felt under some obligation to tell their preferences to each other. The business was consummated in relation to the farm, and Willie and his brother bade the family goodbye and returned home."

In the interim, Rachel had a dream. She saw two suitors, one of whom threatened her. She rejected both. Then she saw William, the young man she had seen a few nights earlier visiting with her father. In the dream William was wearing a light colored coat and buckskin pants and invited her to travel a difficult road with him. She awoke, but when she fell asleep, she dreamed the dream again. She felt that during the night someone gave her the interpretation that the road was the journey of life, and that she should marry William. Together they would brave many hardships but ultimately they would have a wonderful life. The next time Rachel saw William, he was wearing a light colored coat and buckskin pants. However, months passed, and neither Rachel nor William ever spoke to each other. William wrote that even though he cared for Rachel, "He had no means nor comfortable home for her."

William "concluded to ask her parents for her hand. He had to go thirty miles on foot. Before starting he prayed that God would direct him in this matter, and if Rachel would be a suitable companion to favor his plan and bless the union, and if God would ordain otherwise to cause some circumstance to arise to hinder it. That if God would approve the union, he prayed that He would let the family know all about it without him telling them. This was Friday morning when he started on his important journey. He walked to Salt Lake City, stopped all night with Bishop E. F. Sheets. Next day [Saturday] went on to the South Mill Creek, and arrived there about noon. The mother and two daughters were working at some quilting, and the father was reading a chapter from the Book of Mormon. Although it was only noon, the father asked Willie to stay all night. He thought this a favorable sign that all was right, and accepted the invitation. The afternoon passed off pleasantly, but Willie sought no opportunity to talk with the young lady. On Sunday morning the father started on foot to Salt Lake City to attend a meeting in the Tabernacle. Willie bade the family good-bye and went with him. They walked about two miles together before Willie could get courage to ask Rachel's father for her. . ."

Joseph Fielding, Rachel's father, had left England as a young man with two of his sisters, Mary and Mercy, and the three of them settled in Canada. They worshiped with other Methodists who were praying for the true gospel to be brought to them. Joseph joined the church in Toronto in 1836 after being taught by Parley P. Pratt. His good friend and neighbor, John Taylor, and John's wife Leonora Cannon, and his sisters, also joined the church at that time and they moved to Kirtland. Joseph's sister Mary married Hyrum Smith, a recent widower. Joseph accompanied John Taylor on his mission to England and taught the gospel to Leonora's brother, George Cannon. While a missionary in England, Joseph met and married Hannah Greenwood, a young

convert. Rachel and her sister Ellen were both born during their father's mission.

According to William, this is the conversation he and Rachel's father Joseph Fielding had as they walked to the tabernacle:

"Willie -- Brother Fielding, are you willing that I should take your eldest daughter to wife?"

"Father -- I could have told you what you wished to say. Do you know that she is willing?"

"Willie -- I do not know, for I have never talked with her on the subject.

"Father -- Supposing that she is not willing?"

"Willie -- Then that would end the matter with me.

"Father -- Are you willing to come into my family?"

"Willie -- No, Sir, I am not.

"Father -- What reason have you for objecting?"

"Willie -- My reason is this: My father was a good, faithful man and a true Latter-day Saint, and let the consequence be what it may, I cannot promise to leave his family to go into another, believing that I have no right to do so.

Father -- I like your candor, and providing she be willing, you have my consent.

"Willie -- Will you please ask her?"

"Here the father smiled and said that he would see about it.

"As soon as Rachel's father and Willie left the house to go to meeting, her mother asked her and her sister Ellen if they knew what Willie had come to ask for. They answered that they had no conversation with him, and of course could not tell. 'Well,' said she, 'I can tell you. He has come for one of you girls, and you will find out when father comes home.'

"When Rachel's father returned home from meeting, her mother's impressions were fully confirmed, for he told her all about his conversation with Willie, and that he had asked his consent for Rachel to become his wife." Rachel and her mother discussed this, and upon her mother's advice, Rachel told her parents she would marry William.

"Willie received a letter from Rachel's father saying that there appeared to be no great obstacles in the way. Next time Willie visited the Fielding family he had his first conversation with Rachel, during which she said: 'Before I fully give my consent I wish you to answer me on a question.'

"Willie inquired what the question was.

"'Well,' replied Rachel, 'are you willing to marry my sister Ellen also; for I wish you to understand that we have entered into covenant with each other, that in marriage we will never be separated.'"

There is nothing written to substantiate this, but I was told as a child that Rachel and Ellen made this covenant while crossing the plains as young girls. Their family "crossed" in 1848, so Rachel would have been nine or ten, and Ellen would have been seven. My Grandmother Cannon, who was twenty when her Grandmother Rachel died, told me it was a solemn pact made along the trail. Sarah was not born until 1851 and was only four or five when William proposed to Rachel, so it's doubtful she was factored into the equation at that time, although William married Sarah in 1870.

William and Rachel Begin Their Life Together

“On the 28th of March, 1856, Willie and Rachel were married. They were very poor, but they were young and full of hope. Willie rented a farm on shares in Kaysville. On it was an old log cabin, which was to be their future home. They borrowed a bed tick [like a duvet or a comforter cover, made of heavy fabric, such as duck cloth] and put some straw in it for a bed. So they had a good straw bed all but the tick. Then they made such a bedstead as could be made out of the fire wood, with no other tools than an auger and an ax. The rest of their furniture consisted of a table, made from rough boards, without much mechanical skill, and nearly without tools, and some three legged stools made out of rough slabs. They neither had stove nor bake kettle. A neighbor loaned them one of the latter, but it was a broken one. With this kind of an outfit they commenced life together, feeling that their prospects were good, for any kind of a change of circumstances must bring them some improvement. Willie had no knowledge of farming, but was willing to learn. He got the crop put in, but through lack of water only twenty-seven bushels of wheat were raised, and that grew so short that Willie had to pull it up by the roots instead of cutting it with the cradle.”

The previous year, “the grasshoppers had taken the crop, and in the latter part of the winter of 1856 nearly all the stock had died off with the hard winter. Many had lost their last ox and last cow. Willie and Rachel had neither bacon, fresh meat, butter, nor milk. They had about enough flour to last them till after harvest, but they divided that with those who had none, until it was all gone, and they were without bread for about a month. They had a little bran which they sifted and ate the fine out of that; then they ate the coarse siftings and from then until harvest time, they lived on pig weeds, reed roots, beet tops, boiled up for greens. They had a small patch of volunteer barley, which was tolerably early, and anxiously they waited its ripening, it being their first chance for bread. The first thing they did every morning was to go out and see how much the barley had ripened in the night. When the barley was ripe Willie cut it with a cradle, threshed it with a flail and cleaned it by winnowing in the wind, then he took nearly a sack full of it on his back, and carried it nearly two miles to Weinel’s mill, to get it ground, and though it was all ground up husks and all, they thought that it made quite good bread. The scarcity for bread at that time extended through all the settlements that were then in Utah. Rachel’s father traveled from South Mill Creek to Kaysville to get a little of that barley for bread. Soon harvest came and the people generally were relieved.”

Rachel gave birth to a healthy baby girl the day after Christmas in 1856, whom she named after William’s mother Isabella. The first winter William’s mother Isabella and his younger siblings spent in Utah was this winter of extreme poverty for all the Saints.

Rachel wrote down a few memories that have been preserved. She said, “Our home was rather a poor one, consisting of one room built of logs, a dirt roof over it and a floor in only one side of the room. Our furniture consisted of a straw bed, a small table and two chairs. In the winter of 1857 my husband spent in Echo Canyon, helping to keep back Johnston’s Army. All the bedding I had to give to him was my shawl given to me by my mother, for I had a young baby so had to keep the only bed we had.”

The Utah War of 1857

William wrote, “In the fall of 1857, what is known as Buchanan’s army was sent to Utah to

punish the Mormons for supposed rebellion, reported by our bitterest enemies, which reports were received and acted upon without investigation to see whether they were true. At this time nearly the whole people were destitute of clothing. In many cases it would have been a hard matter to tell the original piece of the man's pantaloons. Companies were being raised to go and meet the army, to take away their teams, capture their supply trains and hinder them if possible so they could not reach their destination. . . .”

William and his brother Robert were among those who planned to sabotage and slow down the army to keep them from arriving before winter. William wrote that he, “scarcely had any clothing. He had poor shoes, his toes protruded, and he had no coat at all. Rachel had a home-made skirt which she made up into an over-shirt for him. This was in the month of October, and all the bedding Willie had with him was Rachel's shawl. The company camped [at the base of Little Mountain in Emigration Canyon]. It had been snowing all day, but the clouds had passed from the sky. The moon was shining brightly: the night was bitterly cold, and the snow very deep all around. Willie and thirteen others crowded into one wagon bed, where they had to pass the night.

“Next morning preparations were made for crossing the Little Mountain. It was found that the snow on the side of the mountain was too deep for the horses to face. Ropes were then attached to the end of the tongue of a baggage wagon, and sticks placed from one to two feet apart along the rope. Men were then strung out in twos ahead of the horses to pull on the sticks and tramp the snow till the team could follow behind them. When the men had succeeded in getting a wagon to the summit they then turned back for another till they were all over [the mountain]. At night they camped at the foot of the Big Mountain. Here Willie cleared away about three feet of snow to make a bed. He and two others put their bedding together for warmth. Those on the outside were kept continually turning to avoid being frozen.

“The company camped in Echo Canyon. Rude huts were formed almost like Indian wigwams. In these the men slept, and frequently at night they would have social gatherings and indulge in songs, recitations and other amusements. They had very few arms, and but little ammunition; were poor, ragged, and ill fed; having only about half rations, yet they were measurably happy, in a conscientious and an abiding faith that God was with them, and would overrule all for the best.

“At one of the social gatherings, already referred to, and while the merriment was in progress, Willie was strongly impressed that something was wrong at home. He called his eldest brother out of the company and told him his impressions. They went off to a lonely place and kneeled down under a rocky cliff at the base of the mountain and there they prayed fervently for the loved ones at home, and that if any were sick that God would heal them. Willie marked the time, and on comparing notes after getting home, found that his little daughter, Isabella, at that very time, was very sick nigh unto death, and as near as could be learned at the time Willie and his brother were praying under the rocky cliff away up in the mountains, little Isabella took a change and was healed.”

William's brother Robert sent a letter to his wife Elizabeth Marriott while they were in the canyon. He wrote, “Write to me as often as you can. John Marriott [Elizabeth's brother] is in the camp with me. He is well and he sends his love to you all. William [Robert's brother] is well and sends his love to you all. He is gaining weight.”

The efforts of this rag-tag army were successful, and Colonel Kane chose to camp his army in

Wyoming for the winter instead of coming into the Salt Lake Valley.

“Willie returned to his home in Kaysville in the month of December to find his log cabin deserted. A few days before, Rachel had found it necessary to go to her parents till Willie returned. On a very cold day she got a chance to ride as far as Salt Lake City on the running gear of a wagon. Very thinly clad and without a shawl, (for Willie had it with him) she took her little babe in her arms and started. A Mrs. Cadberry was riding on the same wagon. She was warmly clad and wrapped in a big warm cloak. During the journey she turned to Rachel and said: “it is terrible cold, I can hardly endure it and I am warmly dressed. How can you stand it, girl? I would think that you would perish.

“Rachel replied: ‘I don’t know, unless He that tempered the wind for the shorn lamb has made my back equal to the burden.’”

The Saints Move to the Provo River Bottoms in 1858

Rachel wrote, “When the Saints were instructed to move south, [the next year when Johnston’s army entered the valley,] we went down with my parents, and then we all went down to the Provo Bottoms together. We stayed in Provo until the alarm was over and then returned to our homes. My husband and I remained with my parents until the next spring and then we moved to Aunt Smith’s farm and my husband worked the land for one year.” Aunt Smith was Mary Fielding Smith, the widow of Hyrum Smith. Mary died of pneumonia in 1852, but perhaps her son Joseph Fielding Smith [who became the President of the church in 1901], or an older half brother, John, later the church Patriarch, ran the farm. These men were Rachel’s first cousins.

“In the spring of 1858, [when the US Army entered Salt Lake City,] Willie and Rachel moved south to Provo bottoms. Nearly all the people from northern Utah went south leaving their home, and crops, not knowing whether they would return, but the U. S. Commissioners appointed by the President visited Salt Lake City, and discovered that the report sent the President were false, and that the army ought not to have been sent. A compromise was effected, the army at [Fort] Bridger was to go to Cedar Valley [in southern Utah] and establish a post there, and the Saints that had gone south returned to their homes in the north.

Back in Kaysville

“During their sojourn south, while hunting stock, Willie was in a heavy rain and was out all night. This gave him a severe cold which made him sick for nearly a month. While still sick, Rachel and he moved back with her father’s family as far as their home at South Mill Creek. As soon as he began to recover, he with Rachel went to Kaysville to harvest some fall wheat left there. Willie was still very weak, and he was not likely to gather strength fast on their diet, which was bread and water, for they had neither meat, milk nor butter. Willie’s farm was nearly a half mile from Kaysville town, where he had borrowed a team to haul some brush to make a shed to keep the sun off while resting during harvest. Just as he was going to take the team back, a large hare jumped up before him and ran for a short distance. Willie said to Rachel: ‘Notice which way that goes, and when I come back we will go and get it.’ On his return he took his only weapon, a pistol about a foot long, which had been made in Salt Lake City, loaded with powder and marrow fat peas [large lead shot], and side by side Willie and Rachel went to hunt the hare among the sage brush. They found it and while it was running he fired his pistol, and hit it on the back bone. It

proved to be very large, and lasted them for meat nearly a week. During that time Willie increased in strength very rapidly.”

Rachel wrote, “The following spring we moved upon what was then called Weber Bottoms, and my husband put in a crop and then went to making adobes.” Adobes were mud bricks which the early pioneers used to build homes and other structures. “The evenings and mornings began to get quite cool before our house was finished, and we were living all this time in a covered wagon. I took a dreadful cold and when my parents came to see us, they took me and my two little girls, Isabel and Hannah, home with them, leaving my husband alone, making adobes for our house, which was to shelter us from the winter. At last he had one room completed, so he came and took the children and myself home with him. The following spring . . . our son Joseph Fielding was born.” [Joseph Fielding became the father of my grandmother, Ida May Burton Cannon. Two of his arm chairs are in my home.] “That summer my husband raised a beautiful crop of wheat and barley, which made us very happy. The following winter owing to a big thaw, Weber River overflowed its banks and we were driven out of our home. We went over to . . . some of our neighbors, where we stayed for two or three weeks.”

A granddaughter later wrote, “Grandma was a woman of great faith and humility, and had a very strong testimony of the gospel for which she had suffered and sacrificed. All the early years of her life she spent pioneering in Utah and suffered many hardships, and it was necessary for her to be so economical and saving that she could not be otherwise when the necessity was long past. She was never wasteful nor extravagant in all her life. Nothing was ever disposed of that she thought might be used sometime for something.”

William Marries Ellen Fielding

William wrote, “For some years Willie and Rachel struggled on in poverty. Everything appeared to go the wrong way. They seemed to be working against fate. Rachel dreamed that if he would go and take her sister Ellen to wife as she had requested him when he came to woo her, that they would begin to do better, and God would prosper them accordingly. Willie went and took Ellen to wife also, and from that time they began to prosper just as Rachel had dreamed.”

Rachel wrote about this event with a slightly different perspective. “In November, 1861, my husband went to Salt Lake and married my sister Ellen. When he returned he had the pigs killed and then went back to spend Christmas with Ellen, and I had to see about having the meat salted. Soon after he left it began to rain. The rain continued for some time and then it snowed and froze. In the morning, I went out and milked the cow and fed the remaining pigs in a bad storm. It finally began to blow and then the east wall of our house caved right in. I took my three little ones and went over to stay with Brother and Sister Stanger who lived near. [Possibly the Stangers were the couple William baptized in Faceby more than twenty years earlier.] I stayed there until my husband returned. He brought my brother Heber with him and they soon rebuilt the house. In the summer we added another room to our house, but did not get the door hung and there were no windows in it.”

Rachel wrote that over the next few years she, William, Ellen and their children moved several times, finally settling in Ogden. Rachel and Ellen’s mother Hannah was widowed in 1863, and in 1866 their two brothers, both in their early twenties, died just a few weeks apart, possibly from heat stroke. Mother Hannah and younger sister Sarah Ann moved into the Ogden home with

them. At this time Rachel had five children; Ellen had two. Rachel wrote about an event that occurred later that year. “[In December] our Sarah Ellen was born. She was born in the evening and I had been washing all day. I took cold . . . and was unable to nurse my baby. My sister Ellen’s baby was over a year old, so she weaned her baby and then nursed my baby until she was seven months old.” Stories like these help us understand how polygamy helped those early pioneers survive.

Ellen’s oldest daughter Mercy later told this story, which happened during the difficult years of the 1860s. “My father, William Walton Burton, was a pioneer of 1854. Mother was Ellen Fielding Burton, also a Utah pioneer. Father was a school teacher in Ogden, receiving his pay in farm produce. He was a good provider; only once do I remember hunger threatening our family. Our home was situation on a corner lot, with a large cottonwood tree on the south side where we children and our friends would play in pleasant weather.

“One autumn in the late 60s, time were a bit hard and Father had a little trouble collecting from his school patrons; the four began to get lower and lower in the Burton big until at last a day came when it was quite empty. On that memorable day, Father started out early to visit all of his debtors to try to collect something to exchange or barter for flour.

“We children were playing as usual under our much-loved cottonwood tree when a bowed and covered wagon, drawn by a team of one white horse and one dark one, stopped near us. The driver, leaving a young man about sixteen years of age to hold the reins, alighted and asked if this was the home of William Burton. I, being the child nearest the wagon, answered in the affirmative. Then he went to the rear of the wagon, raised the cover, and lifted out a seamless sack of flour and started for the house. I ran ahead and opened the door for him. He put the flour down, went back to his wagon and drove away.

“Both Mother and the children were so accustomed to produce being delivered this way that no questions were asked. Father came home just as biscuits were being lifted from the oven. He started in amazement, asking, “Where did you get the flour?” Mother replied, “The man you sent left it.” “Why,” came the puzzled response, “I haven’t seen anyone with flour; I haven’t been able to collect a thing all day. I wonder where it came from.”

“We children were called in and questioned, but Father knew no one who answered to our descriptions, so he inquired among the neighbors and also among his debtors but he never did find out who the mysterious giver was. We all wondered and wondered, but this we knew: we all had plenty of flour to tide over the one hunger-threatening period of our remembrance.”

William Marries Sarah Ann Fielding

Rachel’s eighth child was born in 1870. Two months earlier William had married Rachel and Ellen’s nineteen year old sister, Sarah Ann. Their father Joseph Fielding had given his approval for this marriage before he died. Rachel did not mention the marriage in her writings. She did say, “That summer all of our children who had not had measles came down with them, my baby and all. We had a hard struggle, the baby being sick for a long time. She was never strong again, but lingered [until she was] about eleven months old and then died.”

Rachel’s mother Hannah had lived in a polygamous marriage, and Rachel wrote about this part of

her childhood, “We arrived in Salt Lake Valley, September 23, 1849, and for awhile we lived with Father’s sister who had come to the valley the year before us. Then Father obtained a piece of land and we lived in our two wagons. Mother in one, and Auntie in the other. Father went to the canyon — dragged logs home — soon we had walls for a one room house. Someone let us have straw — this was our floor, then Father stretched the tent over the top for a roof, and we had a living room — the wagons still being our bedrooms. In January Auntie had a little daughter — Mother was the doctor, nurse and housekeeper. In May Mother also had a little daughter, and Auntie did all for her.”

Four of Rachel’s daughters married into polygamy. A son and a daughter of Ellen’s children also were in polygamous marriages. Sarah Ann’s children were married after the Manifesto in 1890, although to be completely honest, Ellen’s son married his wife’s sister in 1901. According to family sources, this was done with the knowledge and permission of church leaders as the first wife was unable to bear children. Histories of that particular family describe the love everyone had for these two sister/wives.

William’s Career and the Homes in Ogden

In 1870, William took the position of bookkeeper in the Ogden Branch of the new mercantile store operating in Utah, ZCMI. In 1874, the family moved to a larger home in Ogden, during which time Rachel had another child, making eight living children, and Ellen had four living children. Sarah had two children. The math says there were fourteen children in that home, although Rachel’s oldest daughter Isabella married late that year. Interestingly, Isabella’s husband married her younger sister Sarah twelve years later.

A granddaughter wrote about this home, “Our old home on Grant and 23rd Street in Ogden was a log structure, with a unit for each wife, and one for Grandma Fielding, but the living room was used for the entire family. Happy harmonious relationship of our life together – there are sweet memories. There a clover-carpeted orchard in the back yard, fragrant with bloom in spring, whose branches swayed to the weight of happy children and their acrobatic antics. Here was grown sweet fennel, catnip, dill and hollyhocks of every hue, from which we made our prize dolls. We made them ruffled skirts and turban hats, trimmed with multi-colored currants, and feathery fennel and dill. There was an old rock cellar beneath the granary, where water rose during the irrigation season--this made a wonderful skating pond in the winter.”

In 1880 William entered into a partnership with two other men which they called Burton, Herrick & White. Three years later William was able to move Rachel and Ellen into homes of their own just a block or two away from the log home. Late in life Rachel wrote, “In the summer of 1883, my husband built me the home in which we still reside, on the corner of Monroe Avenue and Twenty-Fifth Street, and here, on October 21, 1884 our little Julina May, came to us. She only stayed with us three years and four months, but how we loved her – but we loved them all.” This was Rachel’s first home of her own in over twenty years. Sarah Ann and their mother Hannah remained in the beloved log home. Rachel wrote, “I was alone more in this new home as my husband stayed more at the home nearest his business, and I had all the bulk of the responsibility of the new house, which meant a great deal of the care and more hard work.” Ultimately Rachel had thirteen children, eleven of whom lived to adulthood. These children were born in the homes described, amidst the background of thousands of pioneers settling and building communities, plowing farms, building homes, attending church and raising families.

Persecution Against Polygamy and the Move to Wyoming

But also in this background was the persecution of the Mormons. The political climate during the decade preceding the Manifesto worked against two practices, slavery and polygamy. Sarah Ann's daughter Alice wrote about this time, "Father had to be away from home most of the time and keep in hiding. His best friend . . . had been imprisoned, and we all lived in constant fear that our father would so meet the same fate. I knew my father was a good man, and we loved him dearly, and he loved us."

In 1885 William and Ellen traveled to England to escape the persecution, and the next year William moved Sarah Ann and Ellen to Afton, Wyoming. Daughter Alice wrote that William had been to Star Valley and had staked a property claim. She wrote, "[My three brothers and I], and our baby brother Ephraim took the long journey over terrible roads through the mountains. The roads were so sidling [steep] that sometimes the whole family had to ride the brakes [a handle they pulled], or hold on to the wagon from the upper side of the narrow road to keep it from rolling over into the canyon below. We had to walk up the steep hills, and put both teams on one wagon to get to the top, but when we came to the view of our beautiful valley we were thrilled by the sight! It looked like a great green field of waving grass with a curving river, edged with willows and trees down the center. There were no houses to mar the view."

William's daughter-in-law Alice Call Burton wrote about the family business William established in Wyoming. His experience over the previous twenty years had given him the ability to see opportunity and be successful, all while benefitting the communities in which he operated. Along with his two families, he took a supply of merchandise. For the first year goods were sold from his wagon, then a tent, and in 1887 a two room cabin was completed for the family and the store operated from one of those rooms. William and his older son Heber used two teams to haul supplies from Ogden. "The roads were very bad and only small loads could be brought.," Alice wrote. "The trip required two weeks or more. They brought groceries, dry goods and some farm implements, and later other items for sale."

With Ellen and Sarah Ann in Afton, and Rachel in Ogden, William continued as a businessman in both communities. In 1889 his firm and others combined to make the Consolidated Implement Company, of which William was the director and vice-president. Ultimately he sold his stock in that company and created the firm of Wm. W. Burton & Sons, Company, of which he was president.

This was the year he opened a new store on Main Street in Afton, which was the first business building erected in Star Valley. Sarah Ann's oldest son Thomas Burton later ran the Post Office from this store. Alice recorded that many emigrant trains passed through Star Valley. "It was a common sight to see long trains of covered wagons moving slowly through the valley. Here they would rest their weary teams and let the horses feed in the luxuriant grass." She also wrote, "Bands of Indians, mainly of the Shoshones and Bannocks, traded freely. . . .for this area was their hunting grounds in the summer." Daughter Mercy recorded that the store grew to include men's clothing and women's hats.

Alice described why William chose to build a creamery. "The winter of 1889-90 was known to early settlers as the *Hard Winter*. Burton's store had shipped in one and a half carloads of flour, corn and other food supplies. But the population of the valley had increased rapidly, and people

depended too much on the store, grist mill and open roads. Consequently, provisions were scarce when the roads to Montpelier became completely blockaded early in the [fall because of snow]. Hundreds of cattle starved to death. Many of the settlers lost every animal and their means to purchase food. Those in distress were sold food on credit, and some of those accounts were never collected.

“The settlers had little money. Some stated they had ‘not seen a dime for months at a time.’ They traded commodities or labor for their needs. The store found difficulty in disposing of the cows, pigs, chickens, butter, etc., taken to pay for the merchandise. They encouraged the milking of cows and promised to buy the butter. The butter intake at the store was becoming a problem. Much of it was poor grade, and with the great distance from market, it was often rated as shortening.

“Mr. Burton and his sons who were interested in the business with him saw clearly the urgent need for some business that would bring the settlers a cash income, and much thought was given this problem during the years 1890-1-2, and as a result, the idea of manufacturing butter and cheese commercially was determined.”

In 1900, William and his sons opened the creamery. Over the next fifteen years they brought in \$50,000 worth of Holsteins. These cows were rented to the settlers to improve the quality of the cream. This was a very successful business for William and many of his sons and also his daughters for several decades. While living in Afton, William was called to be the first counselor in the Star Valley Stake. George Osmond was the president. Remember the little boy in England who taught himself to read and learn? It paid off, and many people, and many generations, benefitted.

Descriptions of Rachel Fielding Burton

In 1887, a year after William, Ellen, Sarah Ann and many of the Burton children settled in Afton, a new ward was created in Ogden and at the age of forty-eight, Rachel, mother of eleven living children, was called to be the Relief Society President. In addition to her church responsibilities, Rachel’s large home on the corner of Monroe and 25th Avenue was open to all of the children, hers or her sisters’. Many lived with her while they attended school, as advanced education in Wyoming was non-existent at that time. This was a great blessing to the family, as the second generation grew up to be educated and successful. Funds for the schooling came from the large creamery business William operated in Afton. I personally have a pet theme about builders and takers. These early pioneers were builders, and this family exemplifies this. They sacrificed, worked and *built* for the next generation. They were not takers. If they had been, they would not have survived in this pioneer environment, nor would have their children. They were looking ahead to the future, as prophesied by Malachi when he described his vision where the hearts of the fathers would be turned to their children. Clearly, Malachi saw the hearts of these fathers and mothers.

Sarah Ann’s daughter Josephine Burton Bagley gathered and wrote many biographies of her family in her later life. In one of these histories, Josephine wrote about a sacred experience Rachel had during a trial in her life. “It was the winter of 1888 when the U. S. Marshals were heckling the polygamists and it was necessary for Father to be away from Ogden. Their little Julina, three years and four months old, was taken seriously ill and died with membranous croup.

This was a great grief to Aunt Rachel, to be bereft of her baby daughter so suddenly, and to have to meet it alone. . . . The first time I heard about [this experience] was when Brother George W. Larkin gave me my Patriarchal blessing. I was greatly impressed when he told about it. I was living with Aunt Rachel, attending the Weber Academy, and [my sister], Hannah Burton Poulter and her family were living there keeping house for us. I asked Hannah about it. . . .At that time, Brother Larkin and my [twenty-three year old] sister Rachel were teachers of the adult class in Sunday School, and the class met with Aunt Rachel in her home, with a desire to give her comfort [after Julina's death] . . .When the group sang, it seemed that a Heavenly Chorus joined them. Some of those present said they saw angels. [Hannah, who was twenty-nine at the time of this experience] said she was there in the meeting, and she took me into Aunt Rachel's back parlor and showed me where her mother sat. She was sitting beside her when they heard the beautiful singing. Hannah turned her head to see where the glorious music was coming from, as it seemed that those who sang were back of them, but she could see nothing. It was a beautiful, spiritual meeting and a message was given to Aunt Rachel in tongues.”

Hannah's daughter Ina wrote about living with Rachel during this time. “Grandmother was never idle. There were apples, peaches, pears, plums, gooseberries, raspberries, both black and red currents, rhubarb and muscat grapes on the place, besides a large vegetable garden that took much time and work during the summer and fall. Nothing was allowed to waste. Apples and peaches were dried, and large crock jars of preserves were filled and sealed with paraffin. Each year dried fruit and preserves were sent to Star Valley to Aunt Sarah Ann because seasons were too short there to raise fruit. All drippings, bacon rinds, fat of any kind were always saved to make soap. The grease was put into a big iron boiler with the water and lye and boiled to the right consistency, then strained into wooden tubs or buckets to set and harden. As soon as it could be handled, it was cut and put out onto boards to dry and get hard. Soap making was a big event in our lives as children, because Grandma fixed us a picnic lunch to eat in the orchard.

“She was very unselfish and always thoughtful of others before herself. Her love of flowers was one thing that brought her much joy. She could not stoop down, so she leaned over without bending her knees and dug with a trowel; weeds were not countenanced in her garden and everything she planted grew. There were rows of peonies along the south entrance walk and phlox along the west walk. Lilac and sweet honeysuckle bushes. a violet bed on the north side of the house, feverfew, cosmos, poppies, petunias, larkspur, bleeding heart, bergamot and beautiful roses. The windowsills inside were full of flowering, potted plants.

“In December, 1907, Grandmother fell down Aunt Martha Cooley's basement stairs, and while no bones were broken, her hip and back were injured. She missed attendance at Sacrament meeting so much and when she got so she could no longer kneel down, she felt she was not properly approaching her Father in Heaven in prayer, sitting in a chair.

“Grandma loved to read the Book of Mormon (the prophet Alma was her favorite character in the book) and the Life of Wilford Woodruff. Poetry held her almost spellbound and she cut many poems out and put them in a scrapbook.

“She pieced dozens of beautiful quilt tops, and sewed pounds and pounds of carpet rags over the years. Every Christmas after her family was grown, she gave her small grandchildren a pair of long black stockings and a pair of red mittens which she knitted herself.

“One summer Aunt Lettie Burton showed Grandma how to embroider and for the next Christmas she gave each of her daughters and daughter -in-laws either a table runner or a centerpiece. She did lots of crocheting.

“Some years later, after her trek across the plains, Grandma dreamed she was again crossing the plains, traveling in some kind of a horseless carriage, at a fast speed, and it gave her a feeling of great excitement and exhilaration as they sped along. She never forgot this dream. When she saw her first automobile, she said, ‘Now that is similar to the horseless carriage I dreamed I crossed the plains in years ago.’ Grandpa never owned a car, but the few rides Grandma did have in a car, were greatly enjoyed.

“In the side seam of her dress skirt, there was always a pocket from which Grandma could produce an old fashioned peppermint, or a piece of hard candy, much to the delight of a little grandchild. She was never without small change on hand with which a child would be rewarded with a penny or a nickel as a reward for running an errand for Grandma.

“After the new kitchen was built, the pantry in the dining room became a sort of catch-all for cups and sugar bowls without handles, trinkets, tin cans or bottles of nails and screws, shoe boxes, and bundles, the contents of which no one but Grandma knew. There was Grandfather Fielding's old lantern, and Grandma Fielding's old teapot, the old candle molds, and other keepsakes Grandma couldn't bring herself to part with. Somehow I got the parable of the Lost Sheep associated with this ‘closet’ and every time I saw Grandma searching for something in the ‘closet,’ I thought of the shepherd seeking for the lost sheep. The ninety and nine were there, but it was the missing one that it was so important to her. She always knew when something was missing at one glance. Grandma had a detailed mind and would have made a good genealogist.

“There were ten of us girls, all cousins, and our two youngest aunts, Pearl and Josephine, and we had a Club we called the D. of M. (Daughters of Mirth) Club. We loved to meet with Grandma in the back parlor which was Grandma's room. She seemed to take great pleasure in our fun and nonsense. She told us once that she was living her girlhood through us, because she was a child, then a wife and mother and she never had any real youth period in her life. She said, ‘Laugh and enjoy life and stay young as long as you can. Responsibilities await you in a few years.’ . . . Her body became old, but not her spirit and mind, even though she lived to be seventy-five years old. . . . The stories she told us of her early years have strengthened our testimonies and carried us over some hard spots in our own lives.”

This unfinished prayer was found among Rachel’s papers after her death caused by heart failure at age seventy-five in 1914:

A Prayer For My Loved Ones

Rachel F. Burton

My Heavenly Father, I come unto Thee in behalf of my children and their children, and their children's children through all the coming generations that follow in my line.

Oh, Heavenly Father! Bless them with health and strength of body and mind. Help them to be true lovers of Thee and Thy work, that they may be worthy of Thy loving kindness. Also bless Thy servant Joseph F. Smith, his counselors and the Twelve Apostles,

Bless them with such blessings as they need to qualify them for their important duties.
Bless all who are seeking to build up Thy work. Help us to be worthy of Thy blessings,
Protect us from our ene----. . .

Descriptions of Ellen Fielding Burton

Ellen had eight children, six of whom survived to adulthood. Tragically, Ellen's sixteen year old daughter drowned during an outing outside Afton with friends and siblings in 1892. Rachel's daughter Martha later described the event, "In July 1892 a group of the young folks of the family from Ogden went to Star Valley for a vacation at the Burton Ranch in Afton. When the young folks of Afton and Ogden got together there was quite a crowd, and they had fun and a happy time. In the evenings they would gather round the organ and sing songs together. It was planned for the girls to go up Swift Creek Canyon, take a picnic lunch and swing in some swings that had been hung in a grove of pines on the south side of the creek. Some of the swings would go out over the water of the creek and it was quite a thrill. The party consisted of Martha [writing this], who was the oldest of the group, Alice, and Mabel, and in addition two friends joined them, Kittie Dixon (later Arthur's wife) and Hattie Hale, (keeping company with John). The girls had a very delightful picnic by the side of the swift stream. A tree had fallen over the creek, and Mabel and Hattie decided to cross on this log to get some colorful flowers on the other side. Martha tried vainly to dissuade them. They crossed safely, picked the flowers and started back, when one of them stumbled and both girls fell into the rushing waters and were drowned. Their bodies were recovered at the Gardner mill below. Martha returned to Ogden where she had a nervous collapse. The horror of this tragic accident kept returning to her."

Mabel's brother George later wrote, "I also vividly recall the drowning of Lottie Hale and my sister Mabel in Swift Creek east of Afton, and how they looked to me when they were brought to the old ranch house. It was horrifying."

It was surprising for me to find temple records showing that a month after Mabel's death, her family had her sealed in the Logan Temple to a young man who had drowned in Ogden at about the same time. This young man was likely a family friend. The young Miss Hale who drowned with Mabel was later sealed to Mabel's brother John, with whom she had been paired the day of the accident. While researching these families, it was not uncommon for me to find deceased women being sealed to men who were active and faithful in the church, some married and some not married. This indicates the importance these early pioneers felt about the value of a temple marriage.

Ellen moved back to her home in Ogden, possibly before this incident, as Mabel was buried in Ogden. Her son John remembered that Ellen's orchard, even though it was in the middle of Ogden, "yielded peaches, pears, apples, apricots, plums; and berries of many kinds -- sufficient for her own table, and an over-flow to share with others." A grandchild recalled, "Grandmother liked to set a good table. You wouldn't have thought it to see her trim figure, but she loved good food, and always prepared and served it nicely. Her vegetable garden provided much of their food, and she usually gathered her vegetables in the early morning before the sun was up. Some of her favorite dishes were: new potatoes and green peas; crisp lettuce, new asparagus, cut in inch lengths, and served with a cup of thick cream poured over it; raspberries, and gooseberries, fresh-picked from the patch; stewed chicken, with real cream gravy; light-yeast griddle cakes, or baking powder biscuits, split and drenched with butter; a roly-polly pudding with peach preserves.

“With her whole heart she entered into the Church-promoted project of "Silk Culture." She devoted one entire room, the walls being lined with shelves for raising the silk worms. The worms were fed on mulberry leaves gathered from the trees on her own yard. Like a tiny factory, the necessary processing was carried on there, reeling the silk fibers from the hot soaked cocoons onto the reels ready for the shuttles.

“Mother had an extra good memory, especially for figures and dates. She knew all of the birth dates for the whole family and for many others, not only when they were born but when they died. She loved the family and delighted in keeping track of them.”

A few grandchildren recalled, “She was meticulous about her speech, never making a grammatical error, and each word properly spoken. She thought slang vulgar was not to be tolerated. -- Good manners, politeness and consideration for others she felt all should possess, since they cost no money, and smoothed the way of life.

“In speaking about her youth she said almost nothing about the hardships she had gone through, but liked to tell of amusing things that had happened, -- She took pleasure in telling of memories her mother had told her, describing the beautiful home in England where her mother had been reared, with its polished woodwork, dark shining window sills - She used with deep appreciation the two solid silver spoons her mother had brought from England. -- She felt she had a heritage of refinement to live up to and was anxious that none of her offspring should tarnish it. -- She wanted to keep up with the times, and read the newspaper thoroughly and with discrimination.

“She loved flowers and always kept a garden. Her asparagus bed, and her flowers were her pride. At the Monroe Avenue home, where the grandchildren lived with her, and where she died, she had a wonderful flower garden, which people stopped to admire, -- it contained phlox, moss rose, peonies and mignonette and lilac bushes filled with large blooms.

“She made soap in an oval iron container, set on two stones in the back yard under the trees, and over a fire of apple tree trimmings. She stirred the seething mass with a long ladle, as she judiciously added water or lye, She made candles too, to conserve coal oil, and later electricity. It was fascinating to watch her as she clipped the knots at the bottom of the mould, and lifted the string of smooth candles up by the wire which held the wicks. She sewed beautifully making each stitch (by hand) so fine and even.”

Ellen died of heart failure in 1906 at her Ogden home. Many family members believed her early death at age sixty-five was due to her grief from Mabel's death fourteen years earlier.

Descriptions of Sarah Ann Fielding Burton

Sarah Ann's granddaughter Marian Gardner Fluckinger wrote, “She read a great deal – the type of reading that elevated and improves the mind and the spirit. Always she was reaching out for the best, eager that her children might have a ‘chance’ in the world; willing to make any sacrifice necessary that they might go to school. . . . She admired with enthusiasm the cultural attainments of her children or grandchildren, or anyone who was master of some gracious art. Often she would wistfully exclaim, ‘Oh, I wish I could have had an education.’ . . . She would thumb through the school books left about by her grandchildren, and wish that she knew about chemistry, or some of the other sciences. Yet in spite of her sorrow over her "ignorance" as she

called it, she was really a very wise and learned lady. All her life she had loved the Gospel, and taught it with a loving diligence to her children. She had a hardy philosophy of her own, born of her life of pioneer hardship and experience.

“There was a certain deftness about Grandma's movements--a, skill or efficiency about the simple home tasks. I used to love to watch her make gooseberry pies, or turn a batch of golden griddle cakes, or pat out a mound of yellow butter. She was an expert at peeling vegetables or fruits. She was always so clean and neat that I thought of her as a ‘dainty’ grandmother, though there were no frills or furbelows about her. . . . [She] carded wool and made quilts to send to her children or her sisters who cared for them while they were going to school.

“Grandmother loved her home. Instinctively she was a person who seemed to know the things to do to four walls that gives ‘hominess,’ comfort and beauty. There was never expensive furniture, or rich drapery or elaborate details that may be found in the modern home. Thoughtful simplicity and frugality marked the arrangements of her home, yet it was a place of charm and happy hours. ‘The Old Burton Ranch House’ was a gathering place for young and old for many years. Those who were familiar with the dear old place think of it with a thrill of happy memories. The living room with its organ, the big kitchen with the pump, and the great table which could stretch to seat so many at a meal; the airy bedrooms with the old-fashioned feather beds, where pleasant odors from the kitchen reached up to you at meal time; outside the wild currant bushes invited you to wander; Swift Creek made its noisy way over the rock bed below the hill; the big barn piled with green hay offered fun and frolic – I'm sure there was not a grandchild who didn't love to go to Grandpa's and Grandma's.

“Her home was a gathering place for young and old, and guests, distinguished and humble, shared her hospitality alike. The young people of her sisters' families loved to come to the Burton Ranch in the summer. She loved and mothered them all.”

Marian, echoing my sentiments, also wrote, “Grandma was a counselor to Sister Kittie C. Dixon in the first Relief Society organization in Star Valley Stake, and later was Stake Relief Society President. How faithfully she, with her associate sisters, faced blizzards, almost impassable roads, and conquered numerous adverse conditions to meet appointments with their pioneer Relief Society sisters in new out-lying wards. Her family has played a leading part in the progressive movements which have made Star Valley's history. The dreams and plans she and her fellow pioneers made for the future of their beloved valley have been realized beyond their greatest anticipations, in highways, rapid transportation and modern conveniences. May her dreams for her posterity also be realized, that through all the generations they may take a place of honor in the world's work.”

William outlived Rachel and Ellen, dying of heart failure in Ogden in 1918 at the age of eighty-five. He was the father of thirty children and one hundred and sixteen grandchildren.

Sarah Ann buried a baby girl and a toddler son, but seven children lived to adulthood. She died in Afton in 1938 at the age of 87, outliving her husband by twenty years.

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