

Sketch of the life of William Ford

A Utah Pioneer of 1855

Prepared by his son Hyrum C. Ford

April 5th, 1926

For Cedar City Camp, Cedar City, Utah

William Ford was born Oct. 5, 1835, Gravely Cambridge Shire, England.

He was the son of John Ford, and Rebecca Chandler Ford. His father John Ford was the son of Thomas and Sarah Turner Ford.

John Ford was born March 8, 1807 at Gravely Cambridge Shire, England. Grandfather commenced looking after sheep at the age of eight years in Gravely, and followed the sheep industry until he left England. He was also ~~what was known~~ a a jobber buying and selling stock and become very proficient as a stock man.

Grandmother's home was in Great Grandson, she was a servant cook in a gentleman's house. She also was an expert lace maker, Father's recollection of it being that she used very large balls of thread and she wove this with several bobbins. She wove lace and bed spreads of different kinds and sold them.

At one time she visited with her sister who had married Grandfather's brother. It was while on this visit that she and Grandfather met and courted which later developed into marriage.

After their marriage they rented a public house and sold beer and cakes. This they did up to the time of their conversion.

(Father's Dictation) Father and Mother had neither one ever affiliated themselves with any church. Father's parents belonged to the church of England.

Thomas and myself were taken to this Church by Father's sisters and christened but neither of their parents would go.

Mother's parents were Baptists and Father and Mother inclined toward this Baptist faith but they did not join any church.

until they were converted into the Latter Day Saints Church.

Mother's conversion was undoubtedly brought about by James Ford who was a member.

Father was very prejudiced against the religion and would not allow his brother to talk of it around him. But he became so unsettled regarding religion that he would saddle his horse and attend one religious service one Sunday and another the next but was never satisfied.

One time finding some Mormon books on the table (belonging to Mrs. Clark a neighbor) he ordered them sent home or he would burn them. Mother sent me home with the books and child like I told Mrs. Clark what Father said.

A few days later mother asked him if she might be baptized into the Mormon Church and Father replied. "Please yourself you can choose between them or me."

Some time later mother had forgotten and left either the Pearl of Great Price or Spencer's letters on the table. Father picked it up and commenced reading. After reading for some time he lay the book down without saying anything. This of course gave mother courage and the book was left lying there.

After this she would get other books and he would sit with his Bible and compare but would never say a word. He continued doing this until he was thoroughly convinced and one Sunday morning said to her, "Mother if you want to join the Mormon Church you can do so whenever you like." She was baptized that day and the following Sunday Father was baptized. This was in the year 1849.

To Grandfather and Grandmother Ford there were born ten children: Thomas, Emma, William, Joseph, Eliza, Ester, John, Sarah, Job, and Ann Ford.

The Ford family sailed from Liverpool, England February 9th, 1854. On the sailing boat Windamere in Job Smith's Co.

They were nine weeks tossing about on the Atlantic and during this time suffered greatly through sickness and hunger.

There were a great many deaths during the voyage and the bodies had to be buried in the sea. Father and Thomas both had smallpox and were very low for days with this disease also during the voyage, the boat took fire which caused a great deal of excitement and panic resulting in some deaths.

When they finally arrived at New Orleans they were not allowed to land on account of the small pox on the boat so they were taken to a small island near St. Louisana where there were left again to suffer from want and privation.

From there they were put on small voats and taken up the river to Kansas City. Here an epedemic of Cholora broke out and there were a great many deaths. Grandfather was stricken with this disease but recovered.

They remained in Kansas City several weeks. While father and Thomas were sent back to St. Joe to drive Church team up river of imagrants. They left hime on Sunday night, stopped at a farmers place on Monday and spent the day putting out cabbage plants each getting fifty cents for their labor.

Before going to bed that night Thomas said to Father "I will never see the folks", Father said if you feel that way about it Tom lets go back. He said, "No, I have been called we will go on." They went to bed in a ware house on the banks of the river. Thomas woke father in the night groaning, he was in intense agony. Father did every thing he could do under the circumstances but he passed away in about six hours with Cholory. Father hired a houre and cart form the livery stable put his brother's body in the cart and took him several miles to a Mormon camp. Here he hired two men to help dig a grave and he laid his brother and pall in the lonely and desolate spot allj alone. Then father was told to go back to his parents. Father felt this was the greatest trial of his life and he never related it without shedding many tears.

The family crossed the plains in an Independent Co. When hit a few days out upon the journey father was taken with Cholory and was very ill. The Elders were called to administer to him and he was promised that he should

live to reach Utah and he recovered. When they arrived near Omaha, Grandfather, John Nathan and Sarah were stricken with typhoid or what then was called mountain fever. When they reached Fort Laramia, Mathen and Sarah died.

This was three of the family buried on the plains.

Before they had died father was stricken with the same disease at Ash Holler. He drove the team for three days with this terrible disease. The family were in the wagon and father was walking by the side. He became so frightened he went unconscious and remained in that condition until they had reached the valley.

Father had not been baptized and his mother was so anxious to have this ordinance performed feeling sure he would never live the Elders carried him on a sheet and baptized him in the Platte River having to break the ice to do it. After this he was given the promise to live and go to Utah, but he was unconscious all the while.

During the time they were having so much sickness Grandfather went to a man in the Company who was bringing a load of liquor and wanted to get some. He said, "the cork shall never be pulled until we get to Utah." Some one in the Company prophesied he should never Utah with it. In Immigration Canyon going down the last hill his wagon tipped over and all landed in the creek.

After they had landed in Utah they lived on a farm near Jordon River belonging to a man by the name of Thomas King. They all were baptized in the Jordon River by Samuel Mesling and were confirmed in the 17th ward this was the spring of '55.

In the fall of the same year they moved to Centerville rented a farm and put in crops in the following spring. During the summer the grass hoppers came and took every thing they had. During this time the family suffered greatly for food. A baby girl (Ester) was born. When the children came to see the mother and baby in place of rejoicing at the arrival of the baby sister they wept because they were already starving and there was no place for another one. This was the trying moment of Grandfather with the children

crying for food, said, "I wish I had never left home." They had lived on pig weed greens.

Sister Cherry a very kind hearted soul who had been called to assist the Mother and new born babe asked grandpa to go home with her that evening. She took him in her room and gave him a hundred pound sack of flour and said you can pay me when you have it. This was truly the saving grace for the family although he and grandmother were trying so hard to keep her from knowing the situation.

The following summer they raised a good crop.

During the years '55 and '56 father herded cattle for Wm. Smith here he earned two wagon covers and grandmother made dresses for herself and the girls and shirts and trousers for the men out of these. While he was herding these cattle his brother John would wald many miles to his herd to have what he wanted to eat.

In '57, father worked for a man three yards of calico a week.

When the United States Army was coming into Utah Father was called malita to go to Echo Canyon to fight if need be. He returned home in Feb. of '58. In the Spring the general move south as they were all told to leave that part. They located them in Springville. Father with nine other young men were left to quard the crops at Centerville. They were told to set fire and destroy every thing in case that peace was not declared or that the army should enter.

In July of that same year the Saints were told to return to their homes.

In the spring of 1862, Father was called to go to Omaha and back with an ox team as a church teamster after the poor.

At this time Grandfather owned a nice farm and some mild cows.

They had built a humble little cottage and had planted an orchard.

From then on they became very prosperous and never again had occasion to say I wish I had never left my home.

The story of the imigration of John Ford and family like thousands of

Letter Day Saints who left the old world in the days of the primitive mode of travel, would make a most wonderful history. You may find but few pilgrimages that were beset with greater dangers than those that beset the early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S.

Crossing the turbalant Atantic in the old sailing vessels and oxen to the valleys of the Rocky Mountains where Gods chosen people at that time were gathering.

As we unfold history we are confident with this thought that nothing but great ideals ever induce any people to make such imigrations.

Father never had but very little opportunity for school but had learned to read and write before he left England, and as long as he lived he was a great reader keeping posted always with what ever was going on in the world. He was exceptionally good in figures which added greatly to his success in his bussiness life.

Father was very firm but kind. He exacted strict obedience from his family which were thankful for. He was a wonderful father and husband, a good provider, kind and gentle in his home he believed in hard work in being honest and truthful and in keeping the commandments of the Lord.

In viewing the unknown future that lies before us and what may in the end be the fate of our family I am assured of this one thing, and that is that they will never be able to recall in their associations with (their) father, and mother one act on their part that was not guided by the spirit of honesty, love, and mercy and undying faith in kind providence of a just God. They were truly of the tribe of Ephriam through Joseph the most favored of the sons of Israel. Should these sons and daughters falter it will never be from the training received from their parents. God Bless their memory and may it ever burn bright in our lives to the directing us to the higher ideals as exemplified in their lives.

As I write these lines I am impelled to stop and think of the

stage that is ours. And if in that great future that to us is so certain. That when we meet parents and grandparents and all they who have gone before that we may greet them in the Celestial Kingdom of our God and there receive with them an exaltation as kings and priests unto the most high-God. And there be crowned as joint heirs with Jesus Christ and be able to dwell with them eternally in the Heavens.

That Grandfather posterity may thus be found by his side is the prayer and desire of one who is proud of the fact that Ford and Chandler blood flows in my veins. May we his offspring ever revere his memory and make him justly proud of these who follow.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF WILLIAM FORD'S BUSINESS AND RELIGIOUS LIFE, GIVEN BY HIS SON, HYRUM C. FORD AT A MEETING OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE PIONEERS AT CEDAR CITY, UTAH, APRIL 5th, 1926.

In the year 1866, Father in company with Lorenzo Roundy and family the Parker family and some others, left Centerville, Davis County for lower Kanab, in Kane County, where they intended on making their home. During the following winter the Indians were very hostile and gave the whites a great deal of trouble. So in the spring of 1867 they were counselled by Church authorities to leave Kanab and establish Long Valley. This they did, but were not at peace long, as the Indians followed them up, stealing and destroying their property and dealing them misery in every way possible, so they were again advised to move, and in June of same year they broke up their homes in Long Valley and moved to Kanarra. Here they were able to establish themselves and make homes, but not altogether peace. Father being signal man some what fearless spent considerable time on the frontier, guarding of the Red Skins. He made his home with the Roundy's from the time of leaving his own people at Centerville until June 1869 when he was married to Martha J. Mulliner, Daughter of Samuel and Harriet Berry Mulliner. They were married in the Endowment house in Salt Lake City, after making the journey from Kanarra with team and wagon, being nine days enroute. After returning to

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arra they lived in one room of John Berry's house until the following spring when they built a home of their own, consisting of a log house of one room and equipped with the following: one legged bedstead, the other, three corners of which were attached to the wall. A clothes chest for table, spring seat for chairs, a good stove and plenty of dishes.

I very much doubt if any young people of today who start life together in a new home with all the modern conveniences are any more contented and happy than were they in their one room log house and meagre furnishings. As a result of this union there are now living, seven children, thirty grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Father engaged in farming and live stock and for a time was business manager of the Co-op sheep and cattle herds; was also a director and stock holder in the Kanarra CO-OP store. He was very successful in his life's chosen line of business and soon became comfortably fixed.

#### ---Improving of Farm Methods---

Father and Wallace Roundy brought into this part of the country the first mowing machine to take place of the scythe, and he and George Williams bought the first grain dropper in Kannara, which took place of the cradle and made the harvesting of grain much easier. A few years later John Middleton of Hamilton's Fort, Francis Prince of New Harmony and father of Kanarra bought the first threshing machine to be owned in either of the three towns, and it did the threshing for these towns for a number of years. Father was also an owner in the Grist Mill at Kanarra in early days.

#### ---The Breeding of Better Live Stock---

In the early beginning of the sheep industry in this section of the country, there was a woolen mill established at Washington, a few miles north of St. George where those who had sheep would take their wool and exchange it for goods from the mill, very seldom receiving any cash for wool. This was not altogether satisfactory, so one spring father loaded his clip of wool onto his wagon and hauled it north. I

am not certain as to where it was sold, but anyway, on his return being a lover of good horses, spent most of the money from his wool sale for a grey stallion. On arriving home, Mother made inquiry regarding a grey dress she had among other things asked him to get for her. In reply he said, "It is tied to the wagon outside." During later years father shipped two well bred horses from the north. He also went to Mt. Pleasant and purchased pure bred sheep from Seely, the well known sheep breeder of that place. Father and Goel Williams of Kanarra were the first to purchase a pure bred sire for their cattle herds, and a good one he proved to be. He was a short horned Durham of the beef type. Father was also one among four others of Kanarra to purchase the first registered Durham cows that are in this country. He also brought the Kanarra the first registered Bull, he being the winner of the blue ribbon at the state fair and being of so good quality was purchased from father a few years later and shipped back to Davis County. One of the early settlers of Kanarra said to me a few days ago, "Your father did more for the breeding up of good animals than all the rest of Kanarra put together."

In the year of 1888 I think it was, John Middleton and family, jointly bought a bunch of cattle consisting of something four hundred from a man by the name of Turrall. These together with several hundred they already owned made them a goodly number and they operated their cattle business conjointly for three years when they dissolved partnership, Middleton buying Father's share in the Turrall Cattle. During the years of partnership they shipped each year in the neighborhood of 400 head of cattle. At that time having to go to Milford the nearest shipping point.

For a number of years thereafter father did quite a lot of shipping of beef cattle to Salt Lake and also Eastern markets.

In 1891 father bought what is known as the old Bishop Lunt home in Cedar City together with fifteen acres of farm land in the north field and ten acres in the old field and later traded the north field land

for five acres in the West field, on which five acres Mother, myself and two sisters are now living. The purpose for buying this property was to give better educational advantages for the children and for a number of years following Mother could spend the winter season in Cedar City keeping house for the school children.

In the year 1889, father owner of something like three hundred head of cattle, one hundred horses, two thousand sheep and one thousand acres of farm and grazing land. Previous to this time public range was quite plentiful and winter feeding unnecessary, but now that much of the range was coming into private ownership and the balance over stocked in order to prevent winter losses which was eating up the profits. During the winter of 1899, Father sold his sheep and purchased a hundred acres near Richfield, Sevier County with the idea of raising feed for winter feeding and moving the herd back and forth, spring and fall. This proved to be very unsuccessful on account of the long distance for trailing the heavy expense for feed also he began selling off the cattle and in a few years was out of the cattle business. In order to prevent his horses from winter killing he had them rounded and shipped them to Iowa where they were sold at auction bringing a net profit of some thing like fifteen dollars per head.

#### ---STANDING IN THE BUSINESS WORLD---

Fathers credit in the business world was almost unlimited, prior to the establishment of banking he would borrow money of private individuals who had a surplus. He did business with the State Bank of Utah for a number of years and when the Bank of Southern Utah was established he immediately transferred his business to the home institution, it always being his policy, to sustain home industry and was over ready to subscribe his name in new enterprises for the betterment of the country.

#### ---POSITIONS HELD IN COUNTY---

Besides some minor offices held in the county father served three terms as county commissioner and was the chairman of that body for a

*Wm Ford*

number of years.

---POSITIONS IN CHURCH---

While father was not religiously inclined when called into office he was faithful in the performance of duty.

The office of most importance which was that of Bishop of Kanarra. This position he occupied from 1888 to 1901, regardless of long distances to travel in order to attend the general and stake conferences he missed but few of such gatherings. During his term of office the church house in Kanarra was destroyed by fire and father gave freely of his time and means for rebuilding the church.

Out of his seven living children, four have filled missions in the world, three sons and one daughter.

In July 1906 while engaged in hauling hay, father was accidentally thrown from a load and seriously injured from which never fully recovered, being a constant sufferer until time of his death.

In the fall of the same year (1906), he moved to Cedar City where he spent the remaining years of his life, but not in idleness as he raised a fine garden each year and attended to other work and chores about the home. In 1915 he sold a tract of grazing land on the Kanarra mountain and with a part of the proceeds, had built the following year a neat and modern cottage. Soon after this building was completed and he and mother had moved into it he said to me, "Well, my boy, I have got Mother in a comfortable little home, now I am ready to go." They lived in this home about three months when Father was taken seriously ill and after a few days suffering passed away, Dec. 3, 1916. Having closed a useful and successful life, and it can be truthfully said of him and the world, especially Iron County was better off for his having lived.