

History Question

What Butler resident, when chided by family and friends for settling on a gravelly arid piece of property located in Butler, gave this prophetic reply? "You just wait and see this country is going to blossom like a rose."

Answer

Charles Robert Wootton was born July 4, 1847, in Eaton Bray, Bedfordshire, England, the son of William Wootton and Deborah Roe. His Mother died when he was 10 years old. In 1860, he, his father and brother, Fredrick, left their home in England and worked their way across the ocean arriving in Boston sometime during 1861. They had only enough money to make it to Florence, Nebraska. Charles was sent ahead to Utah with a man who had taken ill and was unable to drive his wagon. He was just 14 at the time. The man's team consisted of a yoke of oxen and a yoke with two cows. Charles walked most of the way bare footed, driving the animals.

Charles stayed in the Salt Lake Valley for several years working as a farm hand in the summer as well as hauling granite and ore. In the winters he hauled logs from Millcreek Canyon. During this time, he served in the Utah Calvary and was also one of the discoverers of the Maxfield Mine in Big Cottonwood Canyon. He wasn't interested in mining and sold his share of the mine. Eventually he applied for a homestead in the Logan area, only to abandon it and raise cattle in Milford County before returning to Salt Lake. In December of 1878, he married Esther Ballard, who had arrived with a group of pioneers on a Union Pacific Cattle Car early that year. Their first son, William C. Wootton was born in November of the following year. Five months later, in April of 1880, they moved to a piece of property located on the top of Butler Hill on the north side of today's Ft. Union Blvd (between about 27th and 29th east.) He built a house for his family and began clearing the gravelly soil of boulders so he could plant crops. In the winter of 1881-82, he worked building the Deseret News' Cottonwood Mill. As part payment for his work, he received a team of mules.

His chief interest in life was farming and he turned his gravelly land into a place of beauty. In the mid 1890's he built a large new home that became the showplace of the community. He was a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints and was active in civic affairs. He served as a trustee for the school district and

several terms as road commissioner. He served as a convention representative for the People's Party and was elected Poundkeeper of the Butlerville Estray Pound in 1887. The Estray Pound was a place where stray livestock was brought to find the owner or to auction the animal if no owner claimed the animal. When the Brown and Sanford Irrigation Company incorporated in 1900, he was one of the directors and served in that capacity for many years

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