

History Question of the Month

Who was one of the first people to homestead the area known as Poverty Flats?

Answer

Daniel Freeman was born to Nathan Bankhead and Rose Wales Crosby about 1854 in Union, Utah. It is said that he was the first Black baby born after the Black slaves that came to Utah with Mississippi Saints in 1848 were given their freedom. Thus the name, Daniel "**Freeman**," the name he used throughout his life. In the 1870's Daniel Freeman obtained a 160 acre land grant that included the property from about 1700 East to 2300 East and 7000 South to 7200 South. This was part of the area called Poverty Flats by the people living in Union and the surrounding communities. It was called that because the land was a huge sand bar left by the receding waters of Lake Bonneville and had no easy access to water. Consequently, it was almost impossible for anything to grow there.

When Daniel Freeman first settled on his homestead, there was a two-room adobe house on the property, located near the Stelter property today. No one knows who lived there or how long they stayed. We do know that Daniel Freeman never lived there but used the building to store his crops. Residents who settled in the area in the early 1900's remember a really small old house and the remains of an orchard near where Target is today. It is strongly suspected that this was where Daniel Freeman lived. Daniel Freeman eventually sold off all of his property and sometime prior to 1900 moved to Corrine, Utah where he lived until he died.