

The Life Of WILLIAM N. FIFE

Prepared from the Autobiography of William N. Fife and other sources as indicated.

I was born in Kincardine, Perthshire, Scotland, on October 16, 1831, the son of John Fife and Mary Meek Nicol Fife. I was the first born in the family of seven children. The names of the others are as follows: Mary N. Fife, John A. Fife, Jane N. Fife, Thomas N. Fife, Robert A. Fife, and Christine W. Fife.

I was sent to school at the age of six years. We had a free school system in Scotland. I remained in school until I was fifteen years old. In October 1846 I went to learn the art of builder and architect with a large firm, Wilson and Sons, in Edinburgh. I was bound out for five years. My father had to give bonds with two others (a minister and a doctor) for the faithful performance of my duties. I boarded and roomed in the Wilson home. The conditions were: I had to be in bed every night except Sunday at nine p.m. and out of bed at five at the ring of the bell--except on Sunday. Every Saturday night we had a ticket to go to the leading theatre in Edinburgh, which was a treat, as the finest performers were engaged to play in that fine city. We always took the play book with us and followed the performance in the text. I took great pride in it every Saturday night. I was going to receive an education in relation to building and architectural work in five years to fit me for any country. In four and one-half years, I received my papers in consideration of the fact that I had made six months working overtime. The firm did well towards me. I filled my contract with them; and in three months after, left with a very fine record. I was then twenty years old. I obtained a position in the city of Glasgow with the firm of Nairn and Sons. I did nothing but finishing work in the finest of buildings for nine months.

They paid me the highest wages every Saturday at two p.m. The balance of the afternoon I had to myself. They were the only firm in the city that treated their men that well. All of their men were first class and had a good record. They had over three hundred men. They wanted men who had served their time and had received their papers from the firm with a record that he could do all kinds of work and he had filled his contracts with them. Young as I was, they were about to put me in as foreman over the finishers and give me a raise in my wages.

My family was anxious for me to go to Australia. My uncle, Thomas Fife, had written for me to go into the building business with him in Melbourne. He had gone there in 1844. I had another call from a firm--Kay (Keay), Nish and McKean, Builders and Architects--in Manchester, England. They worked where I served my apprenticeship in Edinburgh and made me a fine offer to come to them. The most of my family were for me to go to Manchester. My grandmother said, "You go there, my boy, and you will prosper, and the Almighty will bless you for He is your friend and I know it." I paid strict attention to what my grandmother said for I knew she was a good woman. I was her oldest grandson, and she respected me. So, on June 15, 1852, I started for Manchester, England. I arrived there in good shape. The firm I had come to work for was pleased to see me. I soon got to work. They paid every week. My wages were double what they had been in Scotland. My people were pleased to know I had done so well.

The boarding house I got into was nothing like what I had been used to at home. I

put in a month. On Saturday after I got my pay, I dressed up and started to find a better place to live. I did not know the city much. I went just as the spirit moved me. I saw a row of fine brick buildings. I went up to them. I could see a notice in the window "Board and Room." I pulled the bell. A young lady opened the door. I went in, took a seat, and told her what I wanted. I asked her if she ran the house. She told me it was the Mormon conference house where the Mormon elders put up. I told her I never heard of such people before. I told her I was from Scotland, and that I was sent for to work with a building firm. She said, "I am also from Scotland." She stated, "My husband is here on a mission at Liverpool. He will be here tonight." She showed me the rooms, etc. They were very fine and well furnished. I felt at home. She told me the family owning the house was out but would soon be at home. There were pictures on the wall of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, John Taylor, Heber C. Kimball, Brigham Young and others. I told her these men look well, but I had never heard of them before. The man and woman arrived--Mr. and Mrs. Davis. They took me through the house. I selected my bedroom, etc. With board, the cost-in-advance per week was twelve shillings and six pence. I paid them and sent an expressman for my trunk. In a short time the trunk was there and was put in my room. I had a chat with a Mrs. McDonald. I found she was from the same shire I was--Perthshire. She thought it strange I had never heard of the Mormon people before. In the evening A. F. McDonald arrived and was pleased to meet one of his own countrymen. He told me of his experiences and how he had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He said that he intended to go to Utah as soon as his time was up and live amongst the Mormon people and

build up a home. I told him that was a good idea. I was very much at home and enjoyed his conversation. He gave me some books to read, amongst them the Book of Mormon. The next day being Sunday I went with them to meeting. I rather liked the doctrine which was preached. That was July 1852.

Living at the conference house and meeting so many elders, I soon got the spirit of it and could see great order in the Church and a very great union amongst the people. In August a few elders arrived from Utah to preach to the people. I enjoyed their preaching and the history they gave of the people in Utah, crossing the plains, etc. The first elders I met were Peregrine Sessions and John L. Fulmer. P. G. Sessions was made president of the Manchester Conference. I was at the conference very often. I received a great amount of information from him. His home was ten miles north of Salt Lake City. I made up my mind to join the Church. On October 6, 1852, I was baptized by Alfred Lamb, Manchester Branch. The next man of importance from Utah was Orson Spencer. He was a great preacher. He put up at the conference house. He said:

Brother Fife, you are a fortunate young man. The Almighty through his influence has brought you here, and forthwith through the same influence you will go to Zion and do a great work and have sons and daughters too. I say unto you, you get ready and go this coming season. Take a fine gun with you--the best there is in that country, there is any amount of game on the way. You will have many friends on the way through your kindness.

Very soon after he had told me this, two elders arrived. Then Orson Spencer asked me to come into a room and stated, "I wish to ordain you to the office of priest." After he got through he said, "When you get to

Salt Lake City, you will be ordained a seventy."

Very soon after I was baptized, I was getting big wages for a young man twenty-one years old. When the firm I was working for found out I was making a move to go to Utah, they felt very sore and told me if I would give up the idea, they would raise my wages and put me in a foreman's place. I thanked them for their kindness to me. When the time arrived, I took passage on the last ship of the season, April 6, 1853, to New Orleans from Liverpool. I bought me a fine gun with a large amount of ammunition for the trip. It cost me \$50. I had that gun for many years after. Orson Spencer had told me to be sure to take a fine gun along.

Orson Spencer was a great and good man. It did me good to meet such good men, for such, I thank the Almighty. I commenced paying my tithing, temple money, and donations to the elders sent on missions from Utah.

We arrived in New Orleans June 1, 1853. From there to St. Louis by steamboat. It was one thousand miles to our campground where we would fit out with cattle and wagons to cross the plains to Salt Lake City. Fifty-six wagons and over five hundred people came from that camp to Council Bluffs, a distance of four hundred miles--then to Salt Lake City another thousand miles. I traveled with the John Brown Company and carried my mini-rifle on my shoulder from the camp ground to Salt Lake City, a total of fourteen hundred miles. John Brown, one of the first pioneers, was our captain; he was one of the finest of men. I was appointed carpenter for the company and captain of ten. That was my first office. I killed any amount of yearling buffaloes, deer, antelope, etc. Our company had very little sickness. One half was sent by the emigration fund; the others paid their pas-

sage as far as Liverpool. I paid for myself, and also for Alfred Lamb. He was a poor man and had been a traveling elder for years. He baptized me into the Church. After that most of his family traveled to Utah, and it proved to be a good thing for them. Our trip across the plains was a walk over. We had a fine Captain. After I got located in Ogden, he often visited me.

We arrived in Salt Lake City October 18, 1853, the largest company of the season. Many people visited our camp amongst them President Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards--all in a fine rig. The Captain, John Brown, introduced me to them stating I had brought into the country a very fine gun and that I had made good use of it, etc. They were pleased with it and to know I joined the Church in Manchester as they had done a big work there while on their mission to England. President Kimball invited me to his house to have dinner. I paid him a visit. He engaged me at once to take charge of his building business. In the evening he took me in his carriage to a family to room and board--the Winchester family. On December 15, 1853, I was ordained a seventy just as Orson Spencer had said. The 37th quorum of seventy was organized at that time, and I was a member as the books will show. I boarded with the Winchesters until I was married July 9, 1854.

I was married by Heber C. Kimball in his own house to Miss Diana Davis of Box Elder County. The Winchester family got up a very fine wedding dinner. The Kimball and Nebeker families and others were invited. I found my wife in Peter Nebeker's house. We at once went to keeping house in the 19th Ward.

Our first child was born July 10, 1855, while we lived in the 19th Ward. We named her Sarah Jane Fife. We moved into a nice

comfortable house of our own in the 16th Ward in October 1855. I planted an orchard, shade trees, etc. The next spring we were called to go through the Endowment House and get our endowments and be sealed for time and eternity. After that I was called to go to Ogden to build the tabernacle in July 1856. That fall I built a house in Ogden. In 1857 all of the people renewed their covenants and were rebaptized. That was referred to as "the reformation." It was a great year among the people of Utah.

At about that same time, some very vile, corrupt men had been sent to Utah as judges. President Young was governor of Utah Territory and could not put up with their bad habits, etc. Owing to that, the whole people got down on them. The judges could see that for their own safety they must get away from Utah. They misrepresented their case to President Buchanan. He received their report and acted very unwisely and foolishly. He gave orders that an army should be sent to Utah along with a new governor named Mr. Cummings.

During the summer of 1857, the army started for Utah. It was under the command of General Albert Sidney Johnston and included some four thousand men, artillery, cavalry, and infantry. The territory was declared under martial law, etc., by President Young. The Nauvoo Legion was called out for drill. Many of them were the first pioneers, and all of them, young and old, had crossed the plains and were ready for business. I was still working on the Ogden Tabernacle, but I also attended to all military orders and drilled every week. I belonged to the 5th Regiment, Nauvoo Legion. On August 16 I had a son, we named him William Wilson Fife. He was named after my great-grandfather, William Wilson, a leading architect in Edinburgh, Scotland. On September 25, 1857, our regiment was

called to go north through Cache Valley and on to Soda Springs, as the army was reported to be making a move to get into Utah by the north. Our instructions were to burn all of the grass but not to kill anyone, except in self defense. That was done all through Cache Valley and into Idaho. The Johnston army, so called, had to turn around and go back to Bridger. They got into a heavy snow storm in October 1857, and they could not move their guns. They tried to get down Echo Canyon, but that was so full of fortifications they could not. So they had to remain in the snow all winter. When we left Ogden in September, I hired an elderly lady to live with my wife and the two children. Men that could not take the field went around the town cutting up fire wood, etc., and did very well. Our command was ordered back to Ogden by way of Malad Valley, and from Ogden we went to Echo Canyon through the snow two and one-half feet deep. We took a position in the canyon, dug rifle pits, etc. (William Nicol Fife returned from Echo Canyon with a bullet hole in his hat. He had a white mule as a mount.) Before the end of the year, we were all called to Ogden and what a time of rejoicing and good feeling I never did see. The Almighty blessed the people, and the army had to suffer. That was the downfall of poor President Buchanan, for the next president was Lincoln.

President Brigham Young proved to be a second Moses because at that very time he astonished the world. The Almighty was with the people. President Young ordered a move of all of the people north of Salt Lake City to the south of Provo. In the spring of 1858, I moved my wife and children to my house in the 16th Ward, Salt Lake City, and afterward to Payson. My wife's family, the Davis family from Box Elder County, camped with us. If President Young could

not get the rights for his people from the American Government, his plan was to move to Sonora, Mexico.

Colonel Thomas L. Kane, a very great friend to the people of Utah, addressed a letter to President Buchanan telling him he had made a great mistake in sending an army to Utah, that it was about to bring disunion all over the nation and more than that--war. Colonel Kane called a commission to meet with Brigham Young and others to settle the matter so the people would not have to go to Sonora, Mexico, but they would return to their homes. The new Governor, Mr. Cummings, was very anxious to see the people move back. A commission was appointed and met with Colonel Kane in the Council House in Salt Lake City. The matter was settled, and orders were sent to A. S. Johnston, Commanding, giving him instructions to take his troops forty miles south of Salt Lake City and locate a camp in Cedar Valley. It was to be known as Camp Floyd. (Camp Floyd was located a few miles southeast of the city of Fairfield on the west side of Utah Lake. A monument still marks the spot, 1991.) I was there on military business. I was the quartermaster of the 7th Regiment, Nauvoo Legion, with the rank of captain, when A. S. Johnston's army passed up Main Street and went west to the Jordan. They crossed the river and went to Camp Floyd. That was in June.

Soon the people began to move back to their homes. The detail guard was dismissed. The new governor was much pleased, and so was his wife. She was a lady of a woman. He was much thought of by the people. President Young and he got along very well. Camp Floyd was soon built up. General Johnston was a military man of the first order. He strictly attended to his own business and was much thought of by the people of Utah and the army at large.

His march through Salt Lake City to Camp Floyd was grand. I enjoyed it. It was a great experience to all of them. They suffered in the long winter from October until May. Their bands never played until they were on the outskirts of the city. They camped on the other side of the Jordan River.

A month after the army got to Camp Floyd, I met President Heber C. Kimball. He told me his sons and others were hauling a great amount of lumber to Camp Floyd. He said, "I would like to have you go down and take a few contracts to A. S. Johnston's quarters and talk with him. As you are posted in your business, you may get a contract from him." He continued, "I believe in going to the head." I told him I would go up to Ogden and see what I could do. In a few days I started with a partner, Walter Thompson, and two pretty good workmen with a team of oxen, a wagon, and our chests. In a few days we got to Camp Floyd. I carried out President Kimball's plan. I put on a good suit of clothes and started for A. S. Johnston's quarters. The guard told me where I would find him. An officer took me to him. We shook hands. He placed a chair for me to sit on, and he sat by me on another. I told him my business. He asked where I lived--Ogden. I told him my partner, Mr. Walter Thompson, and myself were from Glasgow, Scotland, and we were trained as architects and builders. I told him we could do all kinds of work and had been in Salt Lake City and Ogden for five years doing first class work. He said:

I am very pleased to have you call on me, and as you have learned your business in Scotland you have received good training. All of my family came from Inverness, Scotland, in 1772 and settled in Virginia. We are a large family now. I want officers'

quarters built, other stores for the infantry, etc.

He got a drafting board and gave me an idea in relation to what he wanted. He gave me the size. I started and soon gave him the plan of the building. Dinner was sound-ed. He took me into the officers' dining room. Everything was in order. After dinner I went down with him to look at a big pile of lumber. I told him, "I can use the most of it."

He said, "Mr. Fife, you can have the job, and when you get through, I will settle." A team and two men were ordered to go with me to get our tools, etc., and my partner and two men. We all got to work. In two weeks the quarters were finished. He set-tled, being highly pleased with our work and the way we put it through. We next built a large building for the 10th Infantry. Then a building was needed by Gilbert and Gemish and through his recommend, we got that. We built livery stables for Hooper and Wil-liams as a result of his recommend. Next we built a large hotel outside the garrison for Thomas and Drum of St. Louis as a result of his recommend. Then we did a large hall for the camp for the different orders to meet in. We had ten men who were carpenters, etc., working for us by De-cember. We finally finished and settled up. Walter Thompson and myself had \$1,600 coming to us.

When I arrived back in Salt Lake City, Heber C. Kimball was pleased to know we had done well for all concerned and that we had the good will of General Johnston. We traveled on to Ogden. Our families and friends were glad to meet us. We then went to work on the tabernacle at Ogden. We started in January 1859 and finished it for dedication October 10 of the same year. I had a daughter born October 7, 1859, Diana

Fife. So I had a son and a daughter born while I was working on the building.

The Tabernacle was remodeled in 1896 at a cost of \$15,000. A large county fair, called the Tabernacle Fair, was held to raise the money. William W. Fife, son of William Nicol Fife, was the architect and builder. Though the inside and outside were redecorated and the vestry made into a choir loft, the foundation, walls, roof and general contour remained unchanged. [Beneath Ben Lomond Peak by Milton R. Hunter]

Walter Thompson and I were partners in the building business. I bought a lot from M. D. Herrick, for \$500. It was on 26th Street, half a block east of Washington or Main Street. In the spring of 1862, I planted the one acre lot into a fine orchard and in a few years had all kinds of fruit. John D. Fife, another son, was born September 24, 1863. I was appointed marshal of Ogden in 1861. War was declared between the North and the South. The Johnston's army was called away from Utah. Most of them were killed in battle. General A. S. Johnston took sides with the South and was the leading general at the Battle of Shiloh. There he was wounded and bled to death April 7, 1862. It was a great battle and was the turning point of the war in favor of the Union.

We in Utah were at peace with all man-kind except a few Indians, and we looked after and befriended them. The mines opened in Montana, and it was a good thing for Ogden as we were having big crops, and they sold at a good price to the miners. Every man was at work building up the country. In 1863 Chief Pocatello's band of Indians were making trouble in Idaho. They had been killing the emigrants who were moving from the States to settle Washington and Montana, etc. President Lincoln sent orders to make an attack on them at Bear

River in January. The snow was four feet deep. Colonel Connor's volunteers from California and Nevada were called to take the field, and they had a fierce battle the latter part of January 1863. They were badly used up. Chief Sagwich got into the river and made his escape. All the other chiefs were killed along with some four-hundred other Indians. Colonel Connor's command lost twenty-six killed and over thirty wounded. I was called upon to go as a guide, as I knew the country in that section. I took charge of the wounded, etc. I was the marshal of Ogden at that time. I took all the wounded men to the city hall where they were well cared for. Doctors from Fort Douglas met me there and operated on some of them. Two died. Lt. Darwin Chase died on the way to Fort Douglas the next day. I got a fresh outfit at Ogden and very soon went to Fort Douglas through the snow, which was over two feet deep all the way. The men soon got well. That battle settled the Indians so that they let the emigrants alone.

The war was still going on between the North and South. By that time the Union army was powerful, and there soon came a surrender. There were glad tidings of great joy all over the country. The people of Utah were all of the time for the Union and always stood by the flag. I knew that because I had taken a very active part in our military and knew the feelings of the people.

After the war Utah was reorganized militarily and the militia was called upon to study General Upton's United States New Tactics. Every county was made into a military district under the direction of Governor Durkee, the same as the United States Army was under the direction of the President. He was the last governor appointed by President Lincoln. Governor Durkee was a very active man and took a very great inter-

est in military affairs in Utah territory. He could see that the people in Utah made good soldiers. In 1866 Ogden and Weber County were made into a military district composed of twelve companies with brass and martial bands. The martial band was the finest in the territory. R. D. Sprague of the Mormon Battalion was the great drum major. He took great pride in it. The Governor and army officers often met with us.

On the Fourth of July, an election was held in the Ogden Tabernacle. I was elected Colonel of the First Regiment, First Brigade, Weber Military District. We drilled every Saturday at 10 a.m. at tabernacle square, Ogden, in the new tactics of the United States Army. We also had three days of drill at Camp Weber on the north line of Weber County. The regiment numbered over one thousand officers and men. It was a fine body of men. All of them had the experience of crossing the plains.

On August 17, 1866, we were blessed with another son, named Walter Thompson Fife. That year I sold my acre orchard and house to Wm. McKay for \$4,000 and moved to the north part of Ogden on Washington and 22nd Street. I bought three acres for another orchard on Adams and 21st Street. I put two acres into orchard and used one acre for pasture. The orchard was planted in 1867, and Box Elder shade trees were planted along the sidewalk.

(Captain James Brown had been killed in an accident, leaving a number of widows and numerous children. Brigham Young thought someone should marry the widows and provide for them. He persuaded William Nicol Fife to marry Phoebe. That marriage was performed October 9, 1866. Cynthia A. Fife was the first child born from that marriage on July 22, 1867. Phoebe persuaded William Nicol to also marry her old-maid sister, Cynthia Abbott, their maiden name.

That marriage took place November 2, 1867.)

In 1868 I took a contract with the Central Pacific Railroad to build six miles of track two hundred miles west of Ogden. I took Joseph Parry as a partner. We did well clearing over \$2,000.

On January 11, 1869, we had a new baby daughter and named her Agnes A. Fife. The Union Pacific Railroad got to Ogden that same year. I was still the marshal, and Ogden had a big celebration as a result of the meeting of the two railroads. I was marshal of the day. All of the leading people of the territory were present. The transcontinental railroad established the junction at Ogden. A few days after the celebration most of the Central Pacific Railroad people arrived, having been delayed by a snowslide. There was a mixed multitude of people in Ogden from all parts of the world. We had to put on more police, and they had to be men of experience. I had an extra jail built at the depot to hold the prisoners. I was kept pretty busy. Later on I organized a chain gang and put evil doers to work on the streets.

Four military officers (Major General Stoneman, two majors and a captain) arrived from Washington on their way to California and Arizona. On their arrival they inquired for me as colonel of Weber Military District. I found them and took them to dinner. After dinner I took them to the mouth of Ogden Canyon to the pine bridge at the turn of the river. It was built in 1863 out of mountain red pine and was a strong piece of work. I had twenty-five men with me. They gave me credit for the bridge. From there I took them to the junction of the two rivers, Ogden and Weber. The next day I took them out to the lake. Brigham Young telegraphed me to bring the officers to Salt Lake City. We had a fine time with

President Young. General Stoneman had been a lieutenant in Colonel Cook's regiment. The Mormon Battalion belonged to that same regiment, and all had made the march together to California. That was the closing scene of the Mexican War. After the interview President Young had with those officers of the army, he made up his mind to send his son Willard to West Point Academy. A grandson, Richard W. Young also served time with the government and later in the war with Spain. They were very prominent officers, well known for their ability in military matters.

President Young was well pleased with me for taking the officers to my house and to the canyon, etc. He said I want to confer a certain mission on Colonel Fife: "When you meet any more officers of the army, bring them to me and I will furnish you a pass by the year." (We assume that was a pass to ride free on the railroad.) I received that, as long as he lived. The officers went back with me to Ogden and at my house held a reception of the leading men including the mayor of the city and the city council. The martial bands of my regiment made military music for the affair. I sent my son, William W. Fife, with a few others to Ogden Canyon, and they caught some fine trout for the party.

The next officer to arrive was General P. Sheridan. He brought his wife and daughter. I went with them to Salt Lake City. The next day we visited President Young and had a very fine time together. We also called on General Wells who was general of the Nauvoo Legion. Next we visited Fort Douglas, and then I took them to the Temple Block. They could see the work in progress on the temple, etc. We returned to Ogden, and they went on to San Francisco. Many others came, and the experience was about the same.

I was still marshal of Ogden and got to be pretty well known. I attended to my business, and anything I undertook I carried it through. In 1870 I was appointed United States deputy marshal, also coroner for Weber County. We were blessed with another daughter in 1871 and named her Emma.

There were a great many very bad men that followed the building of the railroad to Ogden, and they were killing one another. I held many inquests and soon got rid of all such.

Walter Thompson's daughter was the girl who first got the small pox in 1870. She lived but was pox marked. She wore a sun bonnet for a year. The city of Ogden was placed under quarantine regulation for ninety days. The people of Salt Lake were alarmed. President Brigham Young called a meeting in the Tabernacle to select someone to take charge. I was the officer they selected, as I had passed through just such a scene--brought in by the railroad in May 1870. I was the marshal at the time. I got a rig and moved the sick people up to Farr's grove, known as Glenwood (Lorin Farr Park). We put up tents and placed guards so that no one could get in there without my consent. Being a military man, I saw that order was needed, and I strictly carried it out. We were all operating to check that epidemic of smallpox. The mayor, Lorin Farr, and Alderman Herrick trained, so they could assist me. In a week they were taken down with it and had to be taken to the grove. I hunted around and found a few young people that had had the disease in England. They said not so bad as this. I kept moving the sick to the grove. I had moved in all 169. It was three months before I got rid of it. Hired men did the washing and buried the clothes, some of them for good. I allowed no burning of clothes. In three months I raised the

quarantine, and the merchants did a big clothing business.

From 1869 until 1873, I was kept very busy but stood it well. We had a good police force, well armed, and men of experience. Ogden, at that time, was building up pretty fast. I was appointed inspector of buildings.

In 1873 President Brigham Young called me in August to go to Scotland on a mission as the elders there were sick. He wanted strong men that would not get sick. He wanted to know if I could go by October 15. I told him I could. He stated, "You will meet your family and have a rest." I had been away from Scotland for twenty-one years. Fifteen of us left Ogden on November 15 for different parts of the British mission. We took the White Star Line for Liverpool. Cabin passage was \$50, and it was a fine ten day voyage. I took a large case of apples, pears, and fine fruit to show my people the kind of fruit I raised in my young orchard on Adams Avenue in Ogden.

I went to see my grandmother, my mother's mother, Mrs. Mary Nicol. She was over ninety years old and a most wonderful woman. There were over ninety of my relatives who came to her home to see the man from Utah and the fruit--I preached a big sermon. Included were ministers and other leading people. Many of them knew me when I lived there as a boy. My father was still living but died six months later. I attended his funeral. He was seventy-six years of age. I had a fine picture of my family with me, and it was well received. My grandmother stated, "Many of your folks found fault with you when you joined the Mormon church." She added, "You have done better than all of them. Many said you would never come back." She further stated, "I always knew you would; and the Almighty has blessed you with a fine, beautiful family, and located in a fine part of

America." She went on, "I know Brigham Young is a pure and good man. I do not care what they say here in this country. Every tree is known by its fruit." My grandmother always was a reader of scriptures. She always took a great interest in me, being her oldest grandson.

I enjoyed my mission and was never sick. I had hunted up my genealogy at the register office, and all of the clerks took an interest in it. I paid them well for their trouble. (Later when the temple was finished I was told to go with my family and do work for the dead. We attended to that important part.) They told me in the register office in Edinburgh that I was the only man with the name of Fife that had hunted up his genealogy up to that time (1874). We cannot do too much for the dead. I was appointed by Joseph F. Smith, April 1874, to take charge of the Scotch mission and to take charge of the immigration, as many converts were going to Utah that year. In October I was called to take charge of the last company of the season. We left from Liverpool and went by way of New York to Ogden, Utah. We crossed in the steamship Nevada, a very fine passage. I had a cabin passage and a free ticket all the way to Ogden. We took on an additional fifty passengers at New York, and we still had no sickness. We all arrived in Ogden in good shape. In all there were over three hundred passengers.

I was asked to take charge of finishing the court house in Ogden. I determined the style and the kind of finish to be done and went ahead. I hired the best workmen I could find in Ogden and Salt Lake City to do the finish work. I hired my son William W. Fife to work with me, and he received fine instructions as it was first class work. It made a fine workman of him. I named him after my great-grandfather, William Wilson,

an Edinburgh architect of very high order. Great-grandfather Wilson went from Scotland to Hamburg, Germany, to do some work for that city and married an architect's daughter whose maiden name was Mary Monkis. Great-grandfather Wilson brought her home to Edinburgh. She was Grandmother Mary Nicol's mother. (It was my grandmother, Mary Nicol, who was ninety years old when I was on my mission in 1873.)

My son William W. Fife was a natural born architect and also a very fine workman. I had four young men working with me learning the trade in 1876.

I was selected to be marshal of the day for the Fourth of July, 1876, centennial celebration for the territory. I was appointed by the Governor and had sixteen aides. The main celebration was held at Kay's Grove on the Ogden River. The procession formed on tabernacle square at 10 a.m. All was on the move. The 15th Infantry Band took the lead, and all the states and territories were represented, as were Washington and Staff, the Ladies of Liberty, and Miss Perry. The artillery was sent up from Fort Douglas. Ogden never had such a crowd of people and such martial music. The brass bands came from all over. For the centennial celebration of the United States, Uncle Sam was well represented in Ogden. America was one hundred years old with a glorious future as a nation.

It makes me feel good when I think of it. What a great people, made up from all of the nations of the earth. A land of liberty where they can make happy homes for themselves and their children. The Almighty God is at the head and will be--for this nation is good to the poor and has always assisted in times of trouble. I believe the American Flag will always lead. Time will tell.

In 1876 the black smallpox was brought to Ogden. A few sick people got off the train and were sent to the pest house. Some of them died; they had turned black all over. The men in charge of the place burned their clothes. The smoke from the clothing settled all over the city, and the people were taken down with the same sickness. It was alarming. Over five hundred people were taken down with it in just a few weeks.

Because of my experience in 1870, the people thought I had better drop all building business and take the field. I said to the mayor, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." The first month I worked very hard on horseback and rig. I put a flag up at every house taken down with the disease and had to deliver what goods those families needed. I disinfected day and night until I could see I was killing it. After I disinfected in the daytime, I assigned women nurses to care for their sex and men to care for the men. I hired strong men that had been down with it and who were not afraid of it. The few that died were buried at night. I never got home to my family as I stayed at the city hall. The city council gave me full authority. That was a good move. I sent all of my orders through the city recorder.

I felt the Almighty blessed me in doing that work. I never was sick. I remember C. W. Penrose was running a paper in Ogden at the time. He made the remark that I looked well. He said, "You never were afraid of the smallpox." (William Nicol Fife had been vaccinated in Scotland. In 1870 he vaccinated his own wives and children directly from Walter Thompsons daughter's smallpox lesions.) The quarantine was raised a few days before Christmas 1876. The council had me continue to ride all over for two more weeks in case anything might take place. By that time I was home with my family.

A month later I went to Salt Lake City with my wife. In Mr. Jennings's store I met President Brigham Young and Brigham Young Jr. They were pleased to see me looking so well. He blessed me and said God was with me and that I did my duty as an officer. President Young said that if I had done the same work in the city of San Francisco, I would have had a pension for life. He was a man with a big mind and full of charity for his fellowmen.

In his autobiography William Nicol stated that when he returned home from his mission to Scotland in 1874 that it was on the steamship Nevada. However, according to the Millennial Star we learn it was the steamship Wyoming. An entry states:

At 1 o'clock p.m. on Wednesday, October 14th, the sixth and last company of this season's emigration took their departure on board the Guion steamship Wyoming, Captain Beddoe, from Liverpool for New York. There were 95 adults, 53 children and 4 returning Elders, number 152 souls.

Elder Wm. N. Fife, was appointed to take charge of the company, has labored since his arrival from Utah on the 12th of November 1873, in the Glasgow Conference, a portion of the time as president, and having been released, returns home.

[Another entry records:]

The steamship, Wyoming, which left Liverpool Oct. 14th with a company of 155 Latter-day Saints on board, arrived in New York, as reported by Elder William N. Fife, who had charge of the company:

AMERICA
S.S. Wyoming, New York,
October 26th, 1874
Pres. Joseph F. Smith

Dear Brother,--I take the earliest opportunity of informing you of our safe arrival at New York at 3 o'clock p.m. today. After we left Queens-town, we had a severe storm which lasted for three days, washing in the hatchway forward. All of our people on board were seasick, except brothers Murphy, Oldroyd, and myself, which enabled us to be a blessing to the brethren and sisters, as our time was taken up in waiting upon them, and administering to their wants, in all of which I felt well, for I knew the Lord was with us. I was led to promise the Saints in the midst of their sickness, that the sea would become calm and they all would arrive at their destination enjoying good health. On the voyage we remembered the Lord, and after the storm, had a calm for four days, with beautiful weather until we reached this port, all feeling well and thankful to our Heavenly Father for his kindness towards us. Captain Beddoe is a good man and his kindness will be remembered by us, also the doctor--he has done his duty--was always on hand by day or night. In fact all the officers and crew have shown a desire to do all in their power to make our people comfortable. We met together for prayer morning and evening and had two meetings on Sundays, a number of the cabin passengers met with us; the good spirit of the Lord was with us in our preaching, and the Saints bore their testimony to the truth of the gospel, and were thankful for their deliverance from Babylon. On our arrival we were met by Brother Staines, Bishop John Sharp, and Brother John W. Young. The excise officers came on board, and after they examined our luggage we were landed at Castle Garden where we stay tonight, and leave at 2 o'clock p.m. tomorrow. Brother Staines has added 15 persons from New York and vicinity to our company. Elders King and Tay-

lor are well; Elder Bywater has been quite sick but is doing all he can. There is a good feeling in the company. I will write you when we get home.

With kind regards to self and the brethren in the office, I remain your brother in the Gospel,

William N. Fife

Margaret Miller Fife gives this description of her grandfather, William Nicol Fife.

He was a tall square shouldered and square chinned person with keen blue eyes and brown hair and beard. He was very well educated and smart. He was known as a thorough, capable and highly qualified builder and contractor.

William N. Fife and George Douglas were among the earliest blacksmiths in Utah. Their shop was located on the southeast corner of Washington Boulevard and 25th Street where the Ben Lomond Hotel now stands.

William and Diana had nine children but the last three died in infancy or early childhood. When Brigham Young persuaded William to marry Pheobe Abbot Brown, Diana was not in favor of the marriage. She did not like Phoebe because she was not a good housekeeper, was quite fat and lazy, and had children by Captain Brown. Diana thought if William had to marry into polygamy he should choose some young girl whom she liked as well.

After William and Diana's second daughter, Diana, was married in 1881, Brigham Young called William to help settle Arizona. Their oldest daughter, Sarah Jane, had married Barnard White in 1876; and their son, William, was establishing himself as an architect in Ogden. William Nicol accepted the call and wanted to take his two sons John and Walter along. Their mother, Diana, refused to let them go without her

and their daughter Agnes. William's other wives, Phoebe and Cynthia were left in Ogden.

With covered wagons they moved to Arizona and settled in Sulphur Springs Valley, Tombstone, Arizona, on a large ranch located thirty-five miles away from the nearest town. A comfortable six room house was built of large adobes. The thick walls had port-holes that were built to be used in self-defense against the Apache Indians who were very troublesome at that time.

No information has been found to determine whether or not William returned to Ogden to visit his other wives or if they ever went to Arizona. It is known that Phoebe often wrote to William, urging him to have her come to Arizona. Diana was not in favor of that even though she loved Phoebe's daughter Adlaide Brown and was very close to her.

On the morning of September 12, 1884, William had determined that he would go into town and send a wire to Phoebe, sending her the money to come to Arizona. Walter and John were to go to work for one of the neighboring ranchers. William felt that Diego, the hired Mexican workman, would be able to look after everything. At that time Diana was not afraid, because Geronimo (Indian Chief) and his tribe had been restricted to a reservation.

During the morning a lone Mexican came and pounded on the gate. Diana told Diego to open the gate. The stranger loitered around and Agnes finally fixed him a cold lunch. Suddenly and without warning he turned and shot Diana. She died a few hours later with Agnes by her side. (The full account of Diana's death is given in her life story.)

William and his sons made a simple casket of native Chiricahua pine, and Diana was buried under a big oak tree in the oak

grove. When word came to Ogden of her death, her oldest son, William, left Ogden for the ranch. William Nicol was unable to leave the ranch at that time to return to Ogden with Aggie. Therefore, she returned with her brother William.

Phoebe and her family went to live with William on the Oak Grove Ranch in Arizona. After a number of years in Arizona, the Fife family returned to Utah. William Nicol had suffered a severely broken leg, the result of a team of runaway horses. That accident caused him to be lame for the rest of his life.

The following newspaper articles concerned the death of William Nicol Fife:

Death of Col. Fife,
Utah Pioneer of 1852
Special to the News

Ogden, Oct. 21. Col. Wm. N. Fife, a pioneer of 1852, and one of the oldest residents of this part of Utah, died this afternoon of general debility at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Barnard White. He had been ill for several weeks. Col. Fife was 83 years of age and is survived by a large family.

Taken from Deseret Evening News
October 21, 1914

Col. Fife, Pioneer, Ends Useful
Life

Ogden, Oct. 22 Colonel William N. Fife, Indian Fighter, 'Mormon' pioneer, and personal friend of President U. S. Grant and General Sheridan, died at his home, 725 Twenty-third Street, yesterday, at 1:30 p.m. He was a native of Scotland, 83 years of age, and death was due to general debility.

Colonel Fife was famous as builder of the Ogden Tabernacle, the Weber County courthouse, Central School [It later became the Elk's Lodge building on Grant Ave. west of

city hall and was torn down in 1994], and other edifices about the city. He was also marshal of Ogden City for 14 years and gained much prominence in the early days as a 'rough and ready' officer of the law. He captured, single handed, two notorious robbers who pillaged the mails, and received a reward of \$1,000 from the U. S. Government.

Colonel Fife joined the Church while a young man in Scotland and immigrated to Utah in 1853. He lived in Salt Lake City for three years and then moved to Ogden, where he had since resided with the exception of a mission to Scotland and a few years in Arizona.

He was commissioned a colonel by President U.S. Grant and did notable work in suppressing Indian uprisings, scouting and other military duties in this and adjoining states.

He entertained President Grant and General Sheridan at his home in Ogden on the occasion of their visit here and enjoyed a wide acquaintance among other prominent men in the country.

As a member of the Church, Colonel Fife was noted for his active and valuable work. He is survived by the following children: Mrs. Barnard White, Mrs. Joseph Hutchins, Ogden; John D. Fife, Salt Lake City; Walter T. Fife, Los Angeles, Mrs. Cynthia Layton, Proctor, Arizona; David N. Fife, Nevada. Besides these children there are 42 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be held at 1 p.m. Sunday in the Sixth Ward meeting house, Bishop O. M. Sanderson presiding.

The body will lie in state at the home of Col. Fife's daughter, Mrs. Barnard White, 725 Twenty-third Street, Saturday afternoon and evening and Sunday until noon. Interment will be in the Ogden City Cemetery.

Taken from the Deseret Evening News,
October 22, 1914.

COL. WM N. FIFE LAID TO FINAL REST
Impressive Funeral Service
for Prominent Pioneer
Held in Sixth Ward

The Funeral of Colonel William N. Fife was held yesterday, commencing at 1 o'clock in the Sixth ward meeting house. Bishop Owen M. Sanderson conducted the services and also spoke.

The music for the service was furnished by Robert Greenwell and Mrs. Agnes Warner, the former singing 'King of Eternity' and the latter 'Resignation,' 'Sweet Hour of Prayer' and 'O Dry Those Tears.'

The speakers were President C. F. Middleton, Patriarch James Taylor, Bishop Robert McQuarrie and Bishop Sanderson. The three former speakers were all life-long friends of the deceased and gave a strong eulogy of Colonel Fife's career in pioneer days, his work in building the city and his activity in religious work.

A large crowd attended the funeral and many beautiful flowers were given as tributes by the friends of the deceased. The interment was made in the Ogden City cemetery, the grave being dedicated by E. A. Larkin.

William N. Fife was recognized and honored by the Church with publication of the following article, which appeared in the Improvement Era, January 1915:

WILLIAM NICOL FIFE Obituary,
October 21, 1914

Col. Wm. N. Fife, Indian fighter, 'Mormon' pioneer, and personal friend of President U. S. Grant and General Sheridan, died at Ogden, October 21, 1914. He was a native of

Scotland, 83 years of age. He built the Ogden tabernacle, the Weber County Courthouse, the Central School, and other edifices about the city, and was marshall of Ogden for fourteen years. He joined the Church while in Scotland and came to Salt Lake City in 1853, removing to Ogden shortly thereafter. He was commissioned a colonel by President Grant, and did great work in suppressing Indian uprisings, in scouting, and in other military duties in Utah and adjoining states. He entertained President Grant and General Sheridan at his home in Ogden on their visit to Utah. He was a rough and ready officer of the law. At one time he captured single-handed, two notorious robbers who had pillaged the mails, and received a reward of one thousand dollars from the United States Government.

PATRIARCHAL BLESSING OF
WILLIAM NICOL FIFE

Ogden, Weber County, Utah Territory, January 20th 1869.

Patriarchal blessing of William Nicol Fife, son of John and Mary Fife, born in Kincardine, Perthshire, Scotland, September 26, 1831.

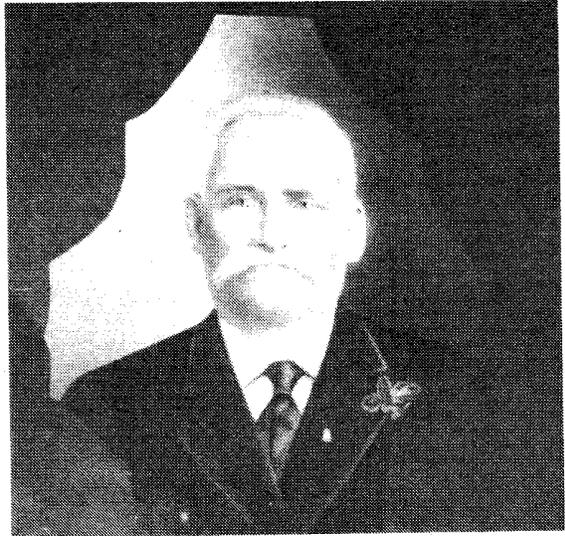
Brother William, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I place my hands upon thy head to pronounce and seal a blessing upon thee, therefore prepare thy mind, and look forward to the future, that you may comprehend the blessings that are in store for the faithful, for they are thine through obedience to the laws of God, for thou hast left thy native land, home, kindred and friends for the gospel's

sake; thou hast also past through trials, for which thou shalt have thy reward in this life an hundred fold, and hereafter. Thou shalt have life eternal, for thou art of the blood of Joseph, through the loins of Ephraim, and a legal heir to the priesthood and entitled to the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of the new and everlasting covenant with the gifts and privileges thereof; therefore live up to thy privileges and the righteous desires of thy heart shall be granted thee, for the Lord knoweth thy integrity and will answer thy petitions to thy satisfaction inasmuch as thou wilt ask in faith, and thou shalt be endowed with wisdom to control thyself and also those who shall come under thy jurisdiction; thou shalt also be blessed in thy habitation and in thy basket and stores; thy posterity shall be numerous and bear thy name in honorable remembrance from generation to generation and thou shalt labour in the vineyard of our Father in heaven, and assist in gathering the saints from the nations of the earth; thou shalt also assist in avenging the blood of the Saints and the prophets which was shed by the ungodly, and thy guardian angel shall protect thee by day and by night and ward off the shafts of the Adversary which may be hurled at thee, and not a hair of thy head shall fall by an enemy. This blessing I seal upon thy head and I seal thee up unto eternal life, to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, a saviour unto thy father's house. Even so, amen. C. Wiedierborg, Recorder

THE MAN



William Nicol Fife



William Nicol Fife--The Marshall

HIS WORK



The First Ogden Tabernacle At 22nd And Washington--Built By William N. Fife

Source Document For
Life Sketch

ANCESTORS AND POSTERITY

OF

RAYMOND VALASCO FARR

AND

ALMIRA SHURLIFF FARR

1995

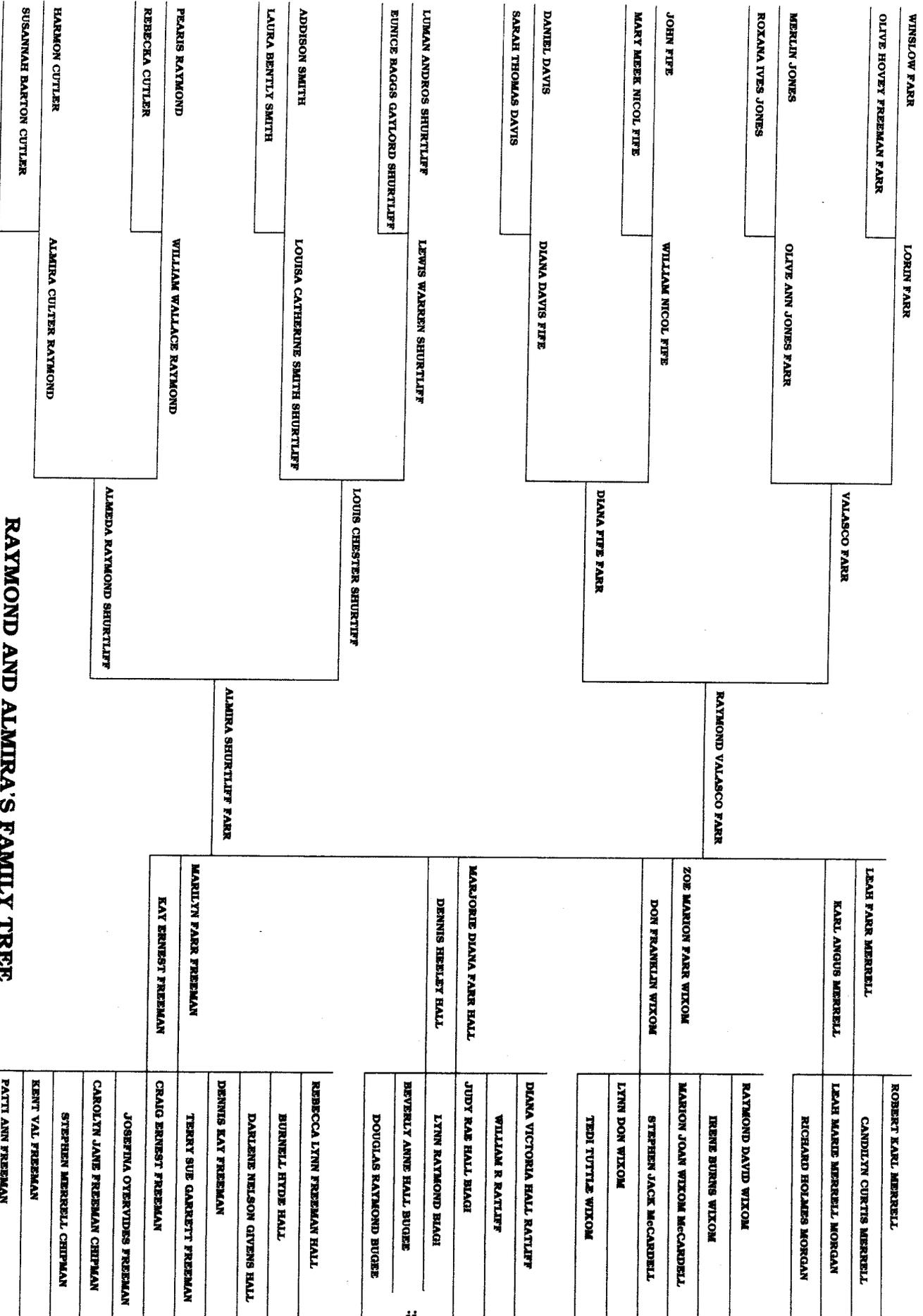


RAYMOND



ALMIRA

OUR PEDIGREE



RAYMOND AND ALMIRA'S FAMILY TREE

This work is dedicated to the memory of Raymond and Almira Farr. It tells about them and their extended families. Ray and Almira were outstanding parents and grandparents who lovingly touched the lives of all who knew them.

PREFACE

The opportunity to bring together written accounts about ancestors and posterity of Raymond and Almira Shurtliff Farr couldn't be resisted. We knew that their early ancestors were either New England colonizers or Church immigrants. Some of the colonizer's posterity joined the Church in New England, and the immigrants joined the Church before leaving the British Isles.

During the early days of the Church, the Farrs and the Shurtliffs each had a family member experience a "healing" miracle, which probably influenced their conversion. On the Farr side, Olive Hovey Freeman Farr, having been sick in bed for several years, was healed during a priesthood blessing by a young missionary named Orson Pratt. On the Shurtliff side, Luman Andrus Shurtliff was healed as he began a 75-mile walk home after being baptized. He was crippled; he had a Book of Mormon under his arm; he was frustrated; he prayed to God for help; and he was completely healed.

This book begins with Raymond and Almira's sixteen great-grandparents (eight each). Two of them did not immigrate to the United States. Of the fourteen immigrants, two came by way of the Mississippi River. However, the husband died of cholera while traveling up the river and was buried on the river bank. His wife continued on to Winter Quarters, joined a pioneer company, and made the journey west to Utah. The other twelve were born in New England, joined the Church, and immigrated to the Nauvoo area. Of those twelve ancestors, four died prior to the exodus from Nauvoo, and two died near Winter Quarters. The remaining six made the westward trek by covered wagon across the plains. So a total of seven were among the early pioneers to arrive in Utah. They became stalwarts in their communities in

both civic and Church affairs. They endured the pioneer hardships, and they lived the gospel of Jesus Christ. What a privilege to dig into their histories and bring them together in one volume with more recent family.

The words "Life Sketch" were arbitrarily included in the titles of the family members whose stories comprised about ten pages or less of original copy.

When the four Farr sisters great-grandfather, Lewis Warren Shurtliff, was a stake president, he preached that members of the Church should write their "life stories." Later on President Spencer W. Kimball said, "I urge all of the people of this Church to give serious attention to their family histories. . . ." We think this book is ample evidence that the R. V. Farr family paid serious attention to the counsel.

We thought the "book making" experience would provide a couple of months of family history training, but it turned out to be a couple of years--we needed that!

We learned there are many ways to refine a manuscript. We learned things like how to spell X ray or X-ray. Did you know the first way is a noun and the second a verb? We learned that the tiny apostrophe plays a big role in grammar. We learned that when to capitalize some words was a real challenge--and we could have flunked the course. We learned that words like "who," "this," and "which" versus "whom," and "that" presented interesting options.

In fact the grammar challenge was awesome, but Weber State University English professor, Russell Burrows, provided valuable assistance. We took solace from his words, "There are no rules, just guidelines" as we applied the wisdom from Style Guide for Publications of The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints, Second Edition and The Gregg Reference Manual, Sixth Edition. Still there were questions we struggled with. For example the guidance said don't hyphenate people's names, (the guy that wrote that must still be using a typewriter), we just let the computer do its thing. We are grateful to Emily Godfrey, an English teacher, for taking the time to patiently "explain it" for a lot of trying questions. So we know we didn't get it all right, but please remember when you note a goof--this isn't an English lesson, it's an introduction to some relatives who were real people.

We are indebted for your help, especially the "advice and council" of Zoe and the "reading" by Carolyn--you school teachers are a few steps out front. Craig's help in getting the words to flow through machines and onto paper was the technical assistance that allowed us to get it done.

As you read these "stories," you'll find out what a truly distinguished clan this is. Some early ancestors associated with conquerors, some with kings, earls, and dukes, and some with ancient explorers--one even captained the Mayflower on several voyages. Information for "name backgrounds" at the beginning of each great-great-grandparent was obtained from "family" books extant at the family history library and a few DUP historical writeups.

Other ancestors were closely associated with the prophet Joseph Smith and experienced the persecution that attended that era. In total they ranged from "rags to riches" and provided us with a well-rounded legacy.

We noted with interest that several ancestors made reference to other ancestors in their stories, or if they didn't their biographer did, without knowing that later on they would all be "family." Most were favorable references for which we are grateful.

While browsing in the Family History Library, we noted two different definitions of job titles used in some ancestors' stories. First was for "tithing man" by Arlene Eakle, "He was an individual with the responsibility of overseeing ten families in a town to make sure they had all the public works like roads and water available to them in their section of town." The second was for "freeman" from the foreword of another Farr. "A freeman was a man who held the right of franchise in colonial times. Only those who were proprietors as well as members of the church could become freemen. The requirements for a freeman were that he should be of age, orthodox in religion, 'of sober and peaceable conversation,' and possessed of a ratable estate of at least 20 pounds. In 1776 only one-sixth of the population of Boston were freemen. Therefore for that reason five-sixths had no participation in local government. Admittance as an inhabitant was a privilege not lightly acquired, only those being admitted who could contribute something of value to the community. Any stranger who came in was warned out of town if after a reasonable time he had not bought land or become self supporting."

The hardships our great and great-great-grandparents accepted as everyday life were incredible. What they accomplished with what they had is almost unbelievable. Still, we noted that today's generation continue to live a range of experiences from somber trials to miracles.

We are most grateful for your trust as we sifted your life experiences into this book--you all did good, and we enjoyed the learning exercise.

Marilyn and Kay Freeman
Ogden, Utah 1995