

their own mother Ma, and did not really know which was their own mother until quite grown. The family always lived together in the same house. His wife Ann had the following children:

Elizabeth Ann born March 4, 1858
Edward Thomas born October 19, 1859
Mary Ellen born June 18, 1862
John Lloyd born October 6, 1864
Artimishia born December 25, 1866
Minnie born March 12, 1869
Harriet born November 1, 1871
Bernard born July 8, 1873
Emma born February 7, 1876
Hugh Evans born May 5, 1881
George born July 27, 1883

In the spring of 1858 he was called again to go out to Echo Canyon. He was out this time three to four weeks. He returned home where he remained for about three weeks when he was counseled with others to move to the south, that the United States troops were coming in and should they intend to remain in the City, arrangements were made to burn our property if the word were given. He and his family went as far as Springville in the beginning of the month of May 1858.

They lived in their wagons and made a little shanty over it. They were located by the side of his brother-in-law, Job Rowland, and his wife Mary Parry Rowland and family. The Parry family at this time included Edward and two wives and two-month-old baby daughter. They remained there until word came to return. They came back to Salt Lake City about the fourth of July 1858.

He says that after a while the Public Works started again where he was employed until he left for St. George to which place he was called at the April Conference 1862. He does not say when he left but he arrived in St. George June 5, 1862, with his wife Ann and little boy Teddy and George Brooks. They had one yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows, and one wagon. His daughter Mary Ellen was born June 18th 1862, being the first white girl born in St. George.

We have no account of when they left Salt Lake City nor any date of incidents encountered enroute. We understand, however, that they remained in Beaver for a few days to recuperate and have teams re-shod.

He related an incident that while they were camped for noon one day, some Indians came by and waited until they were finished churning and partook of a drink of buttermilk. After they had left some men came along and said they were after the Indians because they had stolen some horses. One of the Indians was Black Hawk.

On another occasion, he relates that, as they were unyoking the cattle one of the cows became very unmanageable. He asked George what he thought was the matter with her. George said she could smell Indians. After the animals had grazed for a while they chained them to the wagon wheels for the night.

Sometime in the night the oxen and cows became very restless and made the chains rattle and clank as if trying to get loose, and the little dog under the wagon began to bark furiously. Father raised up

in his bed, took his gun across his knees and was about to raise the cover to look out when suddenly he was pulled back.

This was repeated three times, as he was about to pull back the cover. He asked his wife Ann why she kept pulling him back. She said she had not touched him. As soon as it became light they hitched up and overtook some of the others who were going to St. George. When he related the incident to them they said the Indians were just waiting to have him touch the wagon cover so they could locate him. They were afraid to shoot before being able to know just where he was.

As soon as he arrived in St. George he was put in charge of the mason work on all public and many private buildings such as: the St. George Hall, the Tabernacle, Court House, Erastus Snow's big house, Brigham Young's residence, and many others. He built the second story to the Washington Factory, the culvert at Middletown and was appointed master mason of the St. George Temple.

In the Spring of 1863 he returned to Salt Lake City and brought his first wife, Elizabeth, and daughter Elizabeth Ann to St. George. September 12, 1864 he made his Declaration of Intention (called the first paper to become a citizen of the United States. December 10, 1866, he received his certificate of citizenship, James G. Bleak being the clerk of the Probate court. It was afterward found that the Probate court was not authorized to serve papers, so he was obliged to make new application. This he did on October 17, 1865.

He again made his Declaration of Intention and on November 8, 1869 he received his certificate of citizenship: this time through the Second District Court. James G. Bleak was again clerk. Two of his children died while he lived in St. George, Artimishia, February 15, 1871 and Minnie, March 3, 1871. They were both buried in St. George.

The temple ground was dedicated November 9, 1871. The first stone was laid March 10, 1873. The last stone ready for the roof timbers was laid March 8, 1875. The stone work on the temple and its appendages was finished February 28, 1877.

On January 1, 1877 the St. George Temple was partially dedicated. On January 9, 1877 the administration of the holy ordinances commenced. April 6, 1877 the temple was fully dedicated. March 27, 1877, he and his wives Elizabeth and Ann received their second anointings by Wilford Woodruff. As they were leaving the sealing room, President Brigham Young called him to go to Manti to take charge of the mason work of the Manti Temple.

In looking through some of his accounts I find where he received for his labor and paid out for his hired help and other accounts, the following items:

Molasses two gallons \$ 4.00
Flour 24 pounds \$ 3.60
Beef 15 and a half lbs. \$ 2.70
Tallow one pound \$.40
Tobacco one plug \$ 2.00
Pants stuff four yards \$20.00
Cottonade six yards \$ 7.50
Tea one pound \$ 3.00
Hat one \$ 9.00

Tea two and a half lbs. \$13.00
Dried peaches @ \$.40 \$ 2.00
Lumber 25 feet \$ 1.50
Whiskey three half pints \$ 1.17

He left St. George with his wife Elizabeth and daughter Elizabeth Ann April 16, 1877 along with President Brigham Young's company arriving in Manti April 23, 1877. On April 25, 1877 at high noon the ground for the Manti Temple was dedicated under the direction of President Brigham Young. The actual work of the excavation began on Monday April 30, 1877. The corner stones were laid two years later, April 24, 1879, under the direction of President John Taylor. On May 21, 1888 the House was solemnly dedicated.

In June 1877 the rest of his family, consisting of his wife, Ann, his sons Edward Thomas, John Lloyd and Bernard; daughters, Mary Ellen, Harriet, and Emma and also his wife Elizabeth who had returned to St. George to bring the rest of the family to Manti.

In 1880 he and his son Edward Thomas and N.L. Christensen took up a quarry northeast of Ephraim, he taking one half interest, Edward Thomas one fourth and N.L. Christensen one fourth. Later on they had some trouble with Simon Bamberger who tried to jump their claim.

This entailed considerable trouble and expense, so much so that N.L. Christensen withdrew from the company. E.L. Parry taking three-fourths interest and Edward Thomas retaining the one fourth which he already had. He gave John L. and Bernard each one fourth when they became of age.

The large stones for the cornice and many others for the Manti Temple came from their quarry. He and his son Edward Thomas donated over fourteen hundred dollars' worth of stone in royalties for which they did not reap any credit, which they should have done. After the work was finished on the Manti Temple he and his sons, Edward Thomas, John Lloyd and Bernard entered the Monumental business.

In January 1889 Edward Thomas was called on a mission to the British Isles. He left Manti March 1, 1889. He returned from his mission in July 1891. While he was away John Lloyd and Bernard gave up the monumental business and went over to Castle Valley to take up land.

In the latter part of 1889 Father superintended the building of the smoke stack east of the temple. He was ordained a High Priest August 30, 1890. When his son Edward Thomas returned from his mission, he and his son Bernard met him in Salt Lake and began arrangements to again enter the monumental business and also the building business, which they did immediately upon returning to Manti. He continued in this business until the time of his death on August 26, 1906.

Sometime before his death he made arrangements whereby Edward Thomas and Bernard were to have his interest in the Quarry and the stone business; bequeathing other property to the rest of the children in lieu thereof. His wife Elizabeth died August 11, 1880. His wife Ann died August 6, 1886. His little son George died November 13, 1889 and little Hugh Evans died November 19, 1889. Both died of diphtheria.

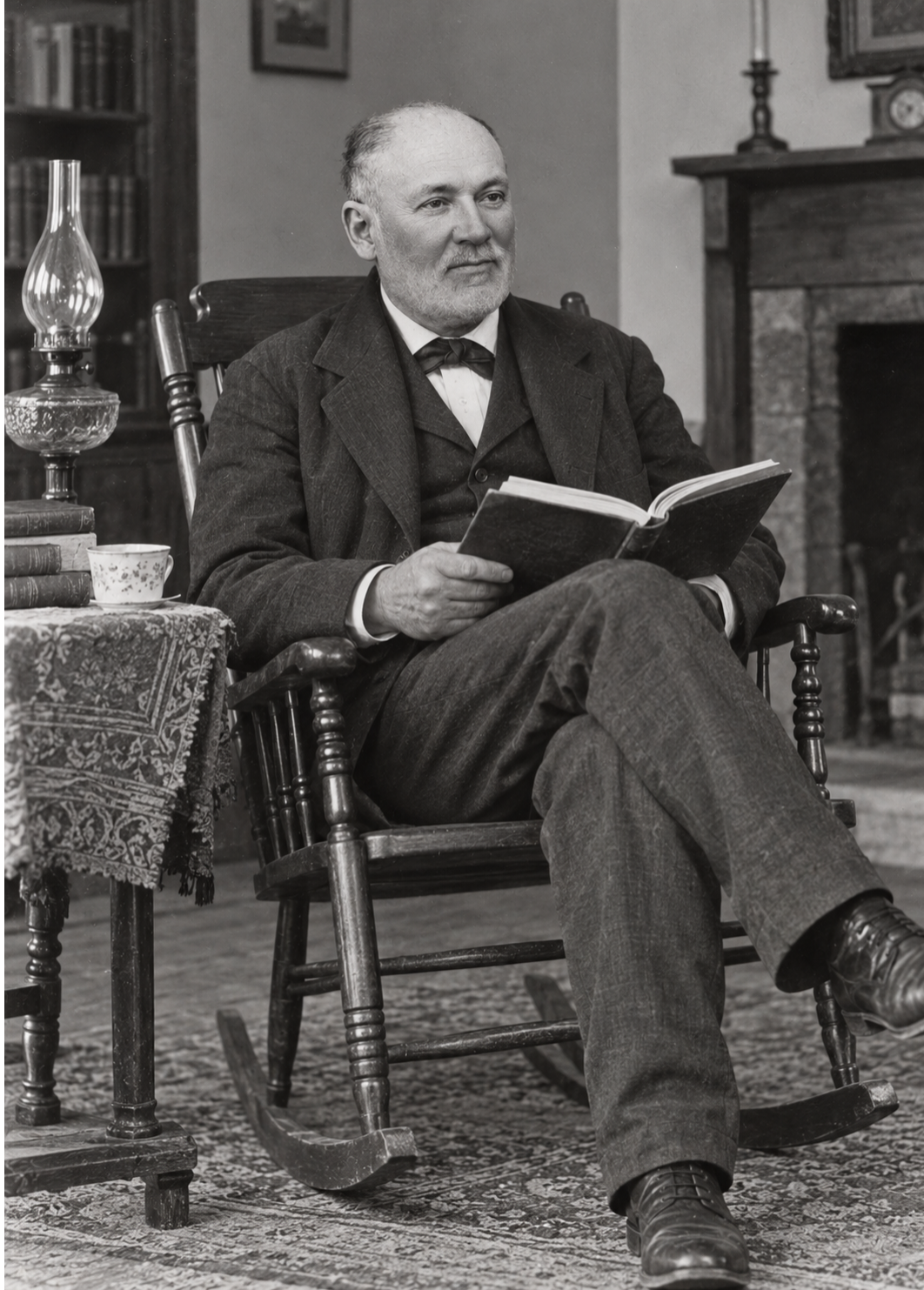


Figure 1 Edward Lloyd Parry



Figure 2 E. L. Parry Store in Manti, Utah



Figure 3 Edward Lloyd Parry built his own home in Manti, Utah. Of course, he used rocks.

Dear Reader, you have observed great kindness shown by E.L.P's son, Edward Thomas Parry. He showed love by taking the time to write his father's history. At this point, you will benefit by spending a little time with Thomas by looking at his own life through the lens of pictures and through the privilege of his own autobiography.

Short Autobiography of Edward Thomas Parry 1859-1938

To Our Dear Son Nat [Nathaniel E. Parry], October 17, 1932

Nat, you have repeatedly solicited me to write our history for you. I have made some notes but have not placed them in concrete form. In talking to your mother, we were wondering what we could give for a remembrance on this the 30th anniversary of your birth.

We concluded that perhaps a book of remembrance would be appropriate. We are therefore presenting to you with the same with a story of our life history, which we will endeavor to add to from time to time, in hope that we can complete it.

Edward Thomas Parry was born in Salt Lake City, Utah 19 October, 1859. Went to St. George, Utah in 1862 with my father Edward Lloyd Parry; my mother Ann Parry and my foster brother George Brooks, arriving 5 June '62.

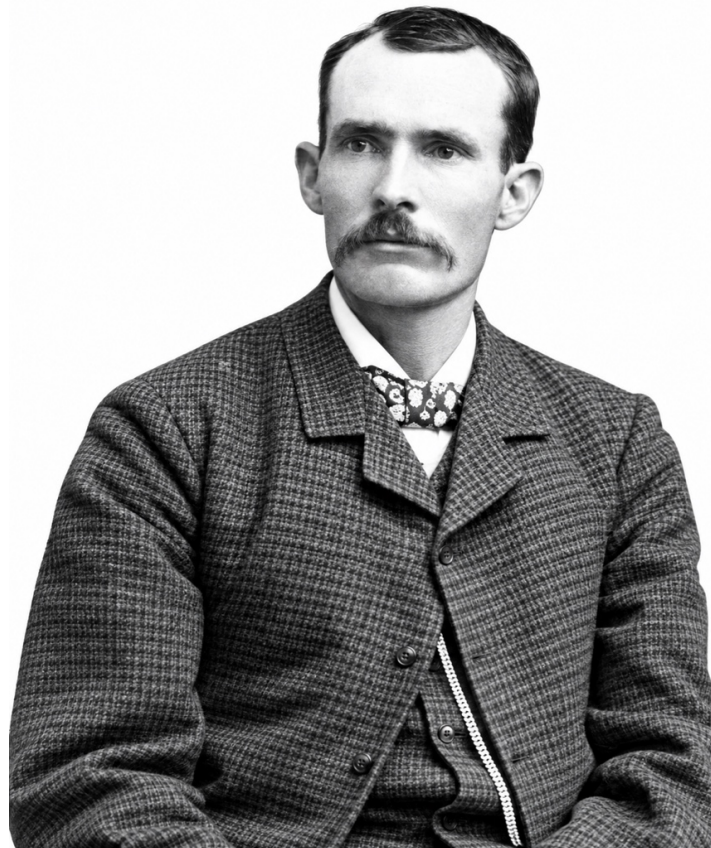


Figure 4 Edward Thomas Parry

Our outfit consisted of one yoke of oxen, one yoke of cows, wagon and a dog. On the way when camped out for dinner one day some Indians called on us, and as Mother was churning she gave them a drink of buttermilk. Soon after they left, some men rode up and asked about the Indians and said one of them was Black Hawk, a renegade.

Another time when we had stopped to camp for the night, one of the cows became very much excited and it was difficult to get the yoke off. George could not handle her. Father lifted me up and put me in the wagon. He asked George what he thot [sic] was the matter with her. George said she could smell Indians. After letting the oxen and cows free for a short time they chained them to the wagon for the night. George usually slept under the wagon but this night Father had him sleep in the wagon.

Sometime during the night the oxen and cows made a terrible racket and the dog barked. Father took his gun and sat up in bed with the gun in his hands ready to shoot if any occasion required. He made three different attempts to raise the cover to peep out and on each attempt he was pulled back. He thot [sic] it was Mother pulling him back, but she had not touched him. He concluded that it must have been his Guarding Angel. Had he raised the cover, the Indians would have known where he was and were probably just waiting so they could shoot him.

We arrived in St. George without any other particular incidents. My sister Mary Ellen was the first white girl born in St. George. I attended school each winter for three months. At the age of ten I started to learn the stone trade, and thereafter worked at cutting stone excepting for the three months when I was attending school. I worked on the St. George Temple of which Father was the master mason.

Whenever there was an unimportant piece of work to be done, Father most always set me at it, and like any boy - I could not understand why I should be the one to do it. I now look back and thank him for having done so. It was some of the best training he could give me. I was often put in places where I had to depend on my own judgement, at best how to overcome the difficult situation. I learned the stone building trade from the bottom up. I learned to mix mortar, packing the hod, climbing ladders, building scaffolds, tending mason, quarrying stone, excavating, building construction, lettering hard stone, sandstone, lime stone both hard and soft; cutting and lettering granite; also polishing marble and superintending buildings and quarries.

After the St. George Temple was built in January 1877, I got the chance to get a job at the Grand Gulch mine, 75 miles south of St. George. Father did not much want me to go but George Brooks persuaded him that it would do me good. I was gone five weeks and it was the first time in my life I had been gone away from home for more than one night. There were six persons in the group - two boys about my age, two Germans, and one Welshman. I was 18 years old. George was also with me.

By this time George was married and had a home in St. George. While I was away my Father was called to Manti to be master of the temple there. I got home a few days before he left. Father took his first wife, Elizabeth, and my sister Elizabeth Ann, with him to Manti. My Mother, Ann, and the rest of the children remained in St. George. I continued to cut stone and any other work I could find to do until October of the same year 1877 when we all moved to Manti, where I attended school. I might state here that when I returned from the Grand Gulch mine, the family came out to the wagon to welcome me home. Father's first wife rushed up to welcome me and my Mother grabbed me first and said, "He is my boy." Really I did not know until I was a pretty sized boy that they could both

could not be my mother. We called the first wife "Mother" and our own mother "Ma." It was really a beautiful relationship.

I was ordained an Elder by Brigham Young, Jan. 11, 1877 in the St. George Temple. Received my endowments the same day.... I remember when the Deseret Telegraph came to St. George. I went out to the East of town and witnessed the men putting up the poles and stringing the wire in Jan. 1867....I was present when the St. George Temple was partially dedicated Tues. Jan. 9, 1877 and well remember when President Brigham Young said there were some who had gotten in who had no right to be there and emphasized the fact by banging his cane down upon the top of the stand, making a dent with the knots of the cane. The next day some of the workmen were going to obliterate the dents. My Father remonstrated them until they desisted thereof. The dents are to be seen today.

March 1875, I remember seeing a lot of Indians passing the temple block in St. George. They were coming home from their camp near the Virgin River south of town. They came by in characteristic Indian fashion. We wondered what was the occasion. We learned that they had asked to be baptized and were baptized by David H. Cannon. They stated that the Great Spirit had visited them the night before and had commanded them to do so. There were two hundred of them baptized.

June 14, 1879, I saw for the first time the girl for me. After a Sunday School jubilee at Ephriam, she and a number of other girls from the little town of Wales, were congregated south of the Ephriam co-op after attending the meeting. Miss Hannah Rees of Wales whom I had previously met at Manti, introduced me to her friend - Miss Charlotte Ann Edmunds.

My attention was attracted to her charm and beauty. July 3 with my mother and others went to the town of Wales to celebrate the 4th of July. We were the guests of Bishop John Rees and family. On July 4th I again saw Miss Edmunds at her home. Her father Nathaniel Edmunds and his wife, Jane, were in the same company with my mother when they came from Old Wales with the handcart co. who arrived in Salt Lake City Oct. 2, 1856.

We spent the day at the Edmunds' home. It was my desire to accompany Charlotte Ann to the entertainment and dance that evening, but was denied the privilege as she had a previous engagement. However we managed to see each other after the dance. It was intimated and taken for granted that the girl of my choice belonged to one John Rees of Wales.

It was not my good fortune to see her for six or seven months when she attended a Sunday School jubilee at Manti. On the 24th of July 1880 I again went to Wales, but a Mr. Dan Chapple of Spanish Fork had gone a farther distance to see her. Later it was possible for us to begin our courtship.

She became my wife October 9, 1882. We were married in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City by Daniel H. Wells.



Figure 5 Edward Thomas Parry and Charlotte Ann Edmunds

I attended the University of Utah the winter of 1883-84. I attended Brigham Young Academy in Provo 1879-80. Our first child was born 19 Oct 1884, on my 25th birthday. We named her Edwardina.

Edwardina, 10 Oct 1884
Jane was born 29 Jan 1887
Ann, 15 Aug 1889
Winnifred, 24 May 1892
Charlotte, 27 April 1894
Arline, 28 March 1896
Edward Lloyd, 9 July 1898
Nathaniel Edmunds, 17 Oct 1902
Ronald 22 Sept 1905

In March 1889 I was called on a mission to Great Brittain [sic]. Before leaving I bought a comfortable five room home for my family, consisting of wife and two daughters, ages 5 and 2 years. While on my way home in June 1891 my little daughter Jane died, June 21, 1891. Six months after I left for my mission my little daughter Ann was born. She was two years old when I returned - the same age Jane was when I left. Our baby, Ronald, died age 2 months.

In 1880 my Father and N.L. Christensen took up a quarry north of Ephriam. My father taking half interest; N.L. Christensen and I taking one fourth interest. Mr. Simon Bamberger attempted to jump it, and we were involved in a lawsuit. Mr. Christensen withdrew so Father took it over. We won the suit.

When Simon Bamberger was campaigning for the office of governor, he made the remark in Manti that he always got what he went after. Then he spied me in the audience and said "all but the Parry quarry."

I continued to work on the Manti Temple until it was completed. We furnished stone from our quarry for the annex to the Salt Lake Temple also the stone on which is carved the all seeing eye and the interior stone and the exterior and the towers of the temple. The larger stones for finishing the Manti Temple were from our quarry. My father and I donated in royalty over \$1400 to the Manti Temple.

I held many positions in the Church. I was secretary of YMMIA in Manti 1878, President of YMMIA 1882, Sunday School teacher, Stake board assistant in Sunday School. Board member Religion class. Stake Supt. of Religion class. Chairman of Old Folks committee for 25 years. Pres. 48th Quorum of Seventy from 1893 to 1922. Stake Pres. of High Priests 1928. City councilman for many years.

Edward Thomas Parry died 28 Sept. 1938 at his home in Manti, Utah.



Figure 6 Edward Lloyd Parry with his Sons. L to R: Bernard, ELP, Thomas, George, John



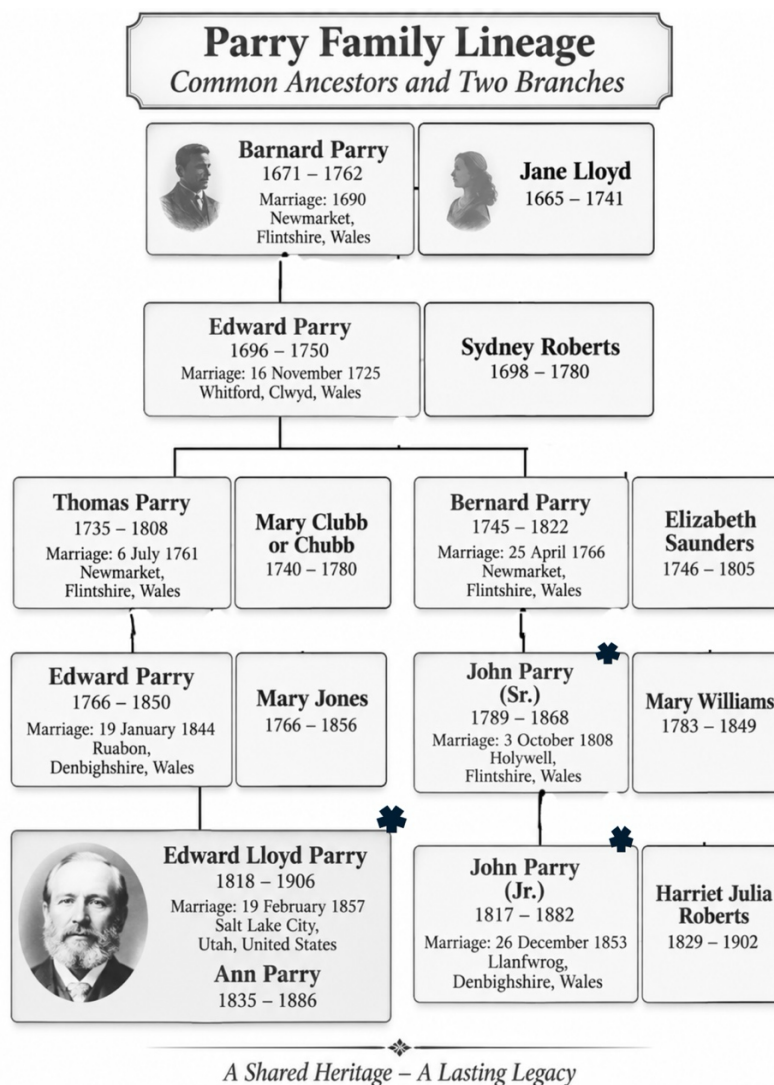
Figure 7 Building with rock was the dream. The rock masons of Utah made it happen.

Chapter 5: John Parry Senior and Son

Consider two men from Wales, John Parry Senior and John Parry Jr. For these men, coming from an extended family that had lived in Northern Wales for centuries, and with opportunities and employment that filled their economic needs in their homeland, why dream of America, of the Utah Territory, of living in a foreign land among strangers?

When we study factors which shape a man's destiny, cause and effect relationships can be observed. And for every man and woman, there are always surprises. Traveling life's road, reasonable people would predict that one would turn right, but unexpected traffic causes one to turn left. And, as Robert Frost would argue, people sometimes take the high road in preference to the low.

For the Parrys, they took “the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.” Basic, life-changing decisions were made, and consequently, unexpected consequences occurred in the lives of John and his son.



John Parry Sr.

The following biography was produced by grandson, George A. Parry.

John Parry Sr. was born February 10, 1789 at Newmarket, Flintshire, North Wales. He was an expert stone mason and worked on the churches, public buildings, castles and dwellings in his vicinity as most of such buildings at that time were constructed of stone. He was a poet and scholar and loved literature. He was a singer and musician of some fame in his native Wales, playing the harp, piano and flute. He and his daughter, Sarah, sang and preached their way into the hearts of the people in much of North Wales.

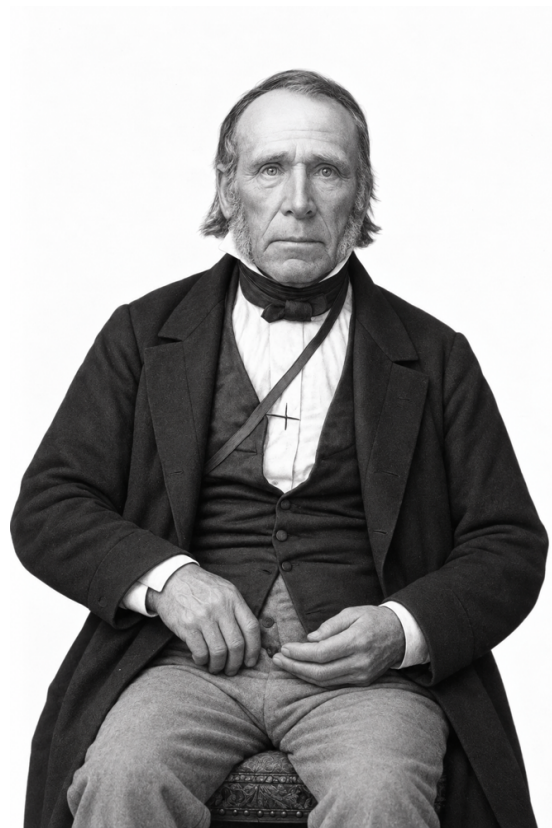


Figure 8 John Parry Senior

After coming to Utah in 1849 with the Geo. A. Smith Company, John Sr. was in great demand as a singer and became the first leader of the since famous Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir, holding this position for several years.

John Parry was an active churchman in his native land and became a lay-preacher in the Church of England. But being of an inquiring mind, ever seeking for the truth, he thought the Baptist Church was nearer the truth and forsook the faith of his fathers and became a Baptist preacher. Later, when the Campbellite or "Apostolic" church came along, with a church organization conforming more closely to the primitive church, he joined hands with them.

On the first hearing of Mormonism he was prejudiced against the restored church and warned his sons to beware of it. But after careful investigation, and weeks of prayerful deliberation and moral conflict, in view of his past religious experiences, he became convinced of the truth of Mormonism and was baptized, September 12, 1846.

With his wife, Mary Williams, and his sons, William and Caleb, he sailed from Liverpool, England, February 25, 1849 on the ship *Buena Vista* under the direction of Dan Jones, the Dan Jones who was in Carthage Jail with the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum. They arrived in New Orleans April 19th and went to Council Bluffs, Iowa. On the river boat his wife died of cholera and was buried at Council Bluffs.

The remaining members of the family came to the valley arriving in Salt Lake City October 28, 1849. In Salt Lake he settled on the west side at 5th West and South Temple in the sixteenth ward where he lived until January 13, 1868. He followed his trade of stone mason, for a few years until his health failed but was present at the laying of the corner stones of the Salt Lake Temple in 1853.

[The end of the George A. Parry's biography]

When in Wales, John was a preacher for a division of the Baptist Church. This division favored the teachings of Alexander Campbell. After the news came to Wales that claimed that Jesus Christ's original church was once again on the earth, John did not accept that, and he believed the slander spoken against the "gospel." Wild stories, fabricated from a whim, became fodder for a fight. People believed what the neighbors said.

Many good people like John were influenced by the tripe and tongue-wagging cliches which floated through the minds of many, often through the minds of the ignorant and bigoted. "Do-You-Know-I-Heard" stories about the Mormons passed from person to person. Consequently, John too believed what he heard, and he preached this "passed-on" information to his congregation.

John taught his family to avoid the Latter-day Saints. But eventually, John's opinions changed. In 1846, when John was 57 and his wife, Mary Williams, was 53, they were baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In 1849, three years later, when John was 60 and Mary was 56, they sailed from Liverpool to America with about 100 Welsh Mormons. This same year Mary died of cholera while she was on the riverboat *Highland Mary*. John continued on to Utah the same year with the George A. Smith / Dan Jones Company. The group consisted of "370 or 447" people and 120 wagons. They started 14 July 1849. In Iowa the group joined the Ezra T. Benson Company, and they traveled together. They arrived in Salt Lake 26-30 October 1849.

The Welsh people with whom John traveled loved to sing, and they did so frequently. In Salt Lake, the group (about 85) continued to get together to make music. Brigham Young knew about the singing Welsh saints so he asked them to provide music for the church's 1849 October Conference. In the next months, the group continued to practice at a location called the Bowery.

John conducted the choir until he was 65 (1854). Then Joseph Goddard took over as director. (Although it happened after John's time, the choir eventually practiced and performed in the Tabernacle, a structure which was started in 1863 and was finished in 1875.)

This was John Parry's family group that traveled to Utah:

Parry, John (60)
Parry, Edward (5)
Parry, Catherine Vaughn (22)
Parry, Caleb (25)
Parry, Anne (27)
Parry, Eliza A. (Unknown)

Please note: John Jr. did not emigrate to the U.S. at the same time as his father.

Two years after John Sr. arrived in Salt Lake City, in 1851 he married Patty Bartlett Sessions when he was 62. Patty gained fame in the Salt Lake Valley as a midwife. She also faithfully recorded in her diary from the years 1846-1888.¹ Patty's first husband, David Sessions, died in Salt Lake 11 Aug 1850. While married with first husband David Sessions, Patty gave birth to 11 children.

On 15 Sep 1852, John married Grace Ann Williams, a sister of his first wife. Because Grace was 51 at the time, the marriage seems one of kindness, giving Grace a home and companionship. Another marriage performed in 1854 was to a 29-year-old lady. In this case, John Sr. married his first cousin, Harriet Parry. She gave birth to five children over the next eight years.

The following important, well-written document was taken from *FamilySearch* from the Memories Gallery for John Parry Sr. Other than that, the source is unknown; however, the document was contributed to *FamilySearch* by W.W. Mills on 15 November 2020.

The Utah-Wales Connection

In the fall of 1840, Brigham Young and his missionary companion, Heber C. Kimball, paid a visit to Overton, Flintshire, North Wales, where they preached the message of Mormonism. These were the first two missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to set foot in Wales. Many who heard their preaching later converted to Mormonism, and within three months the Church had nearly one hundred new members in the Overton area.

The work eventually spread to all parts of Wales and was greatly enhanced by the missionary zeal of Captain Dan Jones, known as the "Welsh Prophet." During the 1840s and 1850s over ten thousand converts were baptized.

¹ Donna Toland Smart, Editor, *Mormon Midwife: the 1846-1888 Diaries of Patty Bartlett Sessions*, Logan, Utah, Utah State University Press, 1997.

Baptism usually meant leaving Wales, as the Church leaders called for the faithful to gather in Salt Lake City in the Rocky Mountains. The first group of Welsh Mormon converts crossed the Atlantic in 1849 on the ships *Buena Vista* and *Hartley*. The Welsh converts' fame for singing was as natural as breathing.

William Morgan, a participant in the Welsh Choir, recorded:

"As we sang the first part of 'When the Saints Shall Come,' we saw the English and the Norwegians and everyone, I would think, with their heads out of their wagons. With the second part, in an instant the wagons were empty and their inhabitants running toward us as if they were charmed.

"I heard good singing in Wales, but nothing like the strength and sweetness of the last song I heard sung by my brothers and sister, co-travelers, on the land of Honuhou. Some asked me where they had learned and who was their teacher?

"I said that the hills of Wales were the schoolhouse, and the Spirit of God was the teacher. Their response was, 'Well, indeed, it is wonderful; we never heard such good singing before.'"

When this group of approximately eighty-five Welsh Saints reached Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young asked John Parry, their leader, to organize a choir to sing at a conference of the Church in the Bowery on Temple Square. Brother Parry, a former Campbellite minister and a first-rate musician, responded with enthusiasm.

The choir he directed was the nucleus of what would become the world-famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir. As conductor of a group of singers who lived a thousand miles from the nearest music store, Brother Parry had to overcome numerous obstacles in preparing his vocalists for their performances. Printed music was simply not available; part of it was memorized.

Until they knew the words they "mumbled" the tune in their respective parts. Another complication was the Welsh language. They could not sing in English, and no one but the Welsh were to sing. Somehow, probably with a bit of magic in the conductor's baton, this obstacle was [overcome]. [The] beautiful music delighted the listeners.

At a time when cultural events were practically nonexistent for the finer things of life, the choir was received with great appreciation. The Welsh pioneers, however, would do far more than fill the air. Their contributions were remarkable. The temples in St. George, Manti, and Logan were from the Welsh.

As you read, dip in and out, and ponder the stories, you will discover information that you have already read. The repetition is good. It makes you even more familiar with and at home with the territory. Here is another important document contributed by W. W. Mills via *FamilySearch*.

W. W. Mills Contributes to FamilySearch More John Parry Sr Story

JOHN PARRY Born-- 10 February 1789, Newmarket, North Wales Came to Utah, 27 October 1849, George A. Smith Company. High Councilman – Chorister. JOHN PARRY was a pioneer musician of Utah and was the first leader of a cherished church choir.

He was a mason by trade and worked on the foundation of the Salt Lake Temple, on the wall enclosing the Temple Square, and on many of the early-day structures in Salt Lake City.

Previous to coming to this country he and his son, John Jr., took contracts and built some of the Liverpool docks in England. He was interested in horticulture and had a small orchard of choice fruit in the early days of Utah. The first bushel of apples sold for (\$12.00) to the Union Soldiers from California. He planted what is believed to be the first alfalfa raised in Utah from seed he brought from Liverpool.

He had a family of eight sons and four daughters. Bernurd, Elizabeth, Mary, Sarah, John, William and Caleb were children of his first wife and were born in Wales.

Joseph, Bernard, Llewellyn Lousia, Edwin, & Henry were children of his second wife Harriet Parry and were born in Salt Lake City. His posterity today numbers in the hundreds and all live in the Western United States.

From a clipping dated 1897 entitled, "Life in Utah Fifty Years Ago"

In the beginning of November 1841, John Parry Sr. and John Parry, Jr. were sent for because Bernard "was sick of a fever on the brain"...This incident is taken from the journal and diary of John Parry, Jr. (Bernard is John Jr.'s Brother).

They stayed with him at the Waterloo Hotel until he died on the 12 of November 1841 at the age of 32. (The Waterloo Hotel was evidently in Ruthin, Wale of Slwyd, Wales).

Two nights before he died he was very quiet in his bed. About midnight he called John Jr., his brother and John Sr., his Father, and told them that the Lord had showed him great and marvelous things that should come to pass in their lives, but that he should not see them as he was to die soon.

Said he, "The Lord is going to make a great work and a wonder upon the earth, and you shall be called to it. And shall preach the everlasting Gospel to thousands in Wales even yet." And he said, "And you John shall be called to it, and shall preach the Gospel

to tens of thousands, and shall baptize many, even in the Vale of Clwyd here. And my body shall not altogether rot before the Savior will stand upon the earth."

The night before he died he asked John Jr., to do one thing that he would ask. John said he would and Bernard said, "Well move all those things that's on the table one by one to the other room," which John did.

Then he said, "Bring them all back and put them on the table as they were."

This John did. Then Bernard said, "Well done my boy for doing it without asking questions. Now I wish you to remember that this is the way to serve the Lord, whatever he commands you to do, do it without asking questions."

Then he laid down and said he was very sick. He didn't speak anymore and in the morning he died. The above prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. John Parry Sr. with most of his family did hear the Gospel and did join the restored church of Jesus Christ. John Jr. remained in Wales until 1856 during which time he preached to many.

From the *Druid*, a Welch-American paper, entitled "Early Musicians."

John Parry [senior], of Newmarket, Wales was the son of Bernard Parry born February 10, 1789. He was educated at the village grammar school, his teacher being the Rector of the Parish. He was taught the trade of a stone mason. He was also a preacher with the Baptist Church for thirty years but in 1846 he joined the Latter-day-Saints Church and emigrated with them to Utah.

John Parry Sr. died in 1868. He composed many tunes which he brought with him to this Country. He came from a musical family and was quite skilled in both vocal and instrumental music.

From the life story written by his son Joseph Hyrum:

John Parry was a poet, a scholar, and loved literature. He was a singer and musician of some note in his native land, playing the harp, the piano, and the flute.

He came from a long line of churchmen and singers. His father, Bernard Parry, was a singing master. John came to Utah in 1849, with his sons William and Caleb, two years after the pioneer caravan, burying his wife on the way.

After his arrival, Mr. Parry Sr. did his part in the early social programs with music and songs. With a few compatriots he organized and founded the first choir in the City of Great Salt Lake, as it was then called, before there was a Tabernacle there. The worshipping assemblies at that period were held in an open bowery, like when ancient Israel dwelt in booths during the annual seven-day feast of the Tabernacle. This bowery was situated on Temple Square, near where the great Tabernacle now stands.

Hymn books and other music books were very scarce in the choir's early history, but Mr. Parry was old fashioned in his way, insisting that his singers memorize the words and music, to sing them most effectively.

Until they memorized the words the singers who had no books "mumbled" the tune in their parts. He was in great demand as a singer and often sang with his daughter Sarah. After coming to Utah in 1849, he became the first Leader of the now famous Tabernacle Choir. Isaac Nash of Malad, Idaho, became his assistant.

Great Grandmother Harriet tells this story:

On the ship the 249 Welch people would band together and sing to the delight of their fellow passengers. When they reached Salt Lake, they naturally sat together in the old Bowery. Their voices so "strong and gruff" about took over the singing. President Young then asked Brother Parry if he and his chorus would furnish the music next Sunday. After listening to them the following Sunday, President Young remarked, "I have heard of the Angels singing but now I know what it is like."

When I (Joseph Hyrum) was on my second mission to Great Britain, I traveled and preached through Careways and Denbigh and had the privilege of preaching on the same spot, in the open air on the village common where my Father had preached thirty years ago.

One man who knew him and had heard him related the following incident:

When your Father testified to the restoration of the Gospel and of the different gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit, some malicious person sent out to him a glass of poisoned water, which of course he did not drink, but went on preaching with the glass in his hand.

John Parry sailed with his wife Mary, and his sons William and Caleb from Liverpool, February 25, 1849, on the ship *Buena Vista*, with a Company of (249) Saints under the direction of Captain Dan Jones. They arrived in New Orleans on April 19, whence they by steamboat went up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers to St. Louis and Council Bluffs.

The remaining members of the family came to Salt Lake in the George A. Smith's Company, arriving October 28, 1849 over some eight months on the way. Joseph Hyrum continues by saying, "My half-sister, Mary, and her husband John Williams came some years later and made their home in Millcreek, Utah. My half-brothers, William and Caleb, both fine singers, settled in Ogden and Marriotts (suburb of Ogden). They walked down to Salt Lake frequently to visit Father.

One of my earliest and happiest memories was hearing the singing of the three together. President Young had set aside the section of the City on the hill, later called

the avenues for the Welch people, but they preferred the West side of town as they were tired of the hills as they had them in Wales.

Great Grandfather [John Parry Sr.] located in the new Sixteenth Ward on the south east quarter of the 5th West and South Temple block. There he built a modest home of adobe. He followed his trade for years, but his heart was in music and the arts.

No one in pioneer days could be spared to devote their time entirely to finer arts. In the early fifties he married a widow Mrs. Patty Sessions. She was about his age and perhaps for that reason was called Grandma Sessions by the children of my great grandmother, Harriet.

President Young appointed John Parry Sr. to look after the Welch emigrants upon their arrival in the valley. On October 10, 1853, in the Joseph W. Young Ox Team Company [arrived] there came a young woman, thirty one years old, without her family. Her name was Harriet Parry. Her straight forwardness and dignity denoted strength and capability.

She had considerable nursing experience, and he placed her in a family then residing in Provo. Great Grandfather became interested in her and married her April 2, 1854, in the old Council House and in due time she became my Great Grandmother.

Harriet Parry was born in St. Asaph, Flintshire, Wales, on October 18, 1822. On his mission, Joseph visited the old Parry home. It was a fine substantial rock home. The William Parry family were upper middle class and thrifty. They were no relation to the John Parry family.

At the time Great Grandmother joined the church, her parents were dead and her brother was the head of the house. She lived with him together, with three sisters. He was very angry when she was baptized into the Mormon Church and would not allow her to live at home any longer. He also reported to her employers, where she had obtained work, that she was a member of the hated "Mormon Sect", hoping to force her to abandon her new religion.

Finally, she secured work in a hospital for the mentally ill and kept that position until she could emigrate to Utah or Zion. Joseph Hyrum found the old home almost abandoned. It seems that at one time the family wished to sell the