

Edmund Weeks Davis

Edmund Weeks Davis was born 12 Dec. 1823 in Breeds or (Brede) Sussex, England to Thomas L and Mary Weeks Davis. We do not have any information about his life until he was 32 years of age. In 1856 he and his brother Elias and Elias' wife, Ann Jones Davis came to America. They sailed from a Port in Liverpool, England on May 25, 1856. The ship was named the Horizon. It was built in 18~~58~~⁵⁴ at Ellsworth, Maine it weighed 1,775 tons and was 220 ft. x 42 ft. x 21 ft. The vessel was commanded by Captain William Reed from Chelsea, Massachusetts he was a mariner of considerable experience and part owner. Elder Edward Martin presided over 856 mormon emigrants. He was assisted by Elder Jesse Haven and George P. Waugh. During the crossing, Patience Loader, a young girl, recorded that for some days a large shark followed the ship causing her anxiety (she may have thought it was an omen).

After 26 days the Horizon arrived in Boston on June 26, 1856. The emigrants then traveled by rail to Iowa City. Since most of the saints were poor, 635 having been financed by the Perpetual Emigrating fund, they formed a handcart company that nearly perished on the winter trek to Utah. In this tragic episode many died before help from Salt lake city reached them.

Elias Davis was 44 years old. His wife, Ann was 47 years old. In a film it says that Edmund Weeks Davis was in the care of Elias Davis, so we know this was his brother. We recently discovered that Elias Davis died Septemeber 21, 1856 on the Platte river 58 miles past Fort Kearney. He died of diarrhea. The following was

recorded about him in "Emigrating Journals of The Willie and Martin Handcart Companies and the Hunt and Hodgett Wagon Trains" by Lynne Slater Turner, on page 177: "Brother Elias Davis departed this life at 3:45 pm, age 44 years, leaving a wife. He was highly respected by those who knew him. He was buried the same evening by the roadside."

On the morning of September 23, 1856 it was cold and frosty, and the company resumed the journey at 6:00 am. An accident occurred to Sister Ann Davis, whose husband died 2 days before. After crossing Skunk Creek, she was in the act of getting out of the wagon when her clothes caught on the tongue and she fell. The wheels passed over her thigh and shoulders, but luckily the road was soft sand and the injuries were not so serious that she was able to walk a few hours afterwards. (Emigrating Journals, by Slater, pg 177-178) Ann Davis, age 47 died at Devil's Gate, Wyoming on November 7, 1856 at 4 pm of diarrhea. She passed away shortly after help arrived from the Salt Lake Valley.

Edmund Weeks Davis was with the Martin handcart company. (The question arises as to why Edmund Davis was with the Martin Company and Elias Davis was with the Hunt Wagon train.) By the time they got to Devil's Gate there were twelve hundred people assembled there. Snow storms and severely cold weather continued to harrow the beleaguered saints. Supplies were inadequate to provide so many people for long. Men and cattle continued to die. They had to find shelter and wood to burn so they loaded the sick and dying people in wagons and moved along the Sweetwater and crossed to a depression later known as Martin's Cove about 2-1/2 miles from

Devil's Gate.

There was so much suffering and dying. There were 56 people who died at Martin's Cove. A very good book that gives a good account of the Martin, Willie handcart companies, and the Hunt, Hodgett wagon trains is "Handcarts to Zion 1856 - 1860" by LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen.

Edmund arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in November, 1856. Then he journeyed to Panguitch, in Garfield county, Utah. There he married Jemina Whitechurch on August 17, 1867. Jemina was born September 7, 1829 in Britton, Gloustershire, England to Henry Whitechurch and Nancy Jeffriess (Jeffries). She died May 5, 1891 in Escalante, Garfield, Utah. Edmund and Jemina did not have any children born to them.

Edmund ^{also} ~~then~~ married Antoinette Justet. She was born February 18, 1840 in Pinarsha, Piedmont, Italy. Her parents were Daniel Justet and Jane (Jeanne) Roslan.

Edmund and Antoinette had 6 children born to them:

Mary Serena 17 Aug 1871

Elias Henry 15 Apr 1873

Bertha Ann 1 Jul 1875

William Edmund 4 Jun 1877

John Eli 14 Jan 1881

Emma Jane 23 Dec 1882

The Davis family moved to Escalante in December 187⁶. Edmund Davis must have suffered very much to journey to Utah. There is no written history about his life. He probably didn't want to talk about the tragedy of that winter of 1856. Antoinette died July 30,

1923. Edmund preceded her in death on the 7th of May, 1906 at the age of 83. He is buried in Escalante, Utah.

compiled by
Kathleen Davis Rowley
August 18, 1999



Edmund Weeks DAVIS Antionette JUSTET (ANTIONET



Mary Serena DAVIS



Elias Henry DAVIS



Bertha Ann DAVIS



William Edmund DAVIS



John Eli DAVIS



Emma Jane DAVIS

Dixie

**A STORY OF
EDMUND
WEEKS
DAVIS
1823-1906**

By James L. Jensen
June, 2004

A
PART FACT AND PART FICTION
HISTORY OF
EDMUND WEEKS DAVIS

1823-1906

Written by James L. Jensen

June of 2004

To the readers of this account, please be aware of the following:

Great Grandfather Edmund Weeks Davis never left a written account of his life, nor did he talk much about it that has been recorded. Very few bits and pieces have been remembered and passed on to his posterity. Since he lived what he may have thought to be a very normal life and that he had done no extra ordinary things, there is evidence that he did live a very interesting and inspiring life. The hardships he had to bear during his life may have been too hard for him to talk about. We do know this; he was a strong faithful member of the Church. He obeyed the counsel given by the Brethren. His testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the "Building of Zion" was unshakable.

With this in mind, I have taken the liberty to tell a story that I believe he may have lived. Most of the account is accurate according to records and journals written by other people who were with him at different times and places. Some is speculation as to what he was doing and what he was thinking. Hopefully someone else can take this story and fill in a lot of the blanks. I am sure that there is much more to tell than is contained herein.

I have used material from books and articles such as: "Handcarts to Zion" by Hafen & Hafen, "Remember" Compiled and Written by the Riverton Wyoming Stake, "I Walked To Zion" by Susan Arrington Madsen, "Handcarts West" by James Bond, the Video "Trail of Hope" and many more. Much has been taken from web sites that contain histories and information about people and places that were related to the time and activities going on during Edmund's life. In many cases I have used the exact wording of those who wrote the accounts. I have not used foot notes or references, only as stated above. I give thanks to those who did keep an account of their journey to "Zion".

Factual information has been gleaned from the early Branch and Ward Records of St. Thomas, Panguitch and Escalante and other early records on file, along with information researched by cousins Sharlene Fox Rowley, Kathleen Davis Rowley and Dave Fox.

I take full responsibility for errors and omissions.

James L. Jensen

A Story of Fact and Fiction About

EDMUND WEEKS DAVIS

1823 -1906

By James L. Jensen

My name is Edmund Weeks Davis. I was born December 12, 1823 in Breeds Sussex, England to Thomas L and Mary Weeks Davis. As soon as I was old enough, I went to work, helping farmers and other people living in the Breeds area. We were a poor family and needed as much earning power within the family as possible. My brother, Elias, who was eleven years older than me, was a good worker so the people in our area were willing to hire me on when they had work. When I was not studying or needed at home I would hire out for a very small wage. We were poor people as to worldly things just like the majority of those living around us.

I grew up in a kind and loving family. My parents were humble, God fearing people. They were well respected in our community for their sincerity and honesty. They were always looking for ways to help our neighbors.

Bible study was a regular part of our lives. It is interesting that they named their first son Elias. In the Bible, Elias is referred to as a person who prepares the way. My brother Elias played that kind of a role for me. He was my idol. I wanted to become just like him. He was outgoing and likable. I was a shy fellow who didn't have much to say to people and didn't associate much with girls.

Sometime in the late 1840s and early 1850s, Mormon Missionaries came to our town and began to hold street meetings. They told of a man named Joseph Smith. They claimed that he was a modern day prophet of the Lord who had been called to restore the Church of Jesus Christ like it was when Jesus was here on the earth. They also had a book they said had been translated from a set of gold plates by this Joseph Smith. They said that it contained a history of an ancient people who had inhabited the American Continent at an earlier time and that the book contained the fullness of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. They told these things with such sincerity and boldness that it touched me deeply. When I attended the church in which our family belonged, I had never felt such a

strong sprit as I did when the Elders, as they were called, bore witness of the things they told us.

My brother Elias and his wife of twenty five years, Ann Jones Davis, had been investigating the Mormon Church and were baptized on the 23rd of June 1852. After reading the Book of Mormon and praying as the Elders had taught me, I had a burning feeling within me that what I was reading was true. If the book was true then Joseph Smith must truly be a Prophet. I was baptized in a cold stream on the 11th of November 1853. Although it was a cold day, I was warm within my heart. I had found the thing I had felt missing in my life. I was 29 years of age at the time so was mature enough to know my mind and heart. My testimony grew strong and I was willing to follow the counsel of the Elders as they received it from Church leaders in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Joseph Smith, prophet and founder of the Church, had been killed in a town called Carthage by an angry mob. Brigham Young was called by the Lord to be the next prophet and president of the Church. Members of the Church had been driven from place to place until they were instructed by President Young to move to the "Tops of the Mountains" in the western part of America where they could worship as they pleased without being persecuted and driven by mobs. There they were to build a modern day "Zion". The place was located in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake.

We were encouraged by the Elders to sail to America and make a trek overland to the Valley and help build this "Zion". In 1847, President or Brother Brigham, as he was lovingly called, led the first group of Saints to the Valley where they could practice their religion without persecution and hatred by their non member neighbors. In England, we were not without ridicule and being made fun of for our "strange" beliefs and practices. In some cases those who joined the Church were disowned by their families. I was grateful that our family had looked upon the Church with favor. My parents were in their sixties at this time. Their health was failing somewhat because of the hard life they had lived bringing up our family. They would be looked after by our siblings and their families and gave Elias, Ann and myself their blessings to follow our hearts.

Brother Brigham sent out a decree for the Saints in England and the Scandinavian countries to leave their homelands and "Gather to Zion in the Tops of the Mountains".

He said "Let all things be done in order, and let all the Saints, who can, gather up for Zion, and come while the way is open before them: let the poor also come, whether they receive aid or not from the Fund (Perpetual Emigrating Fund); let them come on foot, with handcars or wheel barrows; let them gird up their loins and walk through, and nothing shall hinder or stay them." When we heard this we were excited and anxious to follow his call and sail to America. This was no easy task because we had little money to travel from Sussex County, where we were living, to Liverpool and book passage on a ship from England to America. Then when we arrived in America we would need enough money to outfit ourselves with wagons, teams and provisions to make the trek overland to the Valley.

Elias and Ann had moved to Hastings in 1852 where Elias got a job on the railroad. This was a better paying job than working in agriculture as he had been doing. They were able to save enough money to make the journey. In 1854 I moved to Beckley where I could get a better job. I was still helping my family so was not able to save as much as I needed. The plan was developed by Brother Brigham, where Saints too poor to come up with the needed finances, could borrow from the "Perpetual Immigration Fund". This meant that I could leave right away. I was able to sign a contract with the Fund organization to the effect that I would pay back to the Fund the amount borrowed when I reached the Valley and got a job. I could make the journey with Elias and Ann. I was in heaven!

By the spring of 1856 we were ready to go. When we got to Liverpool we found to our dismay that there were hundreds of Saints waiting there to book passage. The Elders were frantically trying to find more ships to take us. Time passed before they were able to book the ships, board the last of us and send us on our way. One group of 764 Saints sailed on the "Thorton", leaving Liverpool on May 3rd, 1856. On May 25th, twenty one days later 856 Saints set sail on the "Horizon". Elias, Ann and I were on board. There were 1620 Saints in all. The Elders were worried because we were leaving so late in the season that it would make it very difficult if not impossible to complete the journey to the Valley before winter set in. However, we as a group did not want to stay in Liverpool over the winter and wait for an early voyage the next year. It would have taken too much of the meager money we had to winter over in Liverpool where there

were very few jobs to be had. Anyway, we were going to Zion and God would take care of us! Little did we know what lay ahead of us.

On ship, we were organized by the Elders into groups and were given chores to do. We were to keep the ship tidy and to be cheerful and courteous to the ship's crew. They were amazed at how happy and friendly we were to them and each other. We held regular meetings, prayed, sang songs and listened to the Elders as they taught us more about the Gospel and what it would be like when we reached the Valley. We had a mixture of infants, young children, teenagers, young and old married couples and a goodly number of elderly people. The majority of us were poor but humble Saints. We came from England, Scotland, Denmark, and other Scandinavian countries. At least five different languages were spoken. On the way we ate what they called sea biscuits and salt pork and salt beef, also brown sugar and vinegar along with a few other foods.

I have to admit that I enjoyed the voyage very much. The ocean could be so beautiful and peaceful. However, there were times when the wind and the waves became ferocious and gave me such a thrill as the ship would dip down in a valley of water and then be tossed to the peak, pausing a moment before dipping down again. The sailors joked and laughed with us as we took in the new experiences. Many became sea sick and stayed that way for most of the voyage.

The "Thorton" arrived in New York Harbor on June 14th. It had taken them 42 days to make the voyage. We arrived in the harbor on June 29th. It had taken us 35 days to make the journey.

Here at "Castle Gardens" a doctor came aboard ship and certified that we were all in good health. We were then taken to the railway station where we boarded box cars on the Rock Island Railroad for our journey to Iowa City. Very few if any had money enough to travel in the coach cars where it was much more comfortable. With smoke and sparks flying from the steam engine we made our way to Albany, Buffalo, Chicago and then to Iowa City. We were ferried across the mighty Mississippi River. It had taken 10 days to make the journey from New York Harbor to Iowa City. We were most grateful to be finished with this part of our journey. The train ride had taxed most of us to our limits. We were weary and tired. However, our spirits were high. We were on our way to Zion!

When we reached Iowa City we found that the Church Agents in charge of making the wagons and handcarts that we would need had shut down the operation for the season. They had already outfitted three handcart companies and had sent them on their way to the Valley. These companies had either reached or were close to the Valley by this time. They had made remarkable time and were in good shape. The Agents were unaware that any more Saints were coming this season.

Time was so valuable by now that we all had to pitch in and help with the outfitting. The men worked on the carts and wagons while the women made tents. Agents were frantically locating and purchasing oxen, milk cows, beef cattle, flour and other goods that we would need to begin the journey. There were four groups to be outfitted, two handcart companies and two wagon trains.

The first handcart company led by James Grey Willie consisted of 500 Saints, 120 handcarts, five wagons, 24 oxen and 45 cows and beef cattle. Our handcart company led by Edward Martin consisted of 576 Saints, 146 handcarts, 7 Wagons, 30 oxen and 50 cows and beef cattle. The wagons were drawn by teams of oxen. They were used to haul the flour, cooking gear and other food items along with those Saints unable to walk. We did have one team of mules to go along with the oxen.

W.B. Hodgett was captain of the first wagon train. There were 185 Saints in this group with 33 wagons and a combination of 187 oxen, cows and beef cattle. The second wagon train, led by John A Hunt, consisted of 200 Saints, 50 wagons and 297 oxen, cows and beef cattle. Elias and Ann were in the Hunt Company. Ann's health was somewhat fragile so they had scrimped and saved from the time they were baptized in 1852 to save enough money so they could pay their own way. As a result they were able to bring with them from England some of their furniture and belongings planning to take them to the Valley. While I had few belongings and very little money, my ship passage, travel to Iowa City and the cost of outfitting for traveling to the Valley was paid for out of the Perpetual Immigration Fund, which I would repay. If we were to gather to Zion, most of us had to handle it this way.

In all, there were 266 handcarts to be made, 95 wagons and a combination of 633 oxen, cows and beef cattle to be rounded up and purchased. Dozens of tents also had to

be made for the trek. Of the 1,620 Saints that sailed from Liverpool, 1,461 arrived in Iowa City ready to move on to the Valley.

The handcarts were made of a box nine inches deep, three feet wide and four feet long. This box was affixed to an axel with two wheels, four feet high. Two long boards extended from the back of the cart out the front with a crosspiece attached for pulling. They were very light and run very easily. The cost was approximately one third the price of a regular wagon without the oxen to pull it. This made it possible for whole families to immigrate for much less money.

Most of the lumber that could be acquired to build the handcarts was green. Everyone did their best to make them as tight as possible. We would soon find out the consequences of using uncured lumber especially for the wheels. It took our company, the Martin, about 19 days to construct the handcarts and make the tents. We left Iowa City on July 28th. The Willie Company left thirteen days before us.

We were organized into groups of 100 Saints with sub captains. One group was made up principally of Scottish Saints, another group was made up of Scandinavians and the other three were mostly English. Each hundred Saints were assigned five round tents, twenty persons to each tent, twenty handcarts, five persons to each cart and one Chicago Wagon, drawn by three yoke of oxen to haul provisions and tents. The strength of the Company was equalized as much as possible by distributing the young men among the different families to help them. I was assigned to a cart with an English family by the name of Hartley. They were an older couple with a son Ben, who was about sixteen years old and a Twenty year old petite daughter named Mary. Each of us was limited to seventeen pounds of clothing, bedding and personal items. This equaled eighty five pounds per cart. To this was added our cooking utensils. The total load amounted to about one hundred pounds. The carts were not designed to haul much more even if we could pull the extra weight. Everything else had to be worn or carried. Several carts were drawn by young girls. In fact, there were two tents assigned to the young women and older females that had no male companions.

Since most of the men and some of the women would have to take a turn at helping drive the ox wagons or herding the cattle day and night, they attempted to train us

somewhat in how to handle the oxen, milk cows and beef cattle. The most difficult job was rounding up the oxen, getting them into their yokes and hitched to the seven wagons assigned to our company. Many of the Oxen were young and not broken as yet to pull the wagons. To aggravate the situation, none of us really knew what we were doing since we had never been around oxen before. I'm sure the oxen were equally confused with men shouting directions to them in four or five different languages.

We left Iowa City on July 28. You should have seen the circus as we hitched up the oxen to the wagons and gathered, without the help of one horse, the other animals that were to be herded behind the handcarts. They didn't seem to do what we wanted them to do. However, after much coaxing and perseverance we were on our way.

One of the first things we noticed was the great clouds of dust created by the handcarts and wagons along with the trailing cattle. It was hot and the pulling and pushing of the carts caused us to sweat a great deal. As the dust billowed around us we became caked with dirt. It was hard to tell who was who. The women tied their bonnets tightly around their heads and covered their necks and faces as best they could. The men put bandanas over their faces and buttoned up their shirt collars to help keep the dirt out. Breathing was hard. From time to time a little breeze would come up and blow the dust away from the strung out caravan. Another problem was where to go to relive your self with so many people moving along the trail and not many trees or bushes to hide behind. You can imagine how good it felt to stop and camp for the night. The men had to take turns making sure that the oxen and cattle got to the river for water and then keep them together in a herd throughout the night as they grazed and bedded down. This job was extremely important because the animals would stray and it would take hours in the morning to find them.

We were all out of shape after being on the ship and train so long. We hadn't had much in the way of exercise. We found ourselves tired and sore all over. Gospel songs were sung around the camp fires and after our prayers we all felt buoyed up as we went to sleep. The next day we traveled more miles than the first and fell into our beds exhausted but happy. By the fourth day we found that we were getting into pretty good shape and were able to move along more easily. However, at times our cart wheels would sink deeply into the never ending sand. We had to cross ravines and pull and push our carts

up fairly steep hills. The worst was when we had to travel through the thick mud caused by frequent rains. At least we didn't have the dust to contend with. We were continually crossing rivers and small streams. This would give us a chance to wash ourselves along with the clothes we were wearing and cool off. One day the temperature reached near 120 degrees. When we camped, weather permitting, we would sing and dance and praise the Lord for our blessings. We were on our way to Zion!

After traveling some 277 miles we reached Florence, Nebraska on August 22nd. We had to camp there for a few days to repair broken down carts. The green wood had shrunk and along with the sand getting onto the axels, the carts were falling apart. Axels were wearing out and breaking. It was hard to find wood to make new ones. We bent and molded around the axels whatever metal we could find, such as cooking tins, plates or anything else so they wouldn't wear away so fast. We used our bacon to grease the axels as long as we had some. Wheel rims were wrapped with wet cowhide to give them more strength. As the leather dried, it tightened things up and became a protective covering that would outlast the raw wood.

In spite of our challenges we were still pretty healthy and cheerful. We were receiving one pound of flour and one half pound of meat per day. We had some molasses, sugar, salt and some private supplies to make us as comfortable as possible. We had our round tents that would sleep twenty persons each and our supply wagons to carry our rations. Even with the 17 pounds of personal belongings per person on our carts, we could move along quite well.

Each day blended into the next. By Friday, October 3, it was still hot and dusty. We would usually leave camp by seven in the morning. Today we met a Major Hunter of the U.S. Dragoons going from Fort Kearney to Fort Laramie. They had about twelve mule teams. We camped about nine miles west of Chimney Rock. We made about seventeen miles that day.

The next day we left at the same time, traveling through bluffs. We had to cross a deep ravine that taxed us pretty well. Part of the road was good but for the most part it was sandy. We were able to get about fifteen miles that day. The Hodget Wagon Company camped a few miles ahead of us. The next night we camped in a dry river bed full of willows. We made another twenty miles.

On Wednesday, Oct 8, we traveled about twelve miles to Fort Laramie. The last five miles of the road was very rough. On the way we met a finely dressed Indian Chief riding a beautiful American horse. We also met two dragoons on horseback. They were pleased to see us and gave the children some sweetmeats which delighted them. The wagon company was camped here. We were able to get some salaratus and a little salt from them.

The next day we visited the fort and were able to purchase some biscuits, rice and a few other things. Most of us had very little money so could not purchase much. They didn't have any flour or cattle for sale. As we left the fort the next morning, we could see Fort Laramie Peak off in the distance. It gave us some idea as to what the Rocky Mountains would be like.

Up till now we had been on full rations. Each person was allotted one pound of flour per day along with meat and other minor provisions. As we pressed on, the road became steeper and required more energy to pull and push the carts. It was getting noticeably cooler the further we traveled toward the mountains. The extra energy it took to travel, along with the cooler weather made us hungrier. It seemed that we could never satisfy our hunger. I would go to bed hungry, wake up in the night hungry and start the next day's trek hungry. I could feel myself loosing some of my usual strength. This was happening to everyone in the company, especially those who were doing the hardest work. I was so grateful to be with the Hartley family. Young Benjamin was strong and a hard worker. Brother and Sister Hartley had a difficult time just walking and keeping up with the handcart. Their daughter, Mary, was willing but not strong enough to help pull or push the cart on a continual basis. She was always there to help up the steepest hills or help guide us through rough ravines. Most of her strength was used when we camped at night. As Ben and me were helping with the animals and setting up the tent, Mary would hurry and gather sagebrush, buffalo chips or wood if available, to build a fire. With the help of her mother the evening meal was prepared. She was such a delight to be around because she was cheerful and had an unshakeable testimony. She had a beautiful singing voice and knew many songs, especially our favorites. She was always singing them to us and encouraged us to sing along with her as we traveled.

A serious problem we encountered along the way was the scattering of our oxen and cattle during severe lightning storms. Some could not be found. We suspected that Indians may have driven some away from time to time and used them for food. We were down to using some milk cows to help pull the wagons. This did not work out too well. As a result the handcarts had to carry more.

We understood that supplies from the Valley would be waiting for us near Fort Laramie. Since the supplies had not arrived as yet, it became advisable to curtail the rations in order for them to hold out longer. We went from one pound of flour per day to three quarters of a pound. We were confident that this would last us until we met the supply trains.

As we traveled on through the Black Hills, it became necessary to cut the rations to one half pound of flour per day. Feed for the animals became scarcer. The weaker ones began to falter.

The road became steeper and rougher as we traveled on. Handcarts began breaking down at a greater rate. We helped each other as best we could and kept moving. We had to cross the Platte River along with some smaller ones many times. This took hours of valuable time to get all our people and handcarts over. We were wet, cold and exhausted most of the time. To our dismay, we had to cut our rations to one quarter pound of flour per day. Food for us and our animals became critical.

On October 14th, in spite of our condition, we traveled twenty miles. The Hodget Wagon Company was just ahead of us all day. I did not feel a bit well, but made it through the day and dropped off to sleep as soon as we set up camp.

On the 17th, because of our growing weakness, it became necessary to reduce our personal belongings from seventeen pounds per person to ten. Children under eight were reduced to five pounds. This made our carts lighter and easier to move along the trail. We discarded baggage including bedding, clothing and cooking utensils. The bedding and clothing were burned. This would prove fatal for many people later in our journey. We still had 400 miles of winter to go.

Saturday the 18th was cool but a fine day. We made 17 miles. The next morning we started out at 7:30. The Hunt Wagon Company passed us and felt very sorry for us because we were so haggard. We reached a place where we had to cross the Platt River

once again. There was a toll bridge where we could have crossed but it cost more than we could afford so we had to pull our carts across at the best place we could find. This was the last time we would cross the Platt. We were at Red Buttes. The day was cold and bitter. Winter came on all at once. The river was very wide with strong currents. It was deep enough that the water came up to the wagon and cart beds. The bottom was filled with cobble stones that were very slick. I helped the other men carry many of the women and children over the river in our arms or on our backs. Most of the women tied up their skirts and waded through like the heroines they were as they had done all along the trail.

We had a very difficult time crossing. The water was up to the arm pits of the shorter people. Some drifted downstream and had to be pulled out by others. The water was bitter cold. We barely got everyone over the river when the snow, hail and sleet began to fall accompanied by a piercing North Wind. We were drenched with water that soon froze to our shoes and clothing. When we finally got to a place where we could camp, there was no firewood to be found. We couldn't drive tent pegs into the frozen ground. Our tents were wet. We finally lay down on the cold frozen ground and covered ourselves with the wet tents and spent the night. It was the most miserable night yet encountered. Twelve to fourteen of our company died that terrible night. We desperately needed the blankets and changes of clothing that we had discarded further back on the trail.

The Hodget Wagon Company camped with us and the Hunt Company camped on the other side of the river. I was comforted in knowing that Elias and Ann were so close to us. Little did I know at the time that my brother had died about 58 miles past Fort Kearney many miles back on the trail. The account as it was recorded by the Hunt Company recorder was as follows: "Sunday September 21st. The cattle again were driven into the corral to be yoked up, but on account of a brother who was dying, the camp was detained all day. A buffalo was shot in the afternoon and the meat distributed. Brother Elias Davis from England departed this life at 3:45 P.M. age 44 years, leaving a wife; he was highly respected by those who knew him. The disease which laid him low was diarrhea. He was buried the same evening by the roadside." Two days after that, Ann was injured in a wagon accident. She was in the process of getting out of the wagon

when her skirt caught on the tongue and the wheels of the wagon ran over her thigh and shoulder. Luckily it happened to be fairly soft sand so she was able to recover and a few hours later, was able to walk. I have often wondered how she managed the oxen and wagon without Elias being there to help. I'm sure she was devastated and cried herself to sleep many a night. I am also confident that she was comforted by the Spirit and the knowledge that they would be together when she would pass from this earthly life.

The next morning we found that a man named Stone had paid the fare and crossed the toll bridge some five miles upstream and was trying to reach us but never made it. Parts of his body were found ravaged by the wolves.

The bugle sounded early. We had to travel seven miles to camp where we could find firewood. Many were sick, more than could ride in the wagons. When we arrived at the camp site we had to go about a mile to find wood. Most of it was green cedars so it was hard to find dry wood that would burn because most of it was under the snow. Buffalo chips that we had found in abundance along the trail were no longer available. They were frozen and under several inches of snow.

We cooked whatever meat we could find from our dead and dying cattle. It didn't taste too good because we had no salt nor seasoning to boil it in, but were thankful for anything to eat at this point.

By Tuesday October 21st, snow in camp was about eight inches deep. The next day we moved on and camped near the Platte where the road left for the Sweetwater. It snowed the next three days. The teams and people were so far given out that it seemed advisable not to move for a few days. We hoped that the snow would stop and that the weather would warm. This did not happen.

With our rations cut to four ounces of flour per day along with a small portion of meat from our remaining cattle, we were in dire need of help from some other source than our own. The cattle were so lean that there was little meat on their bones. We cooked it every way possible to make it taste good. It gave many of us diarrhea which caused much distress.

In spite of our condition our spirits were still quite high. We knew that God would help us to the Valley. If not, death did not seem so bad. We sang songs of Zion to buoy up our spirits. Nineteen died that night. All were buried in the snow because the

ground was so frozen. Wolves were all around waiting for us to move on so they could ravage the bodies of our dead along with the cattle that had perished.

The wolves were ever present, howling and fighting over scraps of whatever food they could find. Day and night they followed us on every side. Their howls, blending in with the wind made cold chills run up and down our spines. They were a constant companion just like our hunger.

We prayed with great faith for deliverance from our dire situation. We had done everything physically possible to continue our journey, but without help we could not continue on. The angels of heaven had been with us. They had helped us pull our carts over steep places. They had been there to help us cross the rivers and streams and the Spirit had been with us to strengthen us when we were down. Our strong testimonies of the Plan of Salvation helped us through the most trying times. The loss of our fellow Saints was almost impossible to bear. However, we had a strong confirmation that they had already reached the final "Zion" they were seeking. We did not fear death but knew we still had a mission to accomplish here on earth before our Father called us home. We waited here for about six or seven days. Five or six people died each day.

October 28th was the day we had been praying so earnestly for. Joseph A. Young, Daniel W. Jones and Abel Garr rode into camp. They were the lead men from the rescue party from the Valley. They were met with cheers and tears along with needed laughter. There were hugs and even kisses that somewhat embarrassed them, but, they were our heroes, our saviors, our sincere friends. They had left the safety of the Valley to venture out to save our lives.

They informed us that ten wagons loaded with provisions and clothing were waiting for us at Devils Gate. We were overjoyed. These three rugged men were brought to tears after seeing how starved, frozen and weak we were. From the looks of us they thought we should be dead. One of them, with tears streaming down his face, asked how many had died. No one really knew.

Brother Young called for the bugler to call everyone out of their tents. He then told Captain Martin to give each of us a full pound of flour, if there was any left, and to butcher enough cattle to give each of us one pound of meat. He said that there was plenty of provisions and clothing coming to us on the road, but we would have to travel about

twenty five miles in order to meet them. He said that God would bless us and give us strength. He indicated that they had made a trail for us to follow.

These three brethren had to go further to reach the Hunt Wagon Company. They were fearful that their animals were giving out and that their provisions were getting very low also. They had been transporting as many of the handcart Saints as possible in their wagons. I was worried for them because I hadn't heard from Elias and Ann since we left Iowa City. At this time both wagon companies were several miles behind us.

After the brethren left, we felt very encouraged. We got out the flour and meat and had a good meal. We thanked the Lord and the brethren for the help. We went to bed and slept better than we had for some time.

The next morning, Wednesday, October 29th, we got up early and headed straight for the Sweetwater. Later on in the day, Joseph Young and his companions overtook us and camped with us that evening about 30 miles east of Devil's Gate. The additional food had helped but people were still dying along the way. Some of the men just gave out from pulling the carts and not having adequate food for so long. The freezing weather along with the ever present wind had taken its' toll. Wives and children were left to do for themselves. We were all so spent that it was difficult for us to move on with our own carts. However, help was given where possible. We camped that night and started again the next morning. There was wind again. It was a hard difficult day.

Friday morning the wind was blowing unmerciful again. By afternoon it was quite pleasant. We had traveled about five miles when we met Elder C.H. Wheelock, Daniel Jones and David Garr coming to meet us. About dark we arrived at Greasewood Creek where we found Elders G.D. Grant, Charles Decker, C.G. Webb, R.T. Burton and other brethren from the Valley with six wagons laden with flour and other good such as boots, socks and warm clothing.

This was the beginning of better days as to food and assistance, but the weather grew colder and more intense. By now the snow had increased to 12 to 18 inches. Those that could not walk or was so sick they could not carry on were put into the wagons while the rest of us pulled and pushed our handcarts. We were a pitiful sight. Brother G.C. Grant later wrote:

“We met Brother Martin’s company at Greasewood Creek on the last day of October. Brother Hodgett’s company was a few miles behind. We dealt out to Brother Martin’s company clothing, etc., that we had for them, and next morning after stowing our wagons full of the sick, the children and the infirm, with a good amount of luggage, started homeward about noon. The snow began to fall very fast and continued until late at night. You can imagine between 500 and 600 men, women and children, worn down by drawing handcarts through snow and mud, fainting by the wayside, falling chilled by the cold; children crying, their limbs stiffened by the cold, their feet bleeding, and some of them bare to snow and frost. The sight is almost too much for the stoutest of us. Our company is too small to help much. It is only a drop in a bucket, as it were in comparison with what is needed. I think not over one third of Martin’s company is able to walk. This you may think is extravagant, but it is nevertheless true. Some of them have good courage and are in good spirits, but a great many are like little children, and do not help themselves much more, nor realize what is before them. Brother Charles Decker has now traveled this road the forty-ninth time, and he says he has never before seen so much snow on the Sweetwater at any season of the year.”

Saturday we moved on and camped about five miles from Devils Gate at the Sweetwater Bridge. We arrived about dark. There was a full 18 inches of crusted snow. We had few shovels left so we had to clear a place for our tents using fry pans, tin plates and anything else we could find to remove the snow. We were so tired that we could only work for a few minutes and then had to rest. It took us about two hours to clear the snow. The ground was so frozen that it was impossible to pound pegs so we could set up our tents.

By this time many of the men had died during the nights because of complete exhaustion and lack of food and warmth. Some died by the trail. This left many widows in our camp with children who had to shovel snow and pitch tents.

A discussion was held about whether we should camp here for the winter or push on to the Valley. We had traveled almost 700 miles and had about 340 to go. It was decided that we would move on to the Valley.

We arrived at Devil's Gate on Sunday, November 2nd. The brethren from the Valley had several big fires going. One of the men took an ax and chopped up an old log cabin and gave us some wood so we could cook our meals that night. We were also able to dry our clothing. It felt so good.

On Tuesday our company was in part reorganized. Most of the carts were left at Devil's Gate, two of the best being retained for each 100 people. We had six handcarts to carry our cooking utensils for the whole company. This made them very heavy. After going a few miles we had to cross the Sweetwater River. The stream was about two feet deep and between 30 and 40 yards wide. This was by far the worst river crossing of the journey. Those of us pulling the carts had to go through last. The bottom was muddy and we had to go down the middle of the stream about 40 yards before there was a place we could pull out. It was severe. It was about dusk, the coldest time of the day. We were exhausted. The wagons that had gone through the stream ahead of us had broken a trail through the middle of the stream, leaving about four inches of ice sticking out on each side. Just as we were turning to pull our cart out of the stream, I caught my leg on a sharp piece of ice and cut a fairly deep gash in it. The water was so cold that I hardly felt it at the time. When we got the cart out, I dressed the cut as best I could by wrapping it with a fairly clean piece of cloth. It didn't bleed too much and didn't hamper my walking so I didn't take care of it like I should have

. This proved to be a mistake because it became infected and left me with a weeping sore that plagued me for the rest of my life.

The boys from the Valley helped us or we couldn't have made it. They had been in the water all day carrying the women, children and some of the men across. They were O.P. Kimball, George W. Grant, Stephen W. Taylor and C.A. Huntington.

Brother Kimball had been in the river so long that he had to be carried into camp that night. It took a while before he could recover from the chills and exhaustion. They were truly heroes.

After crossing the river we had to travel some distance where camp was set up. We were in a ravine that sheltered us a bit from the bitter wind and cold. Firewood was available some distance from where we camped. The place was later called Martin's Cove.

We waited here for several days for provisions to reach us from the Valley. We were again down to one quarter pound of flour. The snow and wind kept coming. The temperature dropped below zero. When it finally stopped the snow was so deep that the wagons could not move through it. The cold was so severe that many people died. By now, my beloved traveling companions, Brother and Sister Hartley had died. Ben and I didn't know if Mary would make it or not. One night the wind was so strong that it blew over a number of our tents, making it very difficult for some to keep from freezing.

Again there was a question as to whether we should stay here for the winter or move on to the Valley. Our cattle had given out and could not pull our wagons. The Hodget Wagon Train Saints were stranded at Devil's Gate, unable to move on. The Hunt Company was some miles back of them. Their oxen had given out and could go no further. The rescuers were doing their best to help them. There were so many of us and such little food to go around. Even though there were more supply wagons on their way from the Valley, the amount of food we had was running out fast.

The Willie Handcart Saints were well ahead of us. The rescuers were working hard to get them to the Valley as well as send as many wagons on to the rest of us as possible

The decision was made for us to move on as best we could so as to close the distance between us and the relief wagons. In this way help could be obtained much sooner. It was also decided that all the cargo being carried in the wagon companies would be stored at Devil's Gate and that eighteen to twenty of the rescue party would stay over the winter and guard the goods and wagons being left behind as there were mountaineers and Indians round about. Before they were rescued the next spring, their food ran out and they were down to boiling hides to get whatever nourishment they could just to stay alive. They were real heroes also.

I believe it was about November 10th that we made ready to move out on the trail again. The remaining food and other survival items along with what cooking utensils we absolutely needed were loaded into the available wagons. The remaining handcarts were gratefully left in the ravine. As many as possible of the sick and lame were loaded into the wagons. This was so very difficult for the leaders to determine who should ride and who should continue to walk. There was considerable crying of women and children and

perhaps a few men whom the wagons could not accommodate with a ride. As for me, it was such a relief not to have a handcart to pull or push any more. I felt that with the help of my Heavenly Father I could walk the rest of the three hundred and thirty some odd miles to the Valley. I was weak from lack of food and physically worn out, but I soon got into a rhythm of walking in the path the horses and wagons made and was even able to hold onto a rope tied to the back of one of the wagons to help me up many of the hills we had to climb. The walking also helped to keep me warm. Some of those riding in the wagons were suffering severely from the cold. My leg bothered me in the mornings when we first started moving, but would ease off after I had walked some distance.

I later found out that my sister-in-law Ann had died at Devil's Gate on November 7th. We were camped about five miles away at Martin's Cove. She died at 4:00 P.M. of diarrhea. She was 47 years old. I know that there was a marvelous reunion as Elias met her as she passed from this life to the next. They never made it to Zion in the Valley, but they made it to their final Zion. Since they were unable to have children here in this life, it became a stronger desire for me to pass on the Davis name and help build Zion here on earth. I know now that Elias and Ann were among the angels that helped me to complete the trek to the Valley.

My feelings about being able to make it to the Valley were confirmed again one evening as we set about to make camp. Just before sunset someone spotted a man in the distance leading two horses loaded with what looked like buffalo meat. It surely was a man, Ephraim Hanks, and he did have meat. He had killed two buffalo just before we met him. He also gave us great hope in that he said that another advance rescue party was just down the road about a day away and that supply wagons were a couple of days behind them filled with food and warm clothing. He said that when we met them we could stop for a while and rest.

Brother Hanks set about distributing the meat so that each of us had a delicious warm meal however way we wanted to prepare it. He went through the camp and anointed and blessed the sick and even took his hunting knife and after holding it over the fire, used it to amputate toes and fingers of people who were in danger of losing their lives. They said that after the blessing he gave them, they didn't feel anything as he went about doctoring them. He was a true angel sent to us from the Heavens.

On about November 18th -19th, we reached and crossed over the rugged rocky ridge and South Pass. It was a bitter cold day. Snow was falling fast and the North wind was fierce.

By this time we had met more relief teams and eventually had enough room in the wagons for everyone to ride. Some of us would have preferred to walk but the wagons were able to move along much faster now and we could not keep up.

We were now traveling at the rate of twenty-five to thirty miles each day. On the 21st we camped at Green River, on the 22nd near the junction of Ham's and Black's Forks, on the 23rd at Bridger. On the 24th we camped in the cedars at the Muddy, where good fires were had and on the 25th at Bear River. The next night we camped in a small canyon a few miles above what was called Echo Canyon. During the night a beautiful baby girl was born. Everything went well considering the circumstances. The mother named her new infant Echo, in honor of the place she was born.

On the 27th we camped on East Canyon Creek, on the 28th the Big Mountain was crossed and we camped at the base where Fera Little, Joseph A. Young and his brother Brigham and others had set up camp so they could keep the road open for us. On the 29th we crossed over Little Mountain and camped at Killian's Canyon, near the head of Emigration Canyon, and on Sunday the 30th we passed down the canyon and arrived in Salt Lake City about noon, driving onto East Temple Street just as the congregation was leaving the old Tabernacle on the Temple block.

Of the 576 Martin Handcart immigrants that started the trek at Florence Nebraska, 413 reached the Valley. There were times when so many of us had nearly given up. We felt that we would have been better off sleeping with the angels of Heaven that had been at our sides helping us along our trek. However, this was not to be for me and the other survivors. We were to move on to the Valley and help build the Kingdom of God. This is the reason you are reading this account at this time. You are one of my descendants who are living and surviving in the Last Days. You are fulfilling my dream and the dreams of your ancestors that helped bring you the living Gospel of Jesus Christ. Please live lives that will allow us to live together in the Celestial Kingdom with Our Father in Heaven and our Savior Jesus Christ.

We must have been a sorry sight as we entered town. We were quickly assigned families to live with while we regained sufficient strength to take care of ourselves. I was taken in by a lovely family by the name of Smith. Brother and Sister Smith had three young children. They had a modest cabin just south of the main part of town. I could tell that they had meager supplies stored for the winter. However, they treated me like a king. The food was delicious and it seemed that I could never satisfy my hunger. I was embarrassed at the amount I ate.

I waited anxiously for the arrival of Elias and Ann as the wagon trains arrived. After the last group entered the Valley I realized that they did not make it. I located some of the Saints from the Hunt Wagon Company and they told me the accounts of their deaths. My beloved brother, friend and mentor and his wonderful wife were gone. Our plans to build a new life together in America, with the Gospel as our guide, were dashed. I was comforted in the testimony and knowledge I have that they were together in Paradise and would eventually be privileged to have the children they were unable to have in this life and to live with them in the Celestial Kingdom. They were already building their 'Zion' in the next life. I would have to go it alone. I was grieved but comforted. After many prayers I became more determined to accomplish the goals I had set when I joined the Church. I would move ahead as fast as circumstances would allow. I prayed for confidence and comfort. I slowly received both.

I learned that the Smiths and most of the Saints living in the Valley had been plagued by a swarm of crickets that had eaten most of their crops the year before and that the drought had cut them short last season. They were down to meager rations. I soon cut back on my food intake. It seemed that I was used to it.

I helped Brother Smith with the chores and repairs needed around the house and farm. When planting time came the next spring, I stayed on at the Smiths and helped them get their ground prepared and planted. We cleaned and dug ditches, repaired fences and sheds and any other chores that needed attention. I felt that it was the least I could do to help pay for my board and room over the winter. When the planting was done, I found a job with a farmer that was able to pay me a small wage for my work.

I was penniless. I owed money to the Perpetual Immigration Fund. I needed to earn enough money to purchase a riding horse along with a team and wagon and some

farm equipment. I wanted to homestead some property and start farming myself. I found a place to board and room and went to work.

By the time I was able to pay my obligation to the Immigration Fund and purchase the necessary items to get started on my own, I was getting on in years. I might mention that these were satisfying years. I was able to attend my meetings and hear the words of Brother Brigham and the Apostles of the Lord. I made many good friends. However, I was still single and lonely. The Brethren, especially my Bishop didn't look too kindly on my situation. They counseled, no, they insisted that I find me a woman and get married and start a family. It became their pastime to line me up with eligible women to date so I could find one that would be right for me. As I said in the beginning of this account, I was very shy around the opposite sex. This did not change with age. In fact I have thought that this trait may be passed on to some of my descendents. Has this happened?

Well, I did fall in love with a lovely woman by the name of Jemima White Church from Cloiter, England and married her. Her unselfishness and her strong testimony of the Gospel was what any man could hope for.

We were soon called to help settle the Muddy Mission located about sixty miles North West of Cedar City. There were five settlements being established at the time. They were, St. Thomas, St. Joseph, Overton, West Pond and Junction City. We moved to St. Joseph first but soon moved to St. Thomas arriving there June 21, 1865. There had been a lot of sickness in St. Joseph, mostly fever, ague and the flue. By the fall of 1865 there were only twenty five of the original forty families left. Three older people and two children had died.

St. Thomas had been established in January of 1865. This colony consisted of forty five families. The town was laid out as follows: Eighty five city lots of one acre each were established along with the same number of vineyard lots containing two and one half acres. There were about the same number of farm lots consisting of five acres each. Ten lots formed a block with streets six rods wide including side walks twelve feet wide. St. Thomas was situated on the S.W. side of the Muddy and one and a half miles from its junction with the Reo Virgin River. James Leithead was appointed President of the Muddy Mission and also served as our Bishop.

We began farming in earnest. We all helped built roads, ditches, a canal and a small reservoir to hold back and store the runoff from the Muddy River. It was hard work but we were being paid for our efforts. Crops were good and our animals were in good shape. Building cabins was a real challenge. We had to go a great distance to find suitable lumber to build our homes and sheds. It took some time for the town to take shape.

On August 17, 1867, Jemima and I had the opportunity to travel to Salt Lake City and be sealed in the Endowment House for "Time and all Eternity", a goal we had been working toward since we had been married by our previous Bishop. It was a red letter day in our lives.

We had been looking forward to having children for quite sometime; however, Jemima could not conceive a child. We prayed in earnest but nothing happened. After much fasting and prayer, Jemima suggested that I take another wife. I was against it to begin with. It had been so difficult to find and marry Jemima that I couldn't bring myself to even think about it. After a while we talked to the Bishop and he got in contact with the Brethren in Salt Lake and they not only gave permission but encouraged it and gave us their blessings.

Living in our neighborhood was a twenty nine year old woman from the Piedmont Valley in the French Alps of Italy. Jemima had become quite close to her. She was a sincere and delightful lady with a strong testimony. She had joined the Church with her family in Italy and arrived in St. Thomas during October of 1868. She was a little hard to understand at first because of her Italian accent. Her name was Antionette Justet. Jemima approached her about the situation and after much meditation and prayer, she consented. We were married in the Salt Lake Endowment House the 10th of May 1870. We soon became a very close knit family with a great deal of love and respect for each other.

With a lot of hard work and dedication, we began to raise some fairly good crops. What animals we had were doing fine. We were so far from markets that we had to live entirely off the land. We traded back and forth with our neighbors for various goods. When someone in town made a trip to Cedar City or St. George, they would take some of our goods and trade them for items we could not produce. Even if we had had excess

produce or crops to sell, there was no place even remotely close that we could exchange them for money. Very little money changed hands. We also helped feed the poor Indians that lived in the area. The Federal Government was to do this through Indian Agents, but this did not happen. Most of the Indians were friendly but would occasionally drive off some of the cattle and kill one or two for meat. We felt that it was easier to feed them than to fight them. This philosophy and admonition came from Brother Brigham and it worked.

When we settled the Muddy Mission, everyone had the understanding that it was part of the Utah Territory. However in the fall of 1870, we all received notice that we owed not only the present year's taxes but back taxes we had not paid to the state of Nevada since settling the area. The sum they said we owed was outrageous. When we protested, the land was surveyed and sure enough we were just over the border in Nevada. Brother Brigham advised us to appeal to the officials in Nevada and to the United States Congress. Thus, the following petitions were drawn up and sent:

"A Petition

To the Honorable, The Governor and Legislature Assemble of the State of
Nevada

Gentlemen:-

Your petitioners respectfully beg to lay
before your honorable body the following facts:

Seven years ago we came to this Valley and made the Settlements of St. Joseph and St. Thomas. The former place being (as we firmly believed) in the Territory of Utah and the latter place in the Territory of Arizona. Subsequently to making the Settlements Congress has seen fit to take one degree of Longitude from Utah and a small portion from Arizona and attached it to Nevada.

We still believed that the boundary line of Nevada would pass to the West of our Settlements, and we have in good faith paid taxes in Utah and Arizona. For the last two years the Authorities of Lincoln County Nevada have attempted to assess and collect taxes from us, but we have refused to pay taxes in Lincoln County until the boundary was established.

The boundary line is now established and it proves that our Settlements are in Nevada. We wish your Honorable body to consider our isolated condition. We are an Agricultural, not a mining people and we have had to contend with great difficulties in trying to subdue these alkaline deserts having expended at least fifty thousand dollars in labor on water costs alone. We have been compelled also to feed and Indian population outnumbering our own, and that too without the aid of a single dollar from the Government. We are far remote from any market and it is impossible for us to convert our produce into cash.

We therefore respectfully ask your Honorable Body to abate all taxes assessed against us by the authorities of Lincoln County.

We also petition that your Honorable Body will, at the earliest practicable date organize a new County to be called Las Vegas County with boundaries as follows: to wit:

Beginning at the point where the East line of the State of Nevada crosses the summit of the Beaver Dam Mountains. Thence Westerly, along said mountains to the upper end of the canyon at the South East end of Pohronagot Valley where the road from the Muddy Valley merges into Tohronagot Valley. Then: Due South to the Boundary line of the State of California, Thence along said Boundary line of California to its intersection with the Colorado River. Thence up said River to where the Eastern boundary line of the State of Nevada intersects said River then along said Eastern boundary of Nevada to the place of beginning.

And as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray that as you listen to and grant our petitions so yours may be granted.”

One hundred and eleven names were attached to this Petition, Citizens of St. Joseph, Oveton and St. Thomas.

The following petition was sent to the Congress of the United States of America:

“A Petition

To the Hon: The Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled.

Gentlemen: We your petitioners, Citizens of the Muddy Valley, State of Nevada would respectfully represent to your Honorable Body the following facts. Seven years ago we came to this Valley and made the Settlements of St. Joseph and St. Thomas and Subsequently those of West Point and Overton. At the time of settling here, the Valley of the Muddy was included within the boundaries of Utah and Arizona and we expected to remain under the jurisdiction of one or the other of those Territories. Subsequently your Hon-Body has seen proper to take off one full degree of Longitude from Utah Territory and slices from Arizona and attach the same to the State of Nevada thus removing us within the jurisdiction of that state without our consent.

It is well known to your Hon Body and to the general public that this region is a vast alkaline desert destitute of timber and grass. Our object in coming here was the production of cotton for the clothing of ourselves and families and to aid our toiling brethren in the Territory of Utah to do the same.

We have expended at least one hundred thousand dollars in labor in construction dams and irrigating canals. The little lumber we have been enable to obtain has been hauled at least one hundred and fifty miles over a sandy desert at a cost of twenty dollars for ever one hundred feet. We are far remote from any market or base of supplies. In addition the these and innumerable other difficulties we have had to feed an Indian population outnumbering our own and that too without the aid of one single dollar from the Government, with the exception of some two hundred and fifty dollars furnished these Indians by Col. Head Superintendent of Indian affaire for the Territory of Utah.

A certain Captain Fenton represents himself as a special agent of the Government to the Tah.Ute Nation but he has never done anything to alleviate their condition as your petitioners herby testify. We have constructed some one hundred and fifty dwellings, planted orchards and vineyards and cleared about five hundred acres of cotton fields, and have done all in our power to establish homes in this Valley. It now transpires that the boundary line of Nevada is established and the authorities of that State demand of us the onerous taxes imposed upon its Citizens of three percent on all taxable property in gold coin for State and County purposes and four dollars in gold poll tax.

Being an agricultural people and far remote from any market and unable to convert our produce into cash we cannot pay those taxes.

Therefore unless we obtain the relief sought for from your Hon Body we shall be compelled to abandon this Valley and remove from the State of Nevada thus throwing away the result of the toil and energies of seven years.

In consideration of all these circumstances we your petitioners pray that your Hon Body to cede back to the Territory of Utah and Arizona that portion of country detached from them and attached to the State of Nevada.

And as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.”

We were not surprised that the petitions to the State of Nevada and the Congress of the United States of America were turned down. We stuck together as Saints and helped each other move to a new location. Brother Brigham had given us a choice as where to settle next. We were informed of a notice published in the Deseret News by a man named George W. Sevy. He had been called by Brother Brigham to gather a company and re-settle the abandon town of Panguitch, formerly called Fairview. The first settlers had been run out by the Indians. The notice read as follows: “All those who wish to go with me to settle Panguitch Valley will meet me at Red Creek on the 4th day of March, 1871 and we will go over the mountain in company to settle that country.” It sounded good to us so we packed up all the belongings we could fit into our wagons and left St. Thomas on the Muddy River, a community we helped settle. We left our homes, vineyards, garden spots and the farmland we had developed and headed for the rendezvous at Red Creek. We met up with the Sevy Company and traveled with them some forty miles over the rough mountain road, arriving in Panguitch around the 18th or 19th of March, 1871.

We were delighted to find that the dwellings and clearings were just as the former settlers had left them and found the crops still standing. The Indians had left the settlement untouched. The soil was fertile and there was enough water to irrigate the valley. The only drawback was the 6,666 foot altitude. The climate was severe with sub freezing weather seven months each year.

A United Order was formed and we began to till the soil and plant new crops. We cleared more land for farming and built more ditches and canals. New homes, barns, corrals, outhouses and such were built.

It was here, at the age of forty eight, that my first long awaited child was born. We named her Mary Serena. She was born the 17th of August, 1871. My, she was a beautiful daughter. She had a dark complexion like her Italian mother. Antionette had a hard time with this first pregnancy because of the rough roads we had to travel and the adverse conditions we lived under during her pregnancy but, Jemima was at her side giving her and little Mary comfort and love all the time. Mary was so fortunate to have two mothers that loved her so very much.

Another child arrived on the 15th of April 1873. We named this tall baby boy Elias Henry, after my older brother Elias that had died while crossing the plains in 1856.

Our third child was a petite beautiful girl. We named her Bertha Ann. She came to us on the 1st of July, 1875.

It was difficult for the Saints to live the United Order. I guess that we were just not ready and may have been a bit selfish. We also had some people that would not do their share of the work but received as much as anyone else. Some became jealous and started to have hard feelings toward other members of the Order. After two years, Brother Brigham gave us permission to dissolve the Order as had been done in most colonies throughout the Church. We divided up the holdings but still worked together on most everything. We remained a close knit community, looking out for each other.

After four years in the Panguitch Valley, some of us became discouraged with the short growing season. We were not as successful with the maturing of our crops as we would liked to have been. One year may be great but the next year we could get a late frost in the spring or an early frost in the fall that would ruin a lot of our crops. Because of this, some of us started looking elsewhere for a place to settle with a warmer climate. It might be interesting to note that four of our group, while on an exploring expedition, met up with two fellows by the names of Dellenbaugh and Thompson who were part of the Powell exploring expedition. They told us of a valley that would be just what we were looking for. They suggested that it be called Escalante after Father Sylvester Valez de Escalante who had passed near the Escalante River on his expedition from Santa Fe to California in 1776

We located the valley about fifty miles east of Panguitch. It had not been settled as yet. It had been discovered in 1866 by a group of Mormon Cavalry in pursuit of

Indians during the Black Hawk war. Captain James Andrus, leader of the Calvary named it Potato Valley because of a wild species of potatoes that grew there. The elevation was about 5,700 feet. It was much warmer and had great potential. With permission from Brother Brigham, we made the move from Panguitch to Potato Valley in 1875. Later the town and river was named Escalante as Mr. Thompson had suggested...

The men moved in first and began to organize and settle the valley. It was laid out on the "Zion Plan". There were four homes to the block and ten-acre farms surrounding it. Wide streets and sidewalks were established. The mild climate provided an abundance of grazing land. We then moved our women and children to the valley and started farming and raising cattle and sheep. Dairying, timber harvesting and mining soon became a vital part of our economy. Most everyone farmed and raised fruit and vegetables for our tables. The women were always busy making clothing, quilts and canning. The Church and town thrived. We had really found the "Zion" we had been seeking for these long years. We were nestled in a beautiful valley that was named the "The Land of the Sleeping Rainbow".

It was here that our fourth child was born. We named him William Edmund. He arrived the 4th of June 1877. Four years later on the 14th of January, 1881, John Eli was born. A little less than two years later our last child, Emma Jane arrived. She was born the 23rd of December, 1882. By now I was fifty nine years old. Jemima was fifty five and Antionette was forty two.

I didn't keep a journal of my life for one reason or other. I have kept so many memories in my mind, many that I never shared with people, even my family members. Some of them I tried hard to forget like the hardships we encountered while coming from England to Utah and the subsequent troubles we had while on the Muddy and at Panguitch. I haven't mentioned the grief I suffered over the years with my leg. You won't find me mentioned among the more prominent people in the places I helped settle, nor my growing up in England and my journey to Zion. I guess it is because I was such a private quite person. I did what I had to do and did what I was asked by the Brethren. I really have had no regrets to speak of in my life. I would do it over if necessary. I love the Church and the Leaders. My testimony has been strengthened over the years so very

much. The Lord has truly watched over me and my wonderful family and blessed us in so many ways that it is hard to recount even a portion of them.

Needless to say, the children grew up and married wonderful companions. Through them we are continually blessed with countless posterity. Antionette, Jemima and I are so grateful for each of you wonderful decedents scattered throughout the world. We just hope that our joining the Church and coming to America has been a blessing to each of you. May our Father in Heaven bless you with his most choice blessings until we all meet together in the final "Zion" established by Father and Mother in Heaven and our Savior Jesus Christ. I just hope and pray that I have done my part. I leave my blessings upon each of you and pray that you may do your part in building the Kingdom of God, in the name of our Savior, Amen.

Jemima White Church Davis died May 5, 1891 at the age of sixty four. She was laid to rest in the Escalante Cemetery.

Edmund Weeks Davis died fifteen years later on May 7, 1906 at the age of eighty two. He is buried next to Jemima.

Antionette Justet Davis passed away seventeen years later on July 30, 1923 in Escalante at the age of eighty three. She is buried next to several family members near Edmund and Jemima.

It would be interesting to know how many descendents they have at this time.

Pedigree Chart

Completed Ordinances:

- B Baptized
- E Endowed
- P Sealed to parents
- S Sealed to spouse
- C Children's ordinances

2 Edmund Weeks Davis

B: 12 Dec 1823 BEPS
 P: Breeds, S, England
 M: 10 May 1870
 P: Salt Lake City, SL, UT
 D: 5 May 1906
 P: Escalante, G, Utah

1 Elias Henry Davis

B: 15 Apr 1873 BEPS
 P: Pangutch, Grafield, Utah
 M: 31 Oct 1894
 P: Manti, Sanpete, UT
 D: 24 Jan 1944
 P: Orangeville, Emery, Utah

Susannah Laramie
 (Spouse of no. 1)

3 Antonette Justet

B: 18 Feb 1840 BEPS
 P: Penarsha, Italy
 D: 30 Jul 1923
 P: Escalante, G, Utah

4 Thomas L. DAVIS

B: 1791 BE S
 P: Breede, Sussex, Eng
 M:
 P:
 D:
 P:

5 Mary WEEKS

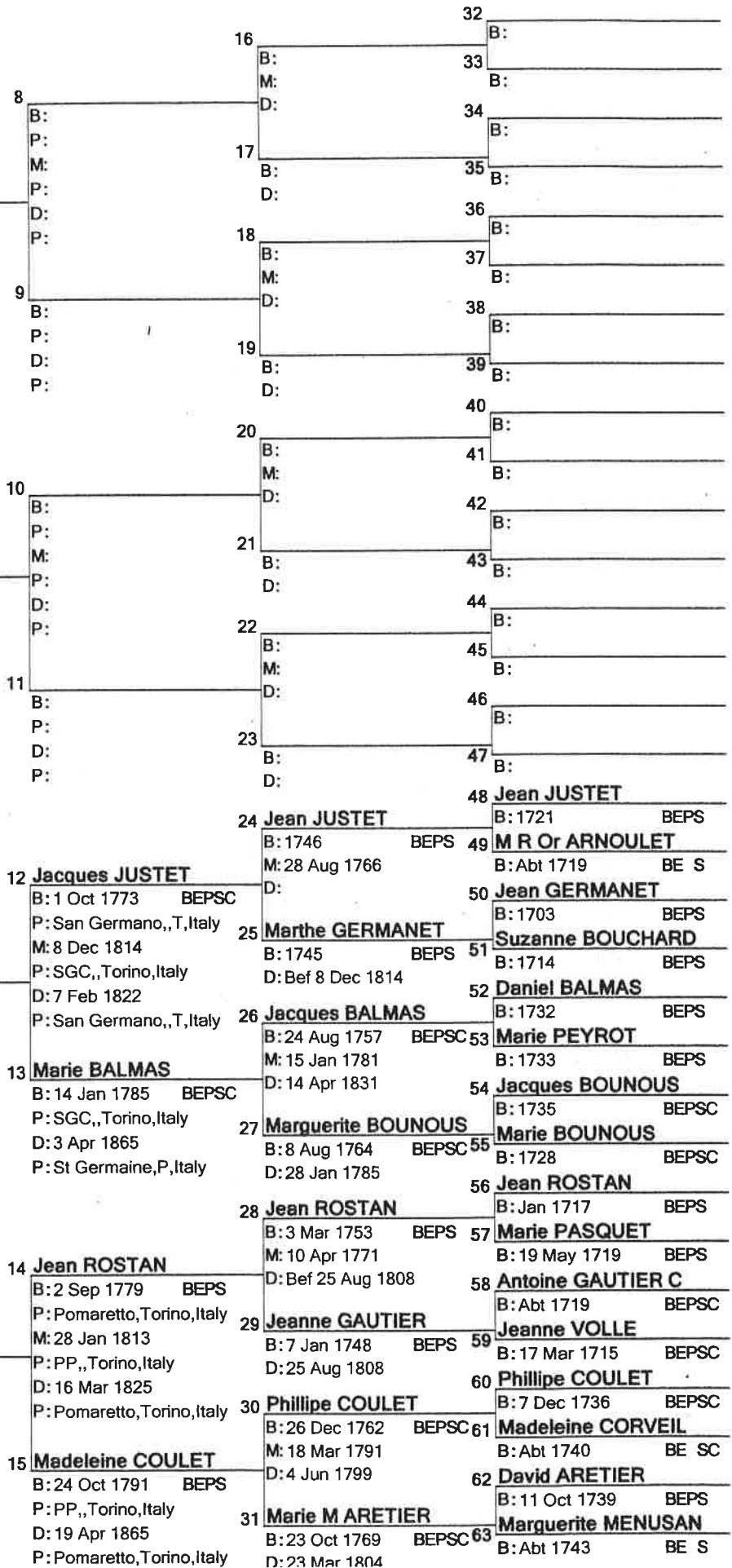
B: 1795 BE S
 P: Breede, Sussex, Eng
 D:
 P:

6 Daniel JUSTET

B: 29 May 1818 BEPS
 P: Pinache, Pdmt, Italy
 M: 11 May 1836
 P: Torino, Pinasca,, Italy
 D: 1871
 P: Santa Clara, W, UT

7 Jane Or J ROSTAN

B: 22 Nov 1817 BEPS
 P: Pomaretto, Torino, Italy
 D: 16 Mar 1895
 P: Escalante, Grfld., UT





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Family Group Record

Husband Edmund Weeks DAVIS						
Born	12 Dec 1823	Place	Brede, Sussex, England	LDS ordinance dates		Temple
Chr.		Place		Baptized		11 Nov 1853
Died	7 May 1906	Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	Endowed		17 Aug 1867 SLAKE
Buried		Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	SealPar		18 Nov 1960 SGEOR
Married	10 May 1870	Place	Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Ut	SealSp		10 May 1870 EHOUS
Other Spouse	Jemima White CHURCH					
Married		Place		SealSp		
Husband's father	Thomas DAVIS					
Husband's mother	Mary WEEKES					
Wife Antionette JUSTET (ANTIONET)						
Born	18 Feb 1840	Place	Penarsha, Italy	LDS ordinance dates		Temple
Chr.	24 Feb 1841	Place		Baptized		10 Oct 1868
Died	30 Jul 1923	Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	Endowed		10 May 1870 SLAKE
Buried		Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	SealPar		19 Jun 1980
Wife's father	Daniel JUSTET					
Wife's mother	Jane or Jeanne ROSTAN					
Children List each child in order of birth.					LDS ordinance dates	Temple
1	F	Mary Serena DAVIS				
	Born	17 Aug 1871	Place	Panguitch, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	1879
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	14 Mar 1888
	Died	20 Feb 1914	Place	Concho, Apache, Az	SealPar	BIC
	Buried	21 Feb 1914	Place	Concho, Apache, Az		
	Spouse	Jacob Noah BUTLER				
	Married	14 Mar 1888	Place	St. George, Wshngt, Ut	SealSp	14 Mar 1888 SGEOR
2	M	Elias Henry DAVIS				
	Born	15 Apr 1873	Place	Panguitch, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	9 Jul 1882
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	31 Oct 1894
	Died	24 Jan 1944	Place	Orangeville, Emery, Ut	SealPar	BIC
	Buried	27 Jan 1944	Place	Orangeville, Emery, Ut		
	Spouse	Susannah LARAMIE				
	Married	31 Oct 1894	Place	Manti, Sanpete, Ut	SealSp	31 Oct 1894 MANTI
3	F	Bertha Ann DAVIS				
	Born	1 Jul 1875	Place	Panguitch, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	6 Oct 1883
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	22 Aug 1912 MANTI
	Died	24 Aug 1925	Place	Orangeville, Emery, Ut	SealPar	BIC
	Buried		Place			
	Spouse	Ephraim Manasa HAWKS				
	Married	10 Jun 1894	Place		SealSp	22 Aug 1912 MANTI
	Spouse	Ephraim Manassa HAWKS				
	Married	10 Jun 1894	Place		SealSp	
4	M	William Edmund DAVIS				
	Born	4 Jun 1877	Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	2 Jul 1885
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	15 Nov 1899
	Died	30 Apr 1948	Place		SealPar	BIC
	Buried		Place			
	Spouse	Rhoda SCHOW				
	Married	26 Oct 1899	Place		SealSp	
5	M	John Eli DAVIS				
	Born	14 Jan 1881	Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	6 Aug 1891
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	6 Nov 1912
	Died	3 Oct 1960	Place		SealPar	BIC
	Buried		Place			
	Spouse	Martha LAY				
	Married	29 Apr 1909	Place		SealSp	

Family Group Record

Husband Edmund Weeks DAVIS						
Wife Antionette JUSTET (ANTIONET)						
Children List each child in order of birth.			LDS ordinance dates		Temple	
6	F	Emma Jane DAVIS				
	Born	23 Dec 1882	Place	Escalante, Garfield, Ut	Baptized	6 Aug 1891
	Chr.		Place		Endowed	27 Oct 1910
	Died	20 Jul 1962	Place		SealPar	BIC
	Buried		Place			
	Spouse	James A ALVEY				
	Married	20 Apr 1905	Place		SealSp	

