

Life sketch of Claybourn Elder

Claybourn Elder was born in Bedford County, Tennessee June 2, 1827. He was the son of David Elder and Louise Montgomery.

Claybourn was baptized in the year 1838 and he moved to Nauvoo with his mother during its early settlement, as his father had died leaving him and his mother to face life alone.

Claybourn was intimately acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith. He served as an apprentice carpenter on the Prophet's mansion. He also played ball with the Prophet. He experienced many of the hardships and persecutions that the saints were subjected to at that time.

One day Claybourn and his friends were out flying kites when a mob came hunting Joseph. They asked the boys if they had seen him and they said "Yes, we saw Joe and Hyrum going to heaven yesterday on a white horse and we are sending their dinner to them in a basket on the tail of our kite."

Another time Claybourn was in a crowd when a mob came along hunting for Joe Smith. While they were talking, Joseph came along with a catfish over his shoulder and tried to sell the fish to the mob.

Claybourn's mother married again and he never got along to well with his stepfather, so he left home at the age of 15 years of age.

In 1850 he crossed the plains with an ox team and came to Grantsville, Utah.

He served in the Echo Canyon episode of the Indian war, also the Black Hawk and Walker Indian wars.

CLOYD THEOBALD

In 1861 Claybourn Elder was called by Brigham Young to serve with General Wells to protect the Mormon people from the Johnston Army. There were 25 men in this group from Badger, Utah that were in Echo Canyon. They used special strategy, they just kept riding around on different ridges so that Johnston's army could see them against the skyline. They put their hats on wrong side up and coats wrong side out and anything just to look different and deceive the onlookers. So when General Johnston's army finally came to make treaty with Brigham Young so they could get into Utah, he asked how many men he had. President Young said "25". Johnston wouldn't believe him; he said he had counted 150, himself.

Claybourn was called to Dixie in 1862 and he took part in quelling the Indian disturbances in that section of the territory. He settled in Duncan's City, later called Duncan's Retreat. When he went to Dixie he took his two wives, Mary Caroline Pratt and Martina Peterson, and three children. It was a hard struggle from the start. Their principal diet was caneseed bread and sorghum. In 1863 he married Francis Elizabeth Pratt, Mary's younger sister, and a little later, Nancy Ott, a widow woman who had a son, David. Altogether Claybourn Elder fathered 24 children.

It was a struggle to earn a living and support his families.

Claybourn was a very active man. He was always on the move. He worked with cattle. He ran sawmills at different times in many of the canyons of southern Utah and northern Arizona. He took his wives with him and while he worked at the sawmills, they took care of the cows and other animals. He worked in the smelter near

Minersville and in the foundry in Iron City. One of his wives, Francis, stayed in Minersville. In 1880 he went to Arizona where he contracted grading on the Santa Fe Railroad. He then moved to Snowflake, Arizona and contracted to make 50,000 pine shingles at \$5.00 per thousand. If they had a good day, they could get a hundred shingles made.

Through the years, they had many experiences with the Indians. While in Arizona there was Indian trouble again. One day Francis saw a bunch of Indians coming, so of course, she thought they were in danger. She took the children down to the creek and hid in the willows, leaving her oldest son Jim at the house. She told him to feed the Indians melons as they had a large crop. When the Indians came to the house they asked if the Squaws were afraid. Jim answered "Yes". He fed the indians melons, and more melons until they were about to burst. The Indians finally left, but the next day they came back, only there were more than before. The women took the children and hid in the willows again. This time Claybourn was home and when the indians rode up, they asked about the squaw and the papooses. They wanted Claybourn to bring them back, because they had brought a big deer all roasted that they wanted to share. Claybourn sent for the women and children and they came even though they were scared. The family enjoyed the deer meat and the Indians enjoyed more melons.

When the family moved back from Arizona they had to cross the Colorado River on Lee's Ferry which was a raft just large enough for a team and wagon. They hadn't unhitched the mules and when

they got to the middle of the river the mules began to buck and almost backed the wagon into the river. "I'll tell you there was some fast unhitching of the mules".

In the spring of 1885, Claybourn came back to Duncan City, Utah and rented a sawmill on Trumball Mountain. They lived at the sawmill during the summers and He moved his family into St. George for the winters. Here Claybourn and the older boys ran the sawmill while the younger children and the women milked the 50 cows and made cheese and butter. The churn was a large wooden barrel with rockers on it and two of the children could churn the butter by rocking themselves to sleep, one on each side of the churn. The butter was put into large wooden barrels and buried until someone went into St. George to take it to market.

Claybourn's later years were spent in Panguitch, Hinckley and Ferron. When he was 80 years old he moved to Leamington and stayed with his son Parley Elder until his death in 1912.

Claybourn was a good musician. People said he could make the fiddle talk. He taught his stepson David Ott to play the fiddle too and together they played for all the dances and the square dances wherever they lived. There pay was usually in food.

Claybourn was always proud of his membership in the church and retained a living testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel.

From a history written by his son Parley Elder.