

Henry Harris

Henry Harris was the son of Martin Miles and Mary Ann Harris. He was born in Horley, Oxford County England December 4, 1848. February 2, 1851, when he was two years old, Henry's family sailed for New Orleans aboard the ship "Ellen Maria" (captain Whitmore) their group was under the direction of Elder George Watts. They arrived in April of that year and joined a company lead by Orson Pratt (his name was on the passenger list because he was returning from a mission to England) to begin their journey across the plains to Utah.

Prior to the journey west there was an outbreak of cholera in the company and Henry's father, mother, an older brother, and a baby sister all died from the disease. Henry and his sister Caroline, six, survived.

Since Henry and Caroline had no relatives in the company they were graciously taken by Thomas and Eliza Howls who had no children of their own. The Howls were kind people who were active in church and community affairs.

After arriving in Salt Lake City the Howls and their newly acquired family moved to Ogden for a short time then moved on to Tooele County. They homesteaded land and became farmers and livestock producers in the area known as Pine Canyon, Lincoln, or Lakeview.

During the time that the land was being acquired and the business begun, Henry worked in a variety of jobs.

In 1866, when he was seventeen, Henry accepted a call to return across the plains to bring immigrants and supplies back to Utah. He made two, possibly three trips back and forth to do this. Captain Boyd was the leader of the group, which consisted of Henry Harris, John Picket, Harry Marshall, and George B. Smith.

Indians, rough terrain, and rivers were some of the problems faced by the immigrants on their journey and at one time Indians stole their cattle. Henry Harris and George Smith were chosen to retrieve them. This entailed riding in among the Indians and driving the cattle back but they were successful and no one was hurt in the process.

When they were crossing the Platte River, Harry Marshall fell in and nearly drowned but was rescued by Henry Harris.

Jessie Murray and Jim Kirk were among one of the groups lead to Utah by Henry and they came to settle in Tooele.

Henry joined in partnership with Wallace Sagers and they contracted supplying timbers for the mines in Bingham, Dry Canyon, Ophir, and Stockton. Freighting and timbering lost their charm however, and Henry went back to farming and livestock raising. This remained his vocation for life.

On March 1st of 1877, Henry married Grace Donaldson. Her parents had joined the church in Scotland and brought their family west on one of the first trains to come to Ogden in 1869.

Henry and Grace settled on the old Howls homestead and had eleven children.

Henry continued farming to support his family and usually took the wheat he produced to Salt Lake City to sell. One day, however, he told Grace he had a strong feeling that he should take the wheat to Ogden even though the trip would take twice as long.

After unloading his wheat in Ogden, Henry decided to go to the train station to watch the trains before returning home. A man stepped from the train for a brief time while the passengers were unloading and new ones boarding. Henry and the man (from California) began talking and exchanged names. The man said he had been a friend of a Harris family when they had come from England to America. He had been trying to find the orphaned children to give them their family Bible which he had had in his possession since the parents died. Henry told the man his search was over. When the Bible was delivered, as promised, inside the cover, written by the hand of one of his parents were the names, and birth dates of the brother and sister Henry had never known and the marriage certificate of his parents. He knew then why he had gone to Ogden rather than Salt Lake to sell his wheat this time.

Henry enjoyed hard work and good health until, at age 67, he was kicked by a horse and on May 31, 1916 he died and was buried in the Tooele City cemetery.

My grandfather, James Henry Harris, in time took over operation of the farm and livestock business. Although he too worked at freighting and operating a livery stable his lifelong work was operating the farm. He died at the age of 93 in 1975.

This version of Henry Harris' history
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