

History of Hyrum, Utah

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Illustrations by the Author

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FOREWORD

This is the beginning of a most exciting story, the story of the making of Hyrum part of the story you already know from your fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers In this history we shall try to see more of the whole picture of this bench-land and of the people who came to make their homes on it We will watch it grow, as the people built it Our people have made this one of the richest corners in Utah

In this book we shall live over again the building of Hyrum We shall live over some of the trials and pleasures of those who built homes here at the mouth of a great canyon In this way nearly eighty-three years of history will pass quickly before us

The people who settled Hyrum were a part of that great westward movement that crossed the broad plains, and crawled in covered wagons, on foot and with handcarts up the Western Mountains to these valleys, where nature's special gifts of climate, soil, forests, and minerals helped the people to make it into the way of living that it is

This book was written because no one who lives with our pioneer forefathers can fail to understand Hyrum, or, understanding it, can fail to love the city and believe in it The history of a place helps to decide what kind of a community it will be

A period of our history has closed; a period of so much action, so much adventure, that sometimes we look back and regret that it is gone

Vance D. Walker

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HISTORY OF HYRUM, UTAH

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Chapter 1



THE WAGON TRAIN

Ira Allen, a young immigrant from Massachusetts, heard many good reports about Cache Valley. In the early spring of 1860 he persuaded a few friends to leave Cedar City, which is now in Iron County, and settle in Cache. By March first, six covered wagons pulled by oxen and loaded with seed, grains, a wooden-beam plow, a few tools, their clothing, bedding and furniture with food stores for the summer, started north. In the lead wagon was Ira Allen, his wife Cynthia and their baby Cynthia Angelea. Mrs. Allen did not think they should pull up their stakes and leave the Valley of the Cedars for an unknown land so far north. Never did she regret this after seeing Cache Valley in the spring. In the second wagon was Andrew Augustus Allen.

Ira Allen's oldest son, and his young wife, Sarah. The third wagon was driven by Ann Cartwright, Ira Allen's oldest daughter and her little son, Andrew Augustus, Jr., Thomas Williams, his wife Elizabeth and "Bill" Judy, Ira Allen's stepson brought the fourth wagon. In the fifth wagon which was driven by Alva Beson rode his wife, Lucy. The sixth wagon was driven by Moroni Benson. A few milk cows, sheep and oxen were driven along in the rear of the train.

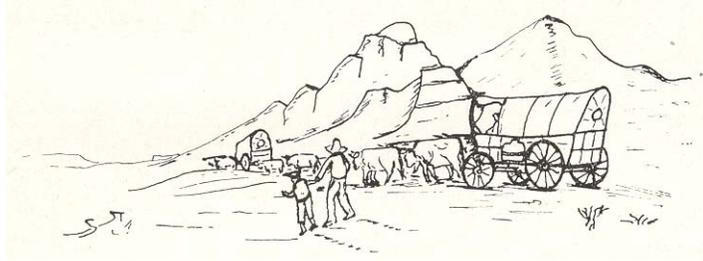
Wagon trains going south from Salt Lake had left a well marked road, but as Ann Cartwright pointedly remarked, "They hadn't removed any of the bumps."

The women and children rode in the wagons on the goods while the men walked and drove the oxen. Each man usually carried a bull-whip and guided the slow moving, awkward brutes right or left by shouts "gee" or "haw", and a crack of the whip. At night the wagons were circled to make a corral and the stock night-herded to keep them from straying or falling into the hands of roaming Indians.

Climbing the southern slope of a spur of the Wasatch Mountains leading up to Soldier Summit, the ruts in the road were hub deep, made soft by the melting snow. Eight yoke of oxen were hitched to each wagon to drag it the last mile to the top. They had never seen such mud.

At the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon, the camping spot of the Spanish priest Escalante, the wagon trains were stopped by Chief Black Hawk and a few of his Ute braves. Cynthia Allen shouted to her husband, as the wagons rolled to a stop, "I told you we'd all be scalped if we made this trip." Chief Black Hawk was known and feared all over Utah. He insisted on bacon and flour as a price for peaceful passage.

At Springville, Ira Allen's enthusiasm for Cache Valley inspired the Nielsens, the Monsons, the Brinkalls, the Parks, and the Sevins to follow as soon as they could get their things together. As they passed through Weber, the Benson family, Williams, McBrides and Osberns joined them.



ENTERING CACHE VALLEY OVER THE COLLINSTON PASS

Rather than risk the rugged, steep trail through Sardine Canyon with their heavy wagons, - the trail blazed by Peter Maughan and his company - , they chose to keep along the west side of the mountains to what is now Collinston and cross the low pass; which from then to now has been known as the Collinston Pass. There to the east was the Great Valley, rimmed with snow capped mountains. The level floor between the magnificent mountains was just turning green. The Logan, Little Bear, Spring Creek and Bear rivers, glistened and sparkled in the sun like great snakes as they wound and crawled through the willows and green meadows. They had reached the last lap of their long hard journey. Like Erastus Snow and Orson Pratt they threw their hats in the air and shouted for joy. They looked out over the view ahead and they sat there in silent wonder. They looked back to what they had done; they looked forward with both hope and faith.

The air was brisk and cool this early spring day in this high mountain valley, and under the wheels of their wagons the earth was rich and black. They followed the easy slope of the mountains southward down the west side to Fort Mendon; which was built in 1859. Then on to old Fort Wellsville built in 1858 and presided over by Peter Maughan. The company remained here for seven days, while Ira Allen, his son Andrew and Moroni Benson, on horses borrowed from the Wellsville settlers, explored the valley for a town site.

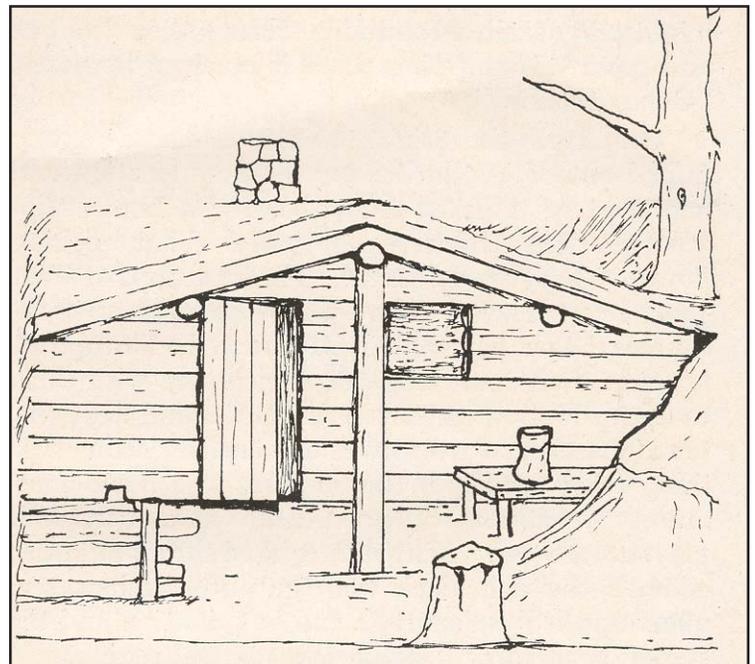
CHAPTER II

CAMP HOLLOW

The first thing they looked for was water. Soil was important, yes! But even more so were the little running brooks, that made the settlers sure there was plenty of fresh water. They could build their houses and plant their crops in many places, but one thing was certain, they must build and plant near a supply of pure water.

The settlers found a building and planting place near a spring five miles east of Old Fort Wellsville, under a little hill at the foot of the mighty Wasatch Mountains. Here they camped and from this stopping place it received its name, "Camp Hollow."

On April the 8th, 1860 the Allen Company pulled out of Wellsville for the new location and immediately the new camp became a hum of industry.



The children ran gaily about picking flowers. They were located. The hardships of their journey were over. Here was the rich natural resources the people wanted. Of course the Europeans brought their knowledge of agriculture with them to Camp Hollow as well as their tools and weapons, their household furniture and utensils. With these things they set about the building of a home community in a new valley. Nature and man both played their part. Nature furnished the stimulating climate, the rich black soil, the pure fresh water; man supplied the courage and imagination and the steady hard work to build this natural region.

The wagons were drawn up along the creek, the sheep, oxen and goats were turned in the grassy meadows below the hill to graze. The young men guarded the animals, the older men began work on one-room dugouts, the humble beginnings of their new homes. Cooking was done on open fires in front of the dugouts. The live coals were carefully covered with ashes to secure a start for a new fire. If some one neglected his fire he would have to run to the neighbor and borrow a shovel full of live coals.

Dangers surrounded them. Often Indians would hide among the trees, waiting to carry off anything left unguarded, or shoot an arrow into an unsuspecting enemy. It was the way of living in this new valley, simple, rough, and generally dangerous. Every man was forced to stand upon his own feet; depend upon himself.

Many new families streamed into the new settlement close upon the heels of these first settlers. Within a few weeks it was apparent that a new town site must be chosen to provide room for this larger group.

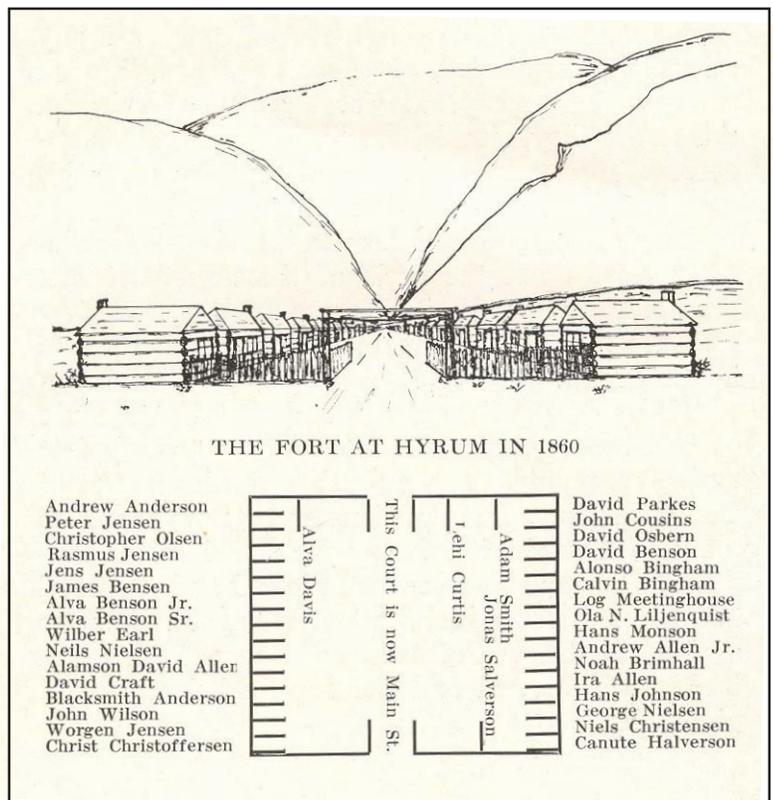
Early in April it was found that water could be had by digging wells from ten to twenty feet deep at a point one mile south and a little west of Camp Hollow. Preparations were now made to move to the new site. Men were sent into the canyon for logs, while other men plowed and prepared 100 acres of land just west of Camp Hollow for spring planting. Potatoes, corn, wheat, oats and barley were sowed and the big field fenced with pine poles.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW TOWN SITE

The last of April, after living at Camp Hollow almost a month the settlers began to move to the new location. The houses were built facing on each side of a long, wide street that began half way down on the street north of the square and extended east to the foot of the hill. The end of each house was connected with a stockade fence. When the huge gates at each end of the street were closed, it formed a very effective fort. Here the settlers were safe from any ordinary Indian uprising.

The houses were cabins, about 16 ft. wide and 20 ft. long, made of heavy logs from the trees cut down in the canyon to the east and hauled from ten to fifteen miles to the fort. The logs were notched together. The earth served as a hard, flat floor. Sometimes a floor was made with thick split logs, the split side up over cross logs, held in place with wooden pins. The house had only one door, which was made of heavy planks and



hung on iron hinges. There were very few glass window panes. Greased paper served to let in light. One could not see through it. The danger from Indians was so great that there were no windows on the outside of the houses.

The furniture in the cabins, like the rest of frontier things was mostly homemade. Proud were the families who had a few factory made articles. The table from which the family ate their food was a smooth board set on four posts. Chairs and three-legged stools were made to match. Bedsteads were made by laving rough boards across small logs, with legs made of other large sticks. A tick stuffed with grass was a luxury. Rough-woven blankets and an occasional buffalo-robe was the bedding. Cooking utensils were heavy kettles and pots that could be used over the fireplace.

A Bowery was built on the north side of the street about halfway between the two ends of the fort, and here they held religious services on Sunday. This place was a general meetinghouse for civic gatherings, as well as for religious meetings. It was the first dance hall and became the first theater.