A SKETCH OF MY LIFE

By Edwin Stott

My grandparents, John and Susan Stott, were born in Soyland, Yorkshire, England. My grandfather was born July 19, 1769, and his wife about 1777. They were baptized into the L. D. S. Church about 1843, but never left England. My father was born April 16, 1803, and my mother, Sarah Lees, August 22, 1800.

Mother died before we left, March 10, 1847, and was buried in the Rishworth Chapel Ward. We left Liverpool the same summer. My father, William Stott, my brother-in-law, his wife, my sister, Hannah Lees, their child about one year old named Sarah, my brother, William Henry, my sister Emma, and myself, which totaled seven.

We sailed in a sail ship named "Berlin." When out at sea two weeks, the wind ceased blowing and we were in a dead calm. Just at this time a disease struck us which was much like Cholera, and in twenty-one days, forty-three of the ship's passengers died and were cast into the sea. The wind began to blow again, and in six weeks and four days from the time we left Liverpool we landed in New Orleans. In three days we were on the move again, going up the Mississippi River to St. Louis, where we remained until the next spring. My father obtained work as a mechanic for nine dollars per week, and I worked for two dollars a week.

The next spring, (1849) we went up the Missouri to the State of Iowa, and located about eight or ten miles south of Kanesville. Father bought two fine cows for $2.00 each. He also bought a fifteen acre farm, from which we cut sufficient wild hay to last until the next spring. Father and William then returned to St. Louis for employment, that they might get money enough to continue our journey. They worked there until the spring of 1852, and then returned home in Iowa, bringing with them two wagons and five yoke of cattle and one team of horses and provisions that we might continue our journey. We sold our farm and left there with six yoke of cattle and one team of horses. We crossed the river on a flat boat a few miles below the present city of Omaha, Nebraska, where a company of forty wagons was organized with a captain over the whole group and a sub-captain over each ten wagons.

We were then in a wild country, where we had to contend with the Indians and the buffalo. We would travel from morning until in the afternoon, and then camp early enough so we could herd our cattle and let them get a good feed before dark, for we

would have to stake them with a short rope within our circle of wagons at night. In the morning we would again let them have a good feed before starting.

Shortly after we left Highland Grove, we crossed the Missouri on a flat boat. The first day out from there one of the drivers did or said something which displeased the captain, so the captain would not let him go with us and sent him back. His wagon was with the first ten wagons or in the first sub-company, and father's wagon was back in the third sub-company of ten. The captain came back and asked if I would drive this wagon. Father left it up to me, and so I went and drove the wagon.

The next river we crossed was the Elk Horn, and then the Loup-fork, which we crossed the same day. We continued our journey over rough roads which the pioneers before us made, and all the time we were guarding against Indians and buffalo.

When we were about six or seven hundred miles on the way across the plains, we divided into four companies, ten wagons in each company, and putting one day's drive between each small company. In this way we traveled on to Salt Lake City, and on into Provo. The captain, whose name was Isaac Bullock, did not wish to stay in Salt Lake City. I was still driving his team and so we went on with them and stayed with them for one week, expecting my folks to come. They did not come, so I returned to Salt Lake City alone and on foot to find them. When a mile or two on my way a man, with a light wagon and a horse team, trotting along, asked me to ride with him, which I gladly did. We trotted along until sundown and arrived at Mill Creek on the outskirts of Salt Lake City.

A family of newly arrived immigrants which was camped there asked me to stay with them over night and I did. After breakfast the next morning, I resumed the task of finding my folks. Traveling on to what is now known as South Temple Street, I turned west and in a short distance met a man coming to the east. He stopped and asked me if I was hunting my folks and I told him I was. He pointed to the west and said, "Do you see those wagons yonder?" I answered, "Yes, sir"; he said, "You will find your folks there." I went to the wagons and found them just as he had said. My people knew nothing of him and he had not been there. I would judge him to be a man from the spirit world.

In a few days we started to a small town called Fillmore, a town 150 miles south of Salt Lake City. The next summer the Indian troubles began. They began stealing cattle and killing men that were unprotected.

About this time a surveyor named Gunnison,[1] with his party came in from the east. They were surveying for a railroad. They followed the main course of the Sevier River down to Deseret, which is a little town about 40 miles west of Fillmore. A short distance up the river from Deseret was a company of soldiers. Those soldiers were under a captain named Morris. Ten of these soldiers went with this surveying party as guards.

This party made their camp on the edge of some willows. At night the Indians came upon them silently and crawled up as close to the camp as they could without being heard. The soldiers and surveyors cooked breakfast just at daylight and were all around the table when the Indians broke in on them yelling and hooting and shooting at them with a few guns which they owned, and also their bows and arrows.

They took the party so much by surprise that they were confused and did not know what to do. Their guns were not right at hand, and consequently the party was all killed excepting one man. He made his way back to Morris' camp and told of the disaster which had come to these men. Morris, with his soldiers, went down next day and about night found their remains. He was afraid to go back in the night for fear of Indians. Consequently they stayed there all night, and at daybreak started back to camp. Morris sent a rider to Salt Lake City to tell the Governor, Brigham Young. Young then sent a message to Fillmore to Henry Standage, the captain of the Militia, who in turn called a party of men to go to the scene of the massacre and gather up their remains and bury them. I was one of the company called. Morris sent the soldiers with the company. He took me by the hand and said, "Goodby" for he never expected to see me again. So we went to the scene of the massacre and were immediately surrounded by Indians. They were armed with guns and bows and arrows, ready for fight. We were also well armed. The Indians circled around us running and yelling. This continued for a short time and then they left us, very likely thinking that our chances were about as great as theirs. We then continued gathering up the remains and burying them.

We then turned our attention to farming, but the Indian trouble grew greater. All were stealing cattle and horses, and were killing men at every opportunity. This condition lasted from 1854 until about 1864, when the Indian war chiefs began to die off, and peace came at last.

At this time I met Sarah Jane Holder and we were married in

[1]Killed October 26, 1853. See "Gunnison Massacre, Indian Version," by Josiah F. Gibbs, *Utah Historical Quarterly*, July, 1928, page 67.

1863. She was born in Crofton, Wakefield, England, in 1846. Her folks, who left England with her, were practically all killed by the terrible sickness called "mountain fever." The remainder who stayed in England were frightened by this calamity: therefore they never came over to this country.

In 1864, I was called to go back to the Missouri River after Mormon immigrants. Our company was composed of sixty wagons with eight head of oxen to the wagon, which made a total of four hundred eighty head of cattle in the company. My calling in the company, with three others, was the night herding of these cattle. It was a hard task, and I slept but very little night or day for six weeks. It was also a year of unusually high water, every creek and river being flooded. We had to swim our cattle and wagons in crossing the South Platte River. When we were on our journey about six hundred miles, we came to a section of country of much rain at that season of the year. We had rain and thunder storms every night for two weeks or more. We journeyed on and finally reached the Missouri River. The Mormon immigration was there ready to be loaded. We started back for Utah, but the Indians were very troublesome. A small company of three wagons, four mules to each wagon, bound for Oregon, traveled with us until we passed Fort Leavenworth, then they left us, as we were traveling too slow for them. But in two days we came upon the place where the Indians had killed them all, set fire to their wagons and stolen their mules. At this time the country was being settled to some extent. Men were coming out and taking up ranches and building homes. Indians were killing them and setting fire to their homes and stealing their belongings. As we were traveling along at night we could see the homes burning on the horizon. When we were about five hundred and forty miles on our journey we camped about one half mile from some freighters, forty wagons in all. They had been to Denver, Colorado, with their loads, and were on their way back. In the night we heard yelling and shooting. Presently we saw the fire start burning. The Indians had set fire to all the wagons and driven their cattle away and killed all the men.

As night herders we had many narrow escapes from the Indians. But the blessings of the Lord were upon us, and we landed home in safety.

In 1866, I moved from Fillmore to Meadow, which is eight miles south. Here I took up a farm and began farming and dairying.

CONTINUED BY HIS DAUGHTER—MRS. M. E. S. BECKSTRAND

After arriving in Meadow, father was alloted twenty acres of farm land. Later when he took up a larger farm of 160 acres for himself, the original 20 acres were taken from him.

When he came, there were no streets except the main highway through town. My parents lived with Uncle William Stott's family in Fillmore, until they got their own home built. I was born in Fillmore and my sister, Sadie, was born in a log room, which father erected as his first home in Meadow. Later in the same lot he erected an adobe house which is still standing on the corner west of Main Street and south of Center Street. Here two of my brothers, Edwin and Raymond, were born.

The old Meadow Creek followed the course of the Old Hollow until it reached the lot where stands the home of Elizabeth Stewart, and from there the stream turned southwest, and well do I remember it flowing past my grandfather's house, where the Howard Bushnell home now stands.

The men started working on roads to the canyons to get timber out for a schoolhouse. In 1867, one log room was completed on the present Tithing yard lot. Father was one of the first school teachers in Meadow. Logs were split and turned to use the flat part for the seat of the bench, then maple pegs were driven in for legs, and there were no back rests. Two years later another room was added to the schoolhouse. This house was used for all Ward[2] activities. In the summer time loads of green branches were brought down from the mountains and made into a bowery on the north side of the building and here the dances were held.

Early Utah history is replete with history of the drama, and here in this little log schoolhouse many glorious hours of entertainment were carried on. The principal worker, for a time in this line, was Jane Houth. In our Sunday meetings the music was furnished by Joun Neild, who played the violin.

The town had not been settled long when a "co-op" mercantile business was established. This proved to be a profitable enterprise for all interested. The home of William Stott in Fillmore was dragged to Meadow, and was placed on the corner where the Swallow store now stands. This housed the mercantile institution, and was the busy corner of the town.

Father was the second postmaster in Meadow and kept the office in his own home. For many years he ran the office, although it was not so remunerative—bringing him $4.00 a year. Someone

[2]An ecclesiastical unit of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), consisting of members of the Church presided over by a Bishop and two counselors and usually about one thousand people.

questioned him once as to why he kept the office, and he answered that he wanted to accommodate the people.

In the year 1876, he was married to Elizabeth Paul, and seven children resulted from this marriage: Paul, Arthur, Eva, Amy, Emma, William, Mable.

In his later life father was a great reader, being especially interested in history. Many prominent men came to interview him in respect to his early life here in Utah.

In 1920, he was placed in charge of the Stott genealogy and temple work, and it seemed that from that time, his whole interest was centered in his work. Due to his diligence he was the means of having religious ordinances performed for thousands of souls.

On February 14, 1928, he passed quietly away at Meadow, at the age of 92.