

Bernard Parry Evans

*Compiled by Margot Seymour Schulzke and Joan Seymour Hamblin,
with substantial contributions from histories by Bernard's daughter
Phebeth Evans Seymour and granddaughter Winnifred Williams Carrell.*



Bernard Parry Evans was born in April 10, 1850, in Holywell, Newmarket, Flintshire, North Wales, to Hugh Evans and Phoebe Jones Evans. Their second child, Bernard had one older sister, Lydia, and three younger brothers, John, William and Edward.

Holywell is a parish in the county of Flint, Wales, about 207 miles northwest of London. A mile and a half from the center of town is a station of the Chester and Holyhead Railway which was completed in 1850. In the early part of the 18th century, Holywell was described as a poor-looking village, its streets unpaved, the houses thatched with straw and having no market. The present town (late 1800s) exhibits a most gratifying contrast, the houses are neat and well-built, and those facing the main street which is of considerable length, running from east to west, are lighted with gas.

The town has a fine spring of water called "St. Winifred's Well" which bursts forth from under a hill and rises into a basin, 12 feet by 7 which is covered over by a chapel, now converted to a school, supported by light Gothic pillars, built by the mother of Henry VII. The roof over the well is finely carved in stone with the legend of St. Winifred. The spring contains over 240 tons of water that will replenish itself in two minutes. (Proved by a wager in July, 1831).



St. Winifred's Holywell, for which the town is named. "Her well at Holywell has been a place of pilgrimage and healing – the only such place in Britain with a continuous history of public pilgrimage for over 13 centuries."



St. Winifred's, the parish church, Holywell: It is situated on the hill over the well. Near the town is Mostyn Hall, originally built prior to the reign of Henry VI, where Henry, Earl of Richmond, later Henry VII, laid the foundation of his plan to overthrow the House of York, in which he subsequently succeeded. The parish in 1851 contained 11,501 inhabitants and in 1861 was 10,000.

Bernard's father, Hugh, was president of the Denbighshire Conference of the Church: he received correspondence from Thomas Evans Jeremy (possibly a church clerk or official) which was recorded as follows: "April 1, 1862. Wrote a letter to brother Hugh Evans President of the Denbighshire Conference informing him that I will attend conference there Sunday the 13th Instant."

Hugh's uncle, John Parry, was an early leader of the Church in North Wales, previously the minister of another congregation, and presided over several Atlantic Mormon emigrations. Emigrating originally in 1849, John became the founding director of the Tabernacle Choir. He surely played an important role in the conversion of the Evans family. His son John is reported to have loaned Hugh and his family some of the funds for them to emigrate. (Several of their Parry cousins were stonemasons and played a major role in the construction of the Manti Temple.)

Hugh was a saddler and maker of harnesses, as had been generations before him -- at least to his paternal grandfather. Hugh Evans shows up in Newmarket as an eighteen year old in the 1841 census, when he was probably an apprentice. He worked in his trade from at least 1851 to 1862, as recorded in the British census.

Much of the employment in Flintshire came from the coal mines, and "not until 1860 was the starting age for underground workers raised from ten to twelve years."¹ While his children were not likely to be employed apart from working for him, they were probably were at a very young age. It was the general practice. Between the time he was eight and twelve, when they emigrated, Bernard was surely working long hours—either learning his father's trade or possibly in the mines. But by 1860, the mines in the Flint area were becoming unprofitable, and a negative impact on the saddle and harness business was inevitable.

Bernard's mother, Phoebe Jones Evans, died in 1858, leaving four young children. Edward was just one year old when their mother died. William, six years old, had died earlier the same year, but four children survived. Lydia, the eldest, was fourteen, Bernard eight and a half, and John four. Their mother had been born and raised in Llansannon, Denbigh, Denbighshire, Wales, not far from Holywell, but in a different Welsh county. When Phoebe passed away she was only thirty-five. Her young children and her husband would have been devastated by her loss. She was buried November 30, 1858, in Trelawnyd, Flintshire, Wales--the Welsh name for Newmarket.

As of this writing, we don't have a cause of death for either Bernard's mother or little brother, but various epidemics were common, particularly cholera. The industrial towns, which included Flint and Holywell (as well as Merthyr Tydfil, further south in Wales, where the John Brown family in our ancestry lived for a time) were notorious in this era for poor living conditions—as such conditions reportedly prevailing over most of Wales. As a tradesman, Hugh's family may have lived better than some, but the contamination implied by a common lack of sanitation would have its effect on the community as a whole.

With the death of his wife, Hugh was surely in need of a mother for his children. Hugh, as a harness maker needed to be gone from home a great deal of the time. He hired a girl to help out in the home. She was young Jane Roberts, the sister of the wife of Hugh's cousin, John Parry, Jr. Jane proved to be a fine, dependable girl, and Hugh married her in May 7, 1860 in Liverpool, Lancaster County,

¹ <http://www.fflint.co.uk/industry.html>

England. Hugh was 37 and Jane was 25. They moved from Liverpool to Holywell, Flint, North Wales where their first child was born on Feb. 1, 1861. They had nine children in all; the first two died as infants.

When Bernard was nine or ten years old his family desired to come to America to join with other members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Bernard, his father and new wife and their baby, plus his own sister and brothers left for America in 1862. The family emigrated from Wales via Liverpool aboard the *John J. Boyd*, a three-masted ship. "The ship was a "square-rigger... She was a three-decker with a square stern, round tuck, and billethead.... under the command of Captain J. H. Thomas, her master since 1857, the John J. Boyd sailed from Liverpool on 23 April 1862 with 702 Latter-day Saints aboard." We can imagine the combination of awe, anxiety and excitement twelve-year-old Bernard must have felt as the ship left port. He may have stood watching the land recede until it disappeared in the distance. He would never see Britain again, but a great adventure lay ahead.

"Apostles Charles C. Rich, Amasa M. Lyman, and George Q. Cannon organized the company and appointed Elders James S. Brown as president and John Lindsay and Joseph C. Rich as his counselors. There were also five other returning missionaries besides the presidency. After a thirty-nine-day voyage, which though successful was somewhat longer than usual because of head winds, the Saints landed on 1 June at New York."²

Bernard's older sister, Lydia Evans Matheson, wrote, "One night a severe storm arose and raged for several days.... During this storm the main mast was broken, and the captain gave the Mormons credit for saving them by their courage, help, faith, and prayers." Another passenger, Mary Anne Williams Leatham, recorded, "We had been on the way about three weeks when a terrific storm overtook us. Our ship sprung a leak and for 36 hours every man had been ordered to the pumps."

Ann Pitchforth, also a passenger, wrote a vivid description of the storm: "Wave lashed on wave, and storm on storm, every hour increasing; all unsecured boxes, tins, bottles, pans, etc., danced in wild confusion, cracking clashing, jumbling, rolling, while the vessel pitched, and tossed, and bounced till people flew out of their berths on the floor, while others held on with difficulty; thus we continued for eight days -- no fires made, nothing cooked -- biscuits and cold water; the waves dashed down the hold into the interior of the vessel, hatchway then closed, all in utter darkness and terror, not knowing whether the vessel was sinking or not; none could tell -- all prayed -- an awful silence prevailed -- sharks and fins presented themselves, and doubts and fears; one awful hour after another passing, we found we were not yet drowned, some took courage and lit the lamps; we met in prayer; we pleaded the promises of God -- faith prevailed, the winds abated, the sky cleared, the fires were again lit, the luxury of a cup of tea and a little gruel. Oh, how ungrateful we are for our mercies, because they are so common."

Lydia concludes her account of the storm: "When the storm was over, the leak was repaired and we went safely on our way. We children were permitted on the deck again."

² http://www.norwayheritage.com/p_ship.asp?sh=johjb (Although some family histories report William died while crossing the Atlantic and was buried at sea, he had died several years before in Wales.)



The John J. Boyd Square Rigger

In this era, the immigrants would have gone through customs at Castle Gardens, in New York Harbor. Due to the Civil War having begun, they would most likely have traveled up through Albany in New York State to the Great Lakes, as most companies did during this period, and then dropped down into Illinois and finally to Florence, Nebraska, probably arriving there on a steamer up the Missouri River. Most companies in this period of time reported train travel—where trains were used—as being rustic, to put it politely. They were frequently transported in cattle cars with evidence of recent occupation, and backless benches.

“They traveled from the east coast by train to St. Joseph, Missouri. Some of their travels were through the devastated areas of the Civil War. Their journey continued up the Missouri River to Florence, Nebraska.”

At Florence, the Evans family joined the Homer Duncan Wagon Company, departing there July 1 and arriving in Utah on September 24, 1862. Twelve people were assigned to each wagon, which required every able-bodied person to walk the entire distance. It was the first of the “church companies,” powered by wagons, teams and teamsters who had crossed the Rocky Mountains east from Utah in the spring, in order to meet the mostly British or Scandinavian companies at the end of the rail line in July. The oxen were surplus, donated to the effort by Utah settlers.

“The Church sent in all six companies (262 wagons, 293 men, 2,880 oxen, 143,315 rounds of flour, etc.) to the Missouri River in 1862, to assist poor Saints immigrating to the Valley.”³ Nearly six thousand saints emigrated from Europe and Great Britain that season, with thirteen wagon companies departing from Florence in that year alone.⁴ So, in addition to his family, Hugh, Jane, Lydia, John, Edward, Bernard had a lot of company on the plains.

³ <http://user.xmission.com/~nelsonb/enarrative.htm#1862>

⁴ <http://heritage.uen.org/companies/Wcbb5a9542bfa0.htm>

There were two independent companies of Mormon immigrants, the provisioning of which may give us some idea of what was required for these groups to travel. One of them, in charge of Elder Chr. A. Madsen, was composed of 264 persons, 40 wagons, 14 horses, 174 oxen, 99 cows, 37 heifers, 7 calves, 6 dogs and 10 chickens, and brought along 22 tents, 32 cooking stoves, 5 revolvers and 37 rifles. For the purposes of a company composed of 500 persons we can roughly multiply those figures.

Homer Duncan's clerk wrote to Church authorities, "I am directed by Captain Duncan to forward you an account of the progress of the Company crossing the Plains under his charge. Since my last letter, from Deer Creek, dated August 5, I am pleased to report to you that this Company has enjoyed the blessings of the Almighty in a marked manner—that health peace and happiness has attended the camp. We have had but one death which occurred on the 20th August to Anne Jane John aged 8 months daughter of David and Mary John from South Wales. ...A few accidents have occurred to the wagons, but such only that could be repaired with but little delay to our travelling and none have had to be left behind. Our cattle are at present in very good condition, though many have had to be shod. We have lost two head (an ox by death and a cow left behind)..."

All of which pretty much describes the conditions under which Bernard and his family crossed the plains from Florence to Salt Lake City. None of the pioneer crossings were "easy" but this company fared better than most.

Sites Along the Mormon Trail



The company started west on July 1, 1862. That was a full month after their ship arrived in New York Harbor (June 1, 1862.)

Excerpts from Thomas Beard's record: While Bernard made no diary or journal of which we are aware, the notes from Thomas Beard can give us the sense of his experience.

“The teams that came from Utah to meet the emigrants to take them over the plains to Utah were very late in coming to Florence on account of high water that year. We had to wait 6 weeks before we could start our journey of 1000 miles over the plains. My wife, our little girl Mary Hannah and I came with Captain Duncan about July 1, 1862. ...

“There were 50 wagons and there were covers over bows with white canvas and each wagon had 2 yoke of oxen [four oxen] to pull it and 10 persons with their bedding to each wagon, [one] after the other.

“When we stopped for dinner or at night, the first wagon would stop in a suitable place for camping under the orders of the Captain. Then the next wagon drove close to it, so close that the cattle wouldn't pass between the wagons and the 50 wagons did the same with their wagon tongues inside the [corral] this made for they were driven in such a manner to form a circle . . . Where we camped, there were hundreds of fires lighted to cook food for the people.

“We traveled along the Platt[e] River for some hundreds of miles and it furnished us with wood for our fires. When we left it we traveled through a country that had no trees in it. There were occasionally a few dwarf willows ranging from 2 feet to 4 feet high. As we traveled we pulled the dry ones out and put them in bundles and carried them on our backs to make fires at our camping ground. We had sacks in which we gathered the droppings of buffalos which had become dry. These we called buffalo chips. These made fires. ...

“When we passed out of this barren country and came to where the sage brush grows, we could make better fire. We passed by large rocks which looked like an old England Castle. These were known as "Castle Rocks". A little farther on, was a narrow split in high mountains where the Sweetwater runs through it. I was tempted to go through it. When I got nearly to the other end of it the water became so deep, I was obliged to turn back. . . . We could not see the train anywhere. We found the trail and followed it. It got dark, but we saw the camp fires which guided us to the camp.

“There was something in the air of Devils Gate or in the mountain which affected me very greatly for I was very sick next morning. I was so sick I could not raise my head, nor did I, until the train got to Echo Canyon. . . . Next day I was able to sit up in bed and as we passed Echo Rock, the teamsters cracked their whips so hard the echo shook me for they sounded like guns going off. We traveled through Coalville⁵ which consisted at that time of 12 or 15 houses in Sept. 1862. We had traveled nearly 1000 miles without seeing any houses except U.S. Mail Stations [the Pony Express] which were 10 to 15 miles apart, and many days we traveled farther in the country away from them to get feed for the cattle.

“When the people saw Coalville, many lifted their hats and shouted for joy. It was the first settlement of the Saints in Utah the travelers had seen.”

⁵ Coalville, in Summit County, Utah, was in the same stake as Kamas and Oakley, also in Summit County -- and very much a part of the Seymour-Evans families' lives.

We can imagine the joy of the weary travelers in seeing their first Mormon settlement, small though it was. Virtually all of the travelers had experienced some degree of persecution for having accepted the gospel. They had dreamed and labored long and hard to come where they would be safe, no longer ostracized or ridiculed for their beliefs. Now they were seeing with their own eyes homes and communities of saints, a thing of which they previously had only dreamed.

“Next day the train traveled to Parleys Park where the immigrants’ agent met us and took our names and caused us to sign notes of what we owed to the P.E. funds. . . .”⁶ ##

After their arrival in Zion, Bernard lived in the Millcreek area of the Salt Lake Valley for a period of time, during which he became acquainted with Eliza Hughes, his future wife, who was then fifteen years old. She was then living with her elder sister, Lucy Hughes Taylor. Barney and Liza, as they were known, were originally just good friends. They had some things in common. Both had emigrated as twelve-year-old children of British converts, crossing the Atlantic and walking across the plains; both had lost their mothers while pre-adolescent. Both had Welsh ancestry, the Hughes family being of Welsh Quaker descent, out of Radnorshire. Their fathers were both skilled craftsmen: while Hugh Evans was a saddler, Eliza’s father was a shoemaker who had employed some twenty workers in his shop in Herefordshire.

“During the next four years, Eliza and Bernard (usually known as Liza and Barney) courted and fell in love, and married in 1873 when he was 23 and she was nineteen” in Salt Lake City, Utah. “Shortly after their marriage, they went to live in Kamas Valley, Summit County, Utah. It was there that their first child was born, a little girl named Phoebe Jane, named after Bernard’s mother, Phoebe Jane Evans—and possibly also in tribute to his stepmother, Jane Roberts. The little girl lived only five days.”⁷

Later another daughter was named in her memory: Phebeth Ann Evans. She was our grandmother. This writer/granddaughter knew her well, sometimes spending the night with her in Salt Lake City when she was in her late 80s, while I was a college student at BYU in the late 50s, sharing her bed and listening avidly to the family history she gladly shared. Getting her stamp of approval on family group sheets and pedigrees I was copying or researching. Later bringing my husband-to-be to her for her approval, and still later, bringing our children to visit her when we lived in Spanish Fork in the mid-sixties.

Bernard “was a great lover of horses. One time he and some other men caught a wild horse in the hills and put it in the corral. While they were eating their dinner they noticed that Phebeth was missing. Knowing her, they knew where to look. They all ran for the corral. Sure enough she was with the wild horse. The horse seemed to sense that she was just a child, for it was standing still, very contented to be rubbed and petted by Phebeth. Her father dared not go near lest the horse

⁶ *Charles R. Seymour, of Oakley, Summit County, Utah, Hugh Evans’ great-grandson, wrote in his personal history of visiting in the home of George Beard in Coalville while on a church assignment, spending the night in his artist’s studio, where some very fine oil paintings of Utah winter scenes hung. This is probably a son or grandson of one of the Beard brothers in the above account. George Beard’s granddaughter, another artist, Marilee Beard Campbell, is a long-time close friend of Hugh Evan’s 3rd great granddaughter, Margot Seymour Schulzke, Charles Seymour’s daughter. Lives intersect, especially in the Church. <http://lib.byu.edu/digital/beard/>*

⁷ Maxwell-Seymour History, p 348.

would become upset; so he peeked through a crack in the board fence, got her attention and gradually coaxed her away without disturbing the horse.”

“Eliza and Bernard moved to Kamas to live with his father, Hugh Evans and his second family. Later, they moved back to Salt Lake City and lived there several years, where five of their children were born. The spring that Phebeth was six years old (1882), the family went to Kamas, where Bernard became a farmer, combined with other work. That year the snow was still deep and the spring air made a deep slush through which to travel. When the family came to the place where Keetley now is [now under the waters of the Jordanelle Reservoir], her father made the children take off their shoes and walk barefoot in order to keep the shoes dry and clean.

“Word of their coming had gone on ahead, and John Warr and Hugh Evans came to meet them at what is known as Ure’s Ranch (on what is called Bitner’s Flats). Eliza had fallen off the sleigh once into the slush, and by the time they arrived home at the Evans place⁸ in Kamas they were a wet, cold family much in danger of sickness from exposure.

“He bought four lots in the town which made 10 acres of land and another 20 acres of farm land. He built a two-room log house on the 10 acres that was their home. They had two more children after moving back to Kamas. He farmed, hauled lumber to Park City mines and followed the thresher every year from the beginning of season until it ended.”

“After Phebeth had been in Kamas only a little, while her Aunt Lucy Taylor⁹ asked if she could come and stay with her in Millcreek. Mrs. Taylor kept boarders and there was much to do. Although Phebeth was only six years old, she and her cousin Jen Taylor were often left to do the work while Mrs. Taylor went to town. Aunt Lucy also had people sewing at her home. One day it literally rained toads. Phebeth went out and gathered toads in her pinafore apron; then she brought them in the house and threw them all over Jen as she sat sewing. Jen vowed she’d get even and later that day she gave Phebeth a whipping with a gooseberry bush. Phebeth didn’t feel she really deserved that, so she packed her things and ran away. She started to go home to Kamas and had gone as far as the reservoir in Parley’s canyon before they found her.

“That night her mother, who was in Kamas, dreamed about Phebeth all night. When morning came she said to Bernard, “I think Phebeth wants to come home.” He went for her that very day. When he got there he said to her, “Hello, Snook-a-dike, let’s go home. “

He was a lover of horses and had many. Phebeth Evans Seymour recalls that among them was a team of white work horses that he liked to show in the local Pioneer Day parades. The horses had a special barn, feed, the best of hay and grain, and one tablespoon of flax seed every day; that made the hair shine like glass and always very fat, well-taken care of. I guess that was his hobby if he had one. He was noted for his fine horses. ¹⁰

⁸ It could be a assumption here that the “Evans’ place” was where Hugh Evans lived across from the Kamas city park, and may have been the same house in which Bernard Parry Evans and his family also lived later on.

⁹ Lucy was the older sister of Eliza Hughes, Phebeth’s mother.

¹⁰ Biography of Bernard Parry Evans by his granddaughter, Winifred Williams Carrell, 1984



Bernard Parry Evans – Eliza Hughes Home in Kamas, Utah

Eventually, Bernard built the Victorian home still standing in Kamas, which at last visit was in beautiful condition. Winnifred W. Carrell wrote, “After my mother left home, Grandfather built a nice home. It had seven rooms, two large porches, one the north and one on the south. I always admired the house, the windows and porches were all trimmed with cut-out wood of fancy design.” Eliza loved beautiful things and was known for keeping a tidy, nicely-appointed home.

His granddaughter Winifred wrote, “He was a good provider for his family but was so very strict. ... For many years he raised a truck garden, the townspeople came and bought their vegetables. He made a hot bed, planted the seeds in March and in May the plants were ready to plant in the ground. His produce was earlier than most. His garden always looked like a flower garden. He planted a row of poppies one year. The seeds would fall; next year they came up by working the land. They got scattered all over the garden patch but he never hoed them up. We kids used to pick them by the arms full, every color of the rainbow.

“He always had bees. I can see the slabs of honey as he took them from the hive and put them over a large dishpan and let the honey drip from the comb. Wouldn’t be surprised if we kids didn’t dab our finger in to taste.

“After my mother, Lavina, was married, he built a seven-room new home. There were still six children at home. He sent two of his sons to BYU College in Provo, Utah. One graduated as a school teacher. He could play the cornet horn; if he was in a good mood he would play it and sing for us children.

“He was always very thoughtful and good to outside people and always had two or three people living at his home; some stayed a year at a time. He would sit out on the fence, seeing a traveler (one or many) going by, and he would invite them in to eat. Stranger or not, his home was always open to those he thought needed something to eat and a bed to sleep.

His daughter, Phebeth Evans Seymour, said, “A man named John Ashby years later told me that if it had not been for Barney and Eliza, he would not be there that day, for at one time they kept him and his whole family from starving while he was unable to get work. He said that every day the Evans would bring milk, bread, vegetables or anything they had to help them out.”¹¹



¹¹ There was no Church welfare system until the 1930s, and people provided charity to individuals as they might accidentally become aware of a need.

Lucy, the youngest sister, in front with Eliza Hughes Evans, their mother; in back, our grandmother Phebeth Ann Evans (Seymour) and Lavinnia Charlotte, the eldest surviving sister.

“His youngest son married and lived with him until he passed away at the age of 75, with a stroke, on Jan. 7, 1922. He was buried in Francis, Utah cemetery on Jan. 10, 1922.

“Grandfather was tall, slim, had red hair and blue eyes.”¹²

The graves of Bernard Parry Evans, his wife Eliza Hughes, Hugh Evans and Jane Roberts are all visible in the pioneer cemetery at Kamas, along with a number of other Evans family members. We have also visited what is almost certainly the grave of either his maternal grandfather, Bernard Parry, or his 2nd great-grandfather, also Bernard Parry, in Newmarket, Flintshire, Wales, in a churchyard there. ##



Graves of Eliza Hughes Evans and Bernard Parry Evans at Kamas, Utah. As you face this old cemetery, their graves are far right and to the rear.

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¹² Ibid.