

THE LIFE OF EDWARD HALL

Edward Hall was born 15 November 1813, at Waterbury, Conn., He was the son of Jacob Hall and his wife, Polly (Molly) Pritchard. He and his twin brother, Edwin, were the ninth and tenth of eleven children. Their father was a tailor and could not very well keep his children employed and so at the age of fifteen, Edward and Edwin started west to "seek their fortunes".

They stopped at Cleveland, Ohio, where they got a job chopping cord wood and splitting rails and doing any other odd jobs they could find. The brothers were inseparable and through their industry and economy, by 1841, they had acquired 1300 acres of land in Lee County, Iowa and had built a fine house. At this time, they learned of a farm for sale in Brown County, Illinois. The Hall brothers went there and purchased the land in December 1841. On the farm was a tenant, Thomas Ballinger, who had a large family of girls. After purchasing the farm, Edward and Edwin returned home. In January, 1842, they returned to the farm in Illinois and asked Mr. Ballinger's consent to wed two of his daughters and were given permission. Edward often told that he courted only long enough to whittle the rail in two on the fence on which they were sitting.

On the 2nd of February, 1842, Edward married Nancy Ballinger and Edwin married her sister, Scythia Jane. Three days later the Halls took their brides and started for their home in Iowa. In 1844, they sold out and moved into Mahaska County, Iowa. They settled in what was called the Skunk Bottoms. They stayed two years and then moved to Polk County, Iowa. Here they pre-empted 360 acres of land, part of which is the present location of the city of Des Moines- at the junction of the Racoon and the Des Moines rivers.

Built on it was the first fort in Des Moines. From 1843 to 1845, Captain B.F. Allen ordered the Indians removed to Kansas and then the fort was abolished. The fort's rows of well built huts were eagerly seized upon in 1846 by waiting settlers. In the list of those occupying huts in Des Moines row, the names of Edward and Edwin Hall are given.

On an early official plat of the city of Fort Des Moines, the portion north of Bird's Run is called Hall's Ridge. On a later (1854) lithographed map in the State Historical Library, the dam across the Des Moines River with Hall's mill on the west bank is shown. Also Edward's and Edwin's farm is shown, which now forms part of Capitol Hill, where is located a state capitol building. The early recorded deeds of Polk County show the vast holdings of the brothers. They put dams across the Des Moines River and built the first grist mill, and also a good brick house on the bluff above the mill.

Up until this time, neither Edward nor Edwin had heard much except an occasional rumor concerning the Mormons, but during the construction of this work (the dam) six Mormon ~~were~~ elders were employed, among them Lorenzo Johnson, who later married the eldest daughter of Edward- Mary Ann.

Having heard of the wonders of California, the brothers decided that they would like to secure some land in that region. So, in May 1850, Edward and his family started westward, leaving Edwin to follow later.

They traveled with a Mormon emigrant train for protection- the David Evans company, which arrived in Salt Lake City, 2 Sept, 1850. They stopped first at Mill Creek and then went on to Provo, Utah, about fifty miles south. Here they

rented one large room for the family which consisted of Edward and his wife Nancy and their three children: Mary Ann, born 20 Dec. 1842 at Montrose, Iowa; William Isaac also born at Montrose, 30 Sept. 1844; and Sarah Jane born 12 Oct. 1846 at Des Moines, Iowa. A fourth child, John Thomas, born 10 Dec 1848 at Des Moines, died 3 Aug. 1849. Their fifth child James Edward was born 10 Oct. 1850, soon after their arrival in Provo. They took up squatters claim to 40 acres on the north side of Spring Creek, 12 Sept. 1850, just six days ahead of the original pioneers of Springville, Utah. They put up wild hay. The winter was so mild that Edward walked back and forth from Provo to Springville to take care of his livestock.

On 10 Mar, 1851, he moved his family to Springville. Here six more children were born: Nephi Edwin, 29 July 1852, Joseph Smith, 12 Dec. 1854; Martha Eleanor 7 Apr. 1857; Harriet Elizabeth, 22 Apr. 1861; Julia Rozeltha, 12 June 1863; and Lydia Mariah, 26 Nov. 1865. The last two little girls died in infancy.

During theyear 1851, Edward went on to California, leaving his family on the homestead in Springville. In California, he purchased a Spanish Land Grant of 1000 acres where the city of San Bernardino now stands. He was wonderfully thrilled by that beautiful land. His wife had accepted the Gospel while crossing the plains and was baptized, but Edward did not. He had observed that the Mormons in the pioneer company were a very ordinary lot, full of faults and shortcomings and he was inclined to look for perfection in people who professed to be the Lord's chosen. Even the miraculous healing of his little daughter, Sarah who had a crippled hip, didn't change him. Now far away from home, he fell very ill, with some kind of a fever. In his hour of need his mind reverted to little Sarah and her healing. He probably also remembered his wife, Nancy and her strong testimony and her faith. He sent for the Mormon elders and received a healing at their hands. Immediately upon receiving baptism, he set about disposing of his land, finally accepting 100 Spanish ponies in exchange. With this bunch of horses he began his return trip home, arriving there with but sixteen of the original number of ponies. Indians and Spaniards managed to get the rest.

Edward became a sincere member of the church and hired Franklin D. Richards (the first president of the Genealogical Society and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve) to do research for him and when the St. George Temple was ready, he and Nancy and some others went there and did work for their dead.

At home from California, he moved his family to the southeast corner of the intersection of second east and second north streets. He took up a homestead of 360 acres along the east hills. Of this he gave land to his children for homes. He dug irrigation ditches and along the banks planted trees, mostly cottonwood.. Later many people came there for picnics. He was one of the first horticulturists in the area. He was a road builder and a timber man. He cut and hauled wood and fence posts. He and James B. Porter built the first grist mill in Springville. He also furnished red pine bark for the tannery.

In 1864, after Edwin's death, he returned to Iowa and settled his affairs there. Then he returned to Springville, bringing with him, three spans of horses, three light rigs, four stoves, four sets of dishes, four clocks and many other good things for himself and his three married children. Accompanying him home were two of Edwin's sons, George and Joseph and Mell McCornwell. George remained in Utah while the others returned to Iowa.

Edward was always an early riser and a man of temperance. He was a very quiet home man, ever willing for his wife to live her own public life, as he said she was gifted as a leader. His motto was "Better suffer wrong than to do wrong". He passed away at the age of sevety-three on Aug. 26, 1886. He is buried in the city cemetery in Springville, Utah. His wife Nancy Eleanor, and some of their children along with other loved ones are buried near him.

No. 17

Springville City April 16, 1854

A Blessing by Emer Harris, Patriarch, upon the head of Edward, son of Jacob and Polly Hall, born 15 November, 1813, Middlebury, New Haven County, Connecticut. Bro. Edward, I lay my hands upon thy head in the name of Jesus of Nazareth even as stated in thy Chronology to confer upon thee a father's blessing, thou art a descendant of Ephraim and art entitled to all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, even conferred unto Joseph, even conferred by his father unto thy father, thou art also entitled to the Priesthood which is come down from thy fathers even unto thee, and shall be conferred unto thy posterity after thee, inasmuch as thou art faithful, thou hast a great work to do, in the name of the mighty God of Israel thou shalt have great power given unto thee to convince the Nations of the Earth that sit in darkness, thou shalt have wisdom given unto thee, thou shalt yet become a counselor in Israel thou shalt be blessed with the fruits of the Earth and shalt be brought through great straits and narrow places, through mighty faith thou shalt be able to overcome all difficulties, thou shalt become a stay to thy progenitors, they shall yet bless thee as their father, and thou shalt have the visitation of Angels, many blessings are in store for thee the desires of thy heart shall be given unto thee and there is no power on Earth or Hell shall be able to take them from thee, therefore my son be strong and fear not for thou shalt be able to overcome, walk carefully and circumspectly. These blessings I seal upon thy head in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Emer Harris, Patriarch

Recorded in Book A, page 16
No. 17
Charles W. Maeller (?)
Recorder
Provo, Utah

Edward Hall

Patriarchal blessing by Isaac Morley on the head of Edward Hall, son of Jacob and Mary, born Nov. 15, 1813, Middlebury, New Haven County Connecticut, Brother Edward, I place my hands upon your head in the name of Jesus, and I bless you in his name with a Father's blessing, I ratify all thy former seals of Priesthood for their fulfilment, thou art entitled to equal blessings with the seed of Abraham, I bless thee as one of the sons of Zion that thou mayst be numbered with them in the rolling forth of Christ's kingdom, there's a great work before thee, in redeeming thy progenitors it is thy gift by birthright to redeem thy Father's household that they may become heirs of Salvation. Preserve their welfare in thy memory, and thou shalt prosper in allthings thou shalt put thy hand to accomplish, both temporally and spiritually, the Lord had endued thy mind with the gift of meditation in this gift thou wilt receive the Keys of light, keys of thine exalation and the principles whereby man is to be redeemed from the fall, thou art of the blood of Joseph. Thou art entitled to the Keys of the Holy Priesthood which wilt endow thee with the gift of counsel with the gift of economy and I seal thee up by virtue of the Holy Priesthood unto eternal lives in the mansions of thy Father, even so, Amen.

Isaac Morley

Springville, Utah March 2, 1859

SAW AND GRIST MILLS.

The first mill within the limits of the county, as it was before the townships taken from Warren were restored, was erected in the Fall of 1843, by Captain Allen, who was associated in the enterprise with J. D. Parmalee. This mill was on Middle river, and was popularly known as Parmalee's mill. It was first operated for sawing lumber; and the following year facilities were added for grinding wheat.

The first mill in the Northern part of the county, was erected on Big Creek, Madison Township, by George Beebe in 1849.

William H. Meacham erected in 1847, the first mill in the county proper. It was built in what is called East Des Moines, and was operated as a saw mill by horse power. On the same site, the steam mill of J. S. Dean was afterwards erected; and the fine mill of Shepard & Perrior now occupies the same place. At the time Mr. Meacham was running his horse mill, a little saw mill was in existence at the place on Walnut Creek where the railroads now cross that stream. Edward and Edwin Hall built a water flouring mill on the same site on which the mill formerly run by Mr. Williams, now known as the Empire Mills of Jack & Toner, is standing.

B. F. Allen constructed a dam in 1848, two miles above the town on the Des Moines river. It was washed away in 1849.

Hezekiah Fagan erected a mill on Walnut Creek in 1849. Subsequently he was associated with Mr. Fitzsimmons, in operating this mill and another one which they built on Raccoon river.

In 1849, B. F. Allen and C. C. Van built a steam saw-mill South of 'Coon; and the same year Cole, Winchester, and Dean erected the first steam flouring mill on the East side, now known as Shepard & Perrior's mill.

Previous to the building of mills in the county, it was necessary at times, to take grists overland nearly two hundred miles to the mills in Southeastern Iowa. During these protracted trips for bread, much suffering was often endured, not only by the persons who executed the long journey in bad weather; but by the families who were waiting at home for the needed sustenance.

The property known as the Farmer's Mills, East Des Moines, was first built by Daniel Stutzman for a woolen mill. It was transferred to Skinner Brothers for a plow factory; thence to Wheeler, Henry & Depew, for Hominy mills; thence to Joseph Williams, and Ed. Keeler, who changed it to a flouring mill, with two run of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet burs, giving it a capacity of two hundred bushels per day. The hominy and corn departments, operated by J. D. Williams have the same capacity.

Egle Flouring Mills, operated by steam, were established in the city by D. A. Tyrrell in 1873. The building is a three story brick. The establishment grinds from forty to fifty thousand bushels of wheat per annum.

Capital Mills, B. C. White proprietor, commenced running in 1865. The building is a three story brick; and the capacity of the mill is one hundred bushels per day.

The Flouring Mills of Gulick & Dye, East Fifth street, have been in successful operation for some time.

Ayres' steam mills, built in early times, in the town, were consumed by fire.

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*Centennial History of
Polk County, Iowa.
by J. M. Dixon -
Des Moines - 1876
(call num. Iowa P. L. C.)*