

HISTORY OF SOME OF THE SEELEY OWEN FAMILY BY J. IRA EARL A NEPHEW
OF SEELEY OWEN. J. IRA EARL'S MOTHER, LOIS CAROLINE OWEN EARL
WAS THE SISTER OF LYDIA ANN OWEN, WIFE OF SEELEY OWEN.

This is a letter written by J. Ira Earl of Overton, Nevada, Jan. 13, 1926
to his son, Ira J. Earl of Las Vegas, Nevada.

My dear son Ira:

I am busy most of the time, but am not getting much done. I have been trying to get time to write you and tell you how much I appreciated your letter of December 22 and to thank you for the \$25.00 you sent me. I feel very grateful for the kindness of my children, Marion gave me \$25.00 on the car besides many other things. The girls are giving me a check each month so I am not distressed to make the payments. I feel that all I ever did for my children is coming back heaped up and running over. Milton is looking after the farm and directing the boys, so I am relieved of all cares of that nature. Kenneth is performing some splendid missionary work in the Eastern States, for which I am very thankful.

If I live until the 6th of September, I will have passed three-fourths of a century in mortality. I have seen many things that are quite marvelous to me when I think back over my life. I have met and conversed with William H. Hopper, Utah's first delegate to Congress. Many times have I shaken the hand of and conversed with Brigham Young, John Taylor, Orson Pratt and Wilford Woodruff. Some of the grandest men of this or any dispensation.

While the Gospel is the same in all ages, it sometimes seems to me, that the warm hand shake and hearty greeting is lacking today. In fact, that high class spirituality, that earnest devotion, that sincere inner conviction that this is the Zion of the last days, spoken of by the prophets of old, is in a measure lacking among the people in general.

Many there are that hold the Melchisedek Priesthood and have been in the Temple, that have filled missions, haven't faith enough to pay their tithing. When I think of the early Elders of the Church, leaving their families at the call of the Prophet Joseph, going into foreign countries, giving years of service to spread the Gospel, and gather scattered Israel. I think what a wonderful testimony they must have had. I think of my own Father and Mother and what they had to pass through. Also Father Bunker and his first wife, before they came to the mountains and of the faith of Aunt Mary Bunker, Viola's mother, who came from far off Scotland. Ira, we scarcely know what the word sacrifice means.

There are many things told me by my parents while I was a boy, that are just as bright in my mind as they were fifty or sixty years ago. I suppose they wished to impress me with the same faith they had, and as I grew to manhood, I would remember what they passed through for their faith in the Gospel. When I reflect on their splendid courage and faith, under the most trying circumstances, I am often moved to tears. My father's journal and Church History bears out all they have told me and many more things they had to pass through to plant the feet of their posterity in the mountains of Israel.

While I am thinking of these things, I may as well write a few of them. If I neglect it too long, they may never be written. My father, Sylvester Henry Earl, was the sixth son of Joseph Earl and Dorcas Tobitha Wixon Earl. He was born in Sciota County, Ohio on the 16th of August, 1815. He died at Middleton, Washington County, Utah on the 23rd of July, 1873, just 26 years to the day from the time he came into the Salt Lake Valley with the pioneers.

My mother, Louis Caroline Owen Earl, was born in Schuyler County, Illinois on the 8th of January 1818. She died at Bunkerville, Nevada on the 9th of March, 1884. You see I had Mother and three sisters to look after for over ten years after Father died. It might be well to add here that Father's blessing on my head when I was eight days old was that I should have a long and useful life and live to take care of my mother after we was gone to the other side of the veil.

When I was a young man, the mining camps and rich agricultural valleys of Nevada offered many inducements for young men to leave their homes and go there. Good wages were paid, while money was scarce in southern Utah, some returned with fine horses, fine clothes and money in their pockets. On the other hand, I remember that many of the young men that went never returned. It was pretty hard for a young man to go to the meetings, and dances clad in home made clothes, with little or no money to spend, while boys of his age that had been off to work could wear nice clothes, high top boots and have money to spend freely.

I had many an inward battle in those days, sometimes fought on bended knees, but I thank the Lord that my dear Mother's prayers and influence prevailed, that I stayed home and took care of her as long as she lived.

Father was 21 years old when he first heard of the Gospel. He was soon converted and baptized by Apostle Charles C. Rich. In the summer of 1837 he went to Farwest, Missouri where the saints were gathering at that time, having been driven out of Jackson, Caly and Ray counties. At the October conference he was ordained by Elder Hyrum Smith. He bought 90 acres of land, a yoke of oxen and several cows. He started in to clear the land and make a home. In February 1839, he was called to go on a mission to the states of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio with more faith than either education or experience in preaching, he started East.

Near Jacksonville, Missouri he met the Prophet Joseph coming with his family from Kirtland, Ohio. He tells the prophet he is going on a mission, but is lacking in experience and knowledge of the scriptures. He sits down on a log by the side of the road and is given a blessing by Joseph. He is told to go on his way rejoicing, that his tongue would be loosed, that the Bible shall no more be a sealed book, but to him it would be an open book, that he will bring many souls to a knowledge of the truth, and bring them to Zion with songs of everlasting joy, that he should not be confounded nor suffer harm. The Prophet's blessing, his hearty "good-by brother, and God bless you," is just what he needed.

He now goes on East with a glad heart. He is no more the farmer boy of Ohio. He is God's minister to the Nations. He is one of the hunters and fishers spoken of by Jeremiah. His heart is set on the

great Latter-day work, henceforth, his life's work is devoted to the cause of Zion. Everything of an earthly nature is now secondary, first and foremost is the building up of the Zion of the last days. Ever after this his life shall be spent in the cause of the Master. He plunges into his work with a new zeal. Here and there, branches of the church are organized. Priests are ordained and appointed to look after the people. Pushing on through Illinois and Indiana, he reaches his old home in Ohio, only to find his Mother in poor health. He continues his ministry among the people. His mother passes away and he buries her by the side of his Father.

He now takes his two younger brothers, Joseph Wilbur and James Calvin, and returns to Illinois, holds a series of meetings in Schuyler County. At the close of one of the meetings he announces that a baptismal service will be held at 4 P.M. and that anyone that wishes to be baptized, can now make it known. A young lady 20 years old, is all that offered to be baptized. The congregation is amazed, the parents astonished, the brothers enraged. The meeting is dismissed. All go to their homes. The parents in a kind way try to get the girl to change her mind, but to no purpose. Her mind is made up. Her brothers get down their guns and commence to clean and load them, declaring that no Mormons shall baptize their sister. Several of her cousins, also, come with guns with the same determination that her brothers have. Thick darkness gathers around the now weeping girl. "What shall I do?" she cries out in the anguish of her soul, with no one to give her comfort. Alone she flies to the woods, at the rear of her Father's house. There on her bended knees she pours out her soul to her Heavenly Father. Thick darkness still hovers around her. Still on her knees, she continues to plead for deliverance, the darkness begins to break away. A light Divine now covers the weeping girl. Her heart is again filled with gladness, peace and joy, now reigns supreme in her soul. God has heard her prayer. She knows all is going to be well with her.

The hour draws near for the Baptismal rite. The girl with her friends, goes to the waters edge. The townspeople gather. The parents of the young lady walk slowly to the place appointed. The six young men with guns in hand also are with the crowd. The hour is near, the young preacher is seen coming with a quick step and head erect. He is not long in taking in the situation. The people are called to order and asked to join in the song,

The morning breaks, the shadows flee
 Lo, Zions standard is unfurled,
 The dawning of a brighter day
 Majestic rises on the world.

The clouds of error disappear
 Before the rays of truth Divine,
 The glory bursting from afar
 Wide o'er the nations soon will shine.

A prayer is now offered. The Lord is implored to shed forth His light upon the assembled congregation that peace and quietness shall prevail. The young man now steps upon a nearby log and for half to three fourths of an hour holds the assembled crowd spellbound. He tells them that the Lord has again spoken from the Heaven, that a great Prophet has been raised up, that the authority to baptize in the name of Jesus has been restored, that all the ordinances of the

house of God can now be administered with authority, that the Zion of the Last Days is to be built up, that Israel is to be gathered from the nations and a people prepared to meet the Savior at His coming, which is not far distant. He now steps down, takes the young lady by the hand, they go down into the stream and he baptizes her in the name of Jesus Christ. They come up out of the water. She sits down on the log and is confirmed a member of the Church. Not a word is spoken by the people. The brothers have sat down on the grass with guns in hand and heads bowed. The parents embrace the girl and tell her she is welcome to the home, but they do not approve of her action.

Father continues his missionary labor in Illinois, calling at the Owen home as often as wisdom suggests, and especially calling on the young lady, Lois Caroline, who had braved the storm of opposition and had accepted baptism at his hands. Her sister, Lydia Ann is quite favorable to the new faith. Her brothers soon repent of their evil intent. She is ever treated with kindness by them. In fact, they soon liked the young missionary that is calling on their sister. The parents grow more tolerant, and the young man is welcome to their home, during the fall of 1838. Father continues to preach in that vicinity. On the 28th of January, 1839, Lois Caroline Owen and Sylvester Henry Earl are married. Lois loves her home and her people, but she has embarked in a new cause. The cause of Zion. She is now ready to leave home and kindred and gather with the Saints.

The main body of the church is now gathering to Hancock County, Illinois. Father goes there and makes a home. Later, when the mob gathers and the church is in trouble, he moves in to Nauvoo and is ever in the thick of the fight, helping to defend the City and the Prophet Joseph. He is a good horseman and is out night and day carrying express from point to another. He is in much danger, and ran many narrow escapes, nearly losing his life many times. He was a member of the Nauvoo Legion and stood near the Prophet Joseph when he made his memorable speech of June 18, 1844. After the death of the prophet and his brother, Hyrum, he continues his labor in and around Nauvoo, working part of the time on the Temple, where later he and Mother received their endowments. Most of the Twelve Apostles are on missions in the Eastern States. Some in Europe. Sydney Rigdon, Joseph's first counselor, now comes from Pittsburg, Pa., where he fled when the Church was in its deepest trouble. Joseph had refused to sustain him, but now he comes back wishing to lead the church. Some of the people are willing to sustain him. A majority of the Twelve has now returned from their missions. A meeting is called. The saints gather by the thousands. Brigham Young, President of the Twelve, is among them. On the 8th of August, in the forenoon, Sydney Rigdon lays his claims before the people. In the afternoon again the people by the thousands assemble. Brigham Young walks upon the stand and with a wave of the hand says, "Attention, all Israel." All eyes are fixed upon him. It is the form of Joseph, it is the voice of Joseph, he is transfigured before the people. All doubt is banished. He is the true shepherd of Latter Day Israel.

The trouble continued in Nauvoo. The Saints had to leave their homes on the 10th of February, 1846. My father and mother crossed the Mississippi River. A number of men with long poles with iron spikes in them was on the upper side of the boat to steer the large blocks of ice that were running down the river so they would not capsize the boat. Those boats were kept running night and day for weeks, to take the Saints over the river. They crossed the plains of Iowa in the

winter. The snow being sometimes two feet deep. The people, poorly clad and poorly fed, finally arrived on the banks of the Missouri River, far away from their enemies.

In the spring of 1847 Father is asked by Brigham Young to go with him to the mountains. He is ever ready to go at any call, but he leaves the following in his journal:

"It was hard for me to leave my little family sick among the howling wolves and the roaming savages of the west; but the servants of the Lord has said go, and I felt as ever, to leave all for the Gospel and the salvation of this people."

He returned to his family in the fall of 1847 having suffered many hardships and privations with the other Pioneers. On the homeward journey, he and another man went to an Indian camp and traded their shirts for dried buffalo meat to do them the rest of the way home, then cut up their wagon cover and made each a shirt.

I wish to state right here that my mother's sister, Lydia Ann also joined the church in Illinois and so did her cousin Seeley Owen. Seeley and Lydia married and came west with the Saints to Winter-Quarters on the Missouri River. In the fall of 1846 and the spring of 1847 there was much sickness among the people, many of them died because of the hardships and suffering they had to pass through. Among them was aunt Lydia, Seeley Owen's wife. She left a little girl that they had named Lydia Ann. My mother took little Ann as she was called, and she lived with her for a number of years.

Seeley Owen went with the Pioneers sharing cheerfully all they had to pass through on that wonderful journey to the mountains. He was my uncle even before he married my mother's sister, Lydia Ann, his first cousin. He later married again and settled in Provo, Utah. Little Ann is now taken care of by her father and stepmother. She grew to be a most beautiful and lovely woman. She married Abram Golden Conover, son of Peter Wilson Conover, first settlers of Provo. They raised a fine family. I have only met three of her children, Mrs. James Leathan, (Lydia Ann), Mrs. J. N. Strong (Alta Eveline), and Don Wilson Conover, all of Provo, Utah. They are the only relatives I know of on my mother's side. I love to call on them. They make one feel like he was at home among his own people. They are the most hospitable people I have ever met. I hope none of my children will ever pass through Provo without calling on them. If you do, you will have lost an opportunity of meeting some of the best people in the world. Don't do it for my mother's sake, do it for yourself. They loved their aunt Lois as they loved their own Mother.

In the spring of 1848 Sylvester Henry Earl started with his family for the Salt Lake Valley. One child died while at Council Bluffs and one was born while on their journey to the mountains. Father was not only a mechanic, but a genius. Everything had to be made that the people had to use, plows, harrows, wagons and all kinds of household furniture. He made the spinning wheel, the reel and the loom on which my Angel Mother took the raw wool and cotton and made clothing for the family. Is there any love and devotion that is too great for us to make? No, verily no!

Remembering the trouble in the states, Father and my brother, Wilbur, was out in the mountains all one winter helping to keep Johnson's

Army out of Salt Lake City. In the spring of 1858 a treaty was entered into and Johnson's Army came into the Salt Lake Valley. Most of the people had moved south, so there were few people in Salt Lake City. They came back during the summer. It is here that my memory of these stirring events begins. I well remember the move south and the return to the city. The great ox trains coming in with the Saints, and with goods for the merchants, are all still fresh and bright. Well do I remember the hand-cart Company coming in and camping on the Union Square. Father Bunker told me that his company camped there. So I think perhaps it was his company that I so well remember. From 1852 to 1855, Father was on a mission to England. After coming from his mission he accepted the law of plural marriage, taking as his second wife, Margret Emily Jones, a very fine English girl, who was ever true to him and to the Gospel. She bore him three children, one of whom is my splendid brother, Thomas Franklin Earl, of Mountain View, Alberta, Canada. A fine man and has a splendid family full of faith in the Gospel, though differing with some on the advisability of President Woodruff issuing the manifesto, advising the saints to stop entering plural marriages.

In 1861, Father was called to help settle Utah's Dixie. At this time he was a high priest having been chosen and set apart as First Counselor to Bishop Alonzo H. Raleigh of the 19th Ward, in Salt Lake City. Previous to this he was Senior President of the 20th Quorum of Seventies.

We started on the journey south on the 29th of October, arriving in Pine valley about the 25th of November, 1861. We were well fitted for the journey, having three outfits besides loose horses, cattle and sheep.

Though I was only 9 years old, I drove an ox team all the way from Salt Lake City to Pine Valley. Father drove another outfit with two yoke of oxen. My elder brothers Wilbur and Sylvester took turns driving the other outfit which consisted of two wagons with four yoke of oxen hitched to them.

Father purchased a large tent, one that had been brought in by Johnson's Army. It was round, about 15 feet in diameter and about 12 to 15 feet high, with a two foot opening on the top. At night the tent was set up and a big fire built in the middle of it. This was a wonderful outing for the younger portion of us. The women did the cooking on the camp fire.

Many times others moving south would camp near to us and would come to our big tent at night bringing their musical instruments. We would have music and singing until time to retire for the night, thus making the journey quite pleasant.

The winters in Pine Valley were long, cold and bleak. So Father took up a ranch some few miles west where it was much warmer in winter and little snow. He also bought a home in St. George where mother and the smaller children spent the winter.

Owing to trouble with the Indians in southern Utah, all the ranchers were advised to move into the settlements. It was while we were living on this ranch about 1864 that Father met Solomon Avery Wixom in St. George. He was on his way to southern California with a family by the name of Jackson. Father persuaded him not to go to California, but to come and live with him. Solomon gave up his trip

and came and lived with us a number of years.

It was at this time that the love between him and my sweet sister, Orenia, was kindled. Which in later years, ripened into marriage. He was a splendid man and I loved him as a brother.

About the year 1866 he was asked to take six yoke of oxen and go down to the Missouri River and help bring a company of Saints across the plains. He drove the team down and back to Salt Lake City, but never came to live with us again.

About this time Father took up land in Pine Valley and moved both families there about 1869. Father bought a place in Middleton from William Fream. I think about 4 or 5 acres with some fruit trees and grape vines on it, giving him \$700.00 for it. He moved his wife, Margret and family down here. He spent part of his time in Pine Valley and part in Middleton.

In July 1873 word reached us that Father was seriously sick at Middleton. My brother, Wilbur went immediately to Middleton where he was. Mother was too ill to go down. The first thing he said to Wilbur was, "Where is mother?" He was informed that she was not able to come down. He turned his face to the wall and wept, saying: "I fear I will never see her again in mortality. Have Joseph come with the spring wagon and take me to Pine Valley. Perhaps the change in climate, good water and good care will make the improvement."

As soon as word reached me, I fixed up the outfit and went down, only to find it was too late. He was in a state of unconsciousness and passed away in about 12 hours after I reached there. There was present at his bed side, at his death; his wife Margaret; his only living brother, Joseph Wilbur; his sons Wilbur Bradley, Joseph Ira and Thomas Franklin.

I am now going to relate a few of the things that happened just before his death. This was related to me by Wilbur while on our journey home. His dying testimony is most remarkable to think about. It was related to Joseph Wilbur, his wife and my brother, Wilbur, all testifying that it was true.

Soon after the word was sent to me to come down, Father relapsed into unconsciousness, remaining that way for about 36 hours. He did not seem to be in any pain or distress. When he awoke he called his wife, his brother and his son, Wilbur Bradley, now 34 years old, to his bedside and related what had happened while his body lay in unconsciousness. He could only talk fifteen or twenty minutes, then would rest. He had to be braced up in bed while he talked to them.

He said: "I have been to the world of spirits. I have seen the Prophet Joseph and his brother, Hyrum. They are very busy men. I have seen my two sons, Sylvester and Hyrum, and they are contented and happy. I saw many others that I knew. I walked the streets of their beautiful cities and saw many people. Everything seemed to be material, but of a finer nature. I wish to leave my dying testimony with my family that they are not deceived. This is the work of the Lord that we have embraced. Joseph Smith is one of the mightiest Prophets that ever graced this earth. Brigham Young is the right man to lead this people." Then taking his son, Wilbur, by the hand he said, "I want

you to tell my family that are not here to never disobey the council that comes from the authorities of this Church." He further said, "I have a message for Mother from my son Sylvester. He said to tell Mother that the young lady I spoke to her about is here. I see her often and she is just as sweet and good as when in mortality. She is all the world to me and is all that I could ask her to be. I am glad that I didn't marry the girl I was expecting to, for she was not the one for me. Mother will understand when you tell her." This was a direct message from the other world as not a soul on the earth knew about this but my mother. Mother had dept this matter to herself fearing that she would hurt the feelings of the girl he was engaged to.

I could tell you more but don't think I had better, as this letter is now too long. I wish to add this: That my Father's dying testimony and his advice to his family has been worth much to me.

I was 21 years old when my Father died. I know he was a man of God. His faith in the divine mission of Joseph Smith, his devotion to the cause of Zion, his example before his family and all Israel, places him far above the average men of his day. My Mother was among the best women that ever lived.

While I have not kept all the commandments of the Lord, far from it, I have fallen short in many things that the Lord has required; but while trying to walk the narrow path, got off, first on one side and then on the other, I have tried to keep my eye on the mark far above the little petty things of life, and devote my time and service to the Lord and the building of the Zion of the Last Days.

I know that if we are ever saved and exalted in our Father's Kingdom, it will be through obedience to the Laws of the Gospel. God is not going to be mocked and he that wasteth the day of his Probation, has no one to blame but his own dear self.

I hope you, or the others of my family will not tire reading this letter. I don't know just why I have been inspired to write this lengthy letter, but it may be cleared up some day.

Your ever dear Father,

J. I. Earl, Patriarch

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF SEELEY OWEN, ONE OF THE
ORIGINAL 143 PIONEERS OF 1847

(Compiled by his granddaughter, Alta Conover Strong)

Seeley Owen, my grandfather was of Welsh descent. He was born in the state of Vermont in the year 1805. His wife, Lydia Owen (Lydia Ann), who was also a native of Vermont, was born about 1814. They were own or first cousins. They were married about 1837. They moved to Schuyler County, Illinois, where my mother (Ann Owen) was born Januray 8, 1839. She was their only living child.

They became members of the Mormon Church and later moved to the city of Nauvoo, where Grandfather was employed with a great many others building the Nauvoo Temple, he being a carpenter and a wheel wright by trade. The temple was scarcely completed, however, when they were driven out of Nauvoo and the state of Illinois. He was among the advanced companies who crossed the Mississippi River in the early part of February, 1846, and after a partial organization at a place called Sugar Creek, the weary journey westward through the wilderness, with Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and others, was commenced. Their destination was unknown save that they were aiming for the Rocky Mountains, where it was hoped they could dwell in peace.

Nearly 300 miles west of Nauvoo, on the west bank of the Missouri River, Winter Quarters was established. There the exiles spent the dreary winter of 1846-47 suffering extremely from sickness and want of proper shelter. Early in the spring of 1847 preparations were again made to resume their journey westward. Leaving Winter Quarters April 5, they

traveled a few miles each day, crossing the Elkhorn River and to a point about 47 miles west of Winter Quarters where another halt was made until they could be organized into companies of hundreds, fifties and tens. I find Grandfather's name, Seeley Owen, among the sixth ten, 2 Co., with Charles Shumway as captain. The company consisted of 143 men and boys, three women, and two children, 148 souls all told. The company had 72 wagons, 93 horses, 52 mules, 66 oxen, 19 cows, 17 dogs, and some chickens.

The organization being thus far completed, the Pioneers broke camp April 16, 1847, and started on the eventful journey across the plains for the Rocky Mountains. Their daily travel averaged between 10 and 15 and sometimes 20 miles per day. Their cattle and horses fed solely upon the grass and forage the country produced. A minute daily account was kept telling of their travels. Although they encountered much hardship and suffering from the depredations of the Indians, they arrived in Salt Lake Valley July 24, 1847, with the loss of a single man, woman or child. Some of the advance companies however, had arrived two days previously, some on the 22nd of July and others the 23rd, but the main body arrived July 24, 1847.

They had no sooner become rested from their toilsome journey until they were preparing to return. Thus on August 17, 1847, just 22 days after arriving in the valleys, he and his brother-in-law, Sylvester Earl, were among the company who started back over the dreary plains to Winter Quarters for their families. The company consisted of 71 men, 33 wagons, 14 mules, 16 horses and 92 oxen. They were provided with 8 lbs. of flour, 9 lbs. of meal, and a few beans for each man, and had to depend on getting meat on the road for further sustenance.

Grandfather, being among those who possessed horses, was appointed with a number of others to lead the way, fix the roads and find camping places for the others. The Indians were more troublesome than before, stealing their horses and cattle and hindering their progress to a great extent. By September 12, their breadstuffs were all gone and they had to subsist solely on elk and buffalo meat that they might happen to kill on the way. These animals happened to be very plentiful or no doubt they would have starved to death on the way, many subsisted for weeks on dry buffalo meat alone. However, October 21, 1847, they arrived back at Winter Quarters, having made the return trip, a distance of 1,032 miles in nine weeks and three days.

They found that there was sickness and that many deaths had occurred. Many were still suffering from lack of the necessities of life. Grandmother, being of delicate health, was unable to withstand the hardships and died that winter at Winter Quarters. The exact date of her death is unknown to me. She left her little daughter, Ann (my mother), who was only nine years of age at the time, in the care of her sister, Mrs. Sylvester Earl, affectionately known by us as Aunt Lois.

In the early summer of 1848, Grandfather, undaunted by misfortune, again set out with his motherless child in company with the Earls for the Valleys of the Mountains, as the country was then called. They traveled in Brigham Young's second company arriving at Mill Creek the latter part of September, where they remained during the winter. He was among the early settlers of Provo in 1849 where he remained for several years plying his trade as wheelwright and mechanic. He made the first bedstead, chairs, crib, spinning wheel, clock reel, and many other pieces of household

furniture used in my mother's home.

Soon after arriving here he married Elizabeth Pickle, by whom he reared six children - three girls and three boys, namely - Elizabeth, Hannah, Julia, Seeley, Joseph and Minor. About 1870 he moved to Wallsburg, where he homesteaded a large tract of land and remained with his family for several years farming and stock raising. Later, about 1880, still imbued with the spirit of pioneering, he moved with his family into Arizona and again tried farming and stock raising. He died in Arizona in 1891, being 86 years of age.

Seeley Owen

This paper was compiled by Maurine Cowan Miller. She interviewed Mrs. Hannah Julia Ann Buttrey Thomas (called Ann) when she was 91 years old. A sister, Mrs. Flossie Ethel Buttrey Ewell, who was 72 at the time was also present. Mrs Ewell helped asked questions on material that she was familiar with. This interview was held in Dec., 1965. Both of these ladies are granddaughters of Seeley Owen by his second wife.

These are the recollections of Seeley Owen as told by Ann Thomas:

Ann Thomas was a girl seven years old when Seeley Owen died. She remembers him as having black eyes, many whiskers, being real grey. He was short (about 5' 6" as he would have been taller than I). He was very honest. He would tell lies for no one.

Seeley Owens daughter, Barbara Elizabeth Owen, (Ann's Mother) married John McClellan Buttrey. He had fought for the South in the Civil War. After this war he had come west and while in Utah (probably Provo) he had married Elizabeth Owen. He was not a member of the church and never joined. Seeley Owen was concerned about this. He told Buttrey that when he died if it were possible he would come back and tell him if the church were true, He never come back.

Ann Thomas said that Seeley Owen didn't like Buttrey and she felt like because she looked like her father that he didn't take to her so her folks told her to stay away from Seeley's place. She felt that the Seeley Owens showed great favoritism to her older sister, but remember she was only seven when Seeley died. She remembers here Grandmother Owen (Elizabeth Pickle Owen) as having a temper. When she was grown Ann's sister visited Granama Owen in Arizona with her children and the Grandmother (probably quite old at the time) was not able to listen to or take to the noise of the children. Ann Thomas says that Seeley Owen helped lay the first corner stone to the Salt Lake Temple. He also gave some of his property to the church. This was on 7th East off from

21st South as near as she can remember.

John Buttrey didn't care too much for farming so in 1779 or 80 he decided to go to Arizona to work on the F.R. building the grades around Flagstaff and Phoenix.

Seeley Owen was an old man at the time. When I asked why he would go to Arizona at an old age, Ann replied, "To keep us in the church, I guess. Seeley Owen always went where we did." When they left Wallsburg, Ann doesn't remember of Seeley working. He never worked in Arizona either. He would have been 74 when they left.

It took 30 days to go from Wallsburg to Flagstaff. Seeley Owen had a wagon with a trailer of furniture. Seeley had horses for his wagon. John Buttrey had a wagon and a trailer for his furniture. There were 2 oxen for their outfit and they could pull a big load. When the oxen gave out they put the cows in their place. They took a stove with them for they baked bread.

Seeley Owen had 6 children by Elizabeth Pickle:

1. Seeley Owen, Jr., who had left Utah before the other Owens went to Ariz.
2. Barbara Elizabeth who md. John Buttrey and went to Arizona for a time.
3. Hannah, who had died before the family went to Ariz.
4. Jewel who md. Jerome Kempton and did not go to Ariz.
5. Joseph who went to Arizona and stayed there. He died there.
6. Miner who went to Arizona with the Owens. He stayed there for a time and then moved to L.A. He died there around 1963.

On the way to Arizona there were anxious times. A Dalton family who were desperados tried to steel their cattle. At night the cattle had to be watched. At times the children and adults hid in feather ticks so they wouldn't get shot at. Ann was about 5 when they went to Arizona. They stayed 2 or 3 years.

In Flagstaff they built log cabins. It didn't take long as there were lots of timber. The log cabins would have 3 or 4 rooms. Seeley's cabin was about $\frac{1}{2}$ block from Buttrey's cabin. They could buy food at the stores as it was brought in by wagons.

Arizona at this time was a wild country with out laws. Your life wasn't your own. You had to take good care of your family and cattle, too. You could

get up in the morning and find people hanging in trees. One of these was "Wild Bill Hickock" who was found with 17 shots in him and scalped. This was done by whites, not Indians.

Water was obtained from ponds. Some would claim the ponds and this resulted in trouble. At one time the children were all commanded to say they knew nothing about an event when they had to use force to get some water.

There was a time that animals were kept in the log cabins at night so they wouldn't be stolen. Seeley Owen and the group went to Phoenix also, but details are meager.

Seeley felt that Arizona was too wild a place. He begged them all to go back to Utah and get baptized.

I asked Ann Thomas if Seeley talked to the grand children much. She said, "Oh, yes." I asked if he were jolly and played with them. She said, "No, he was serious." I asked if they had church or many Mormons in Arizona. She said they had church in a home, but she never went as she was too little. Seeley Owen talked at some of the meetings and always attended the church meetings.

Seeley took sick one day and died the next. The day before he died he said, "Today I'll eat dinner with you (2nd wife Elizabeth) and family. Tomorrow I'll eat breakfast with my 1st wife (Lydia Adeline). Lydia is my 2nd great grand mother. He maintained his testimony of the church all of his life and desired his posterity to do likewise. He wanted them all to come back to Utah to live as it was the best place for them. Soon after he died the Buttrey family came back to Utah moving near Kamas, I believe.

Seeley was buried on Buckstone Mountains in the San Francisco Mts. near Flagstaff in a lone unmarked grave. He died of old age. His widow remained in Arizona and married a man named Hull and was known as Grandma Hull to her Grandchildren.

The Buttreys had 7 girls and 7 boys. John the 6th child and the only one born in Arizona is the only one she knew of to go through the temple.

The children are: Abraham Vance, who is buried in Heber; Matilas Elizabeth Hannah Julia Ann (the one I talked with), Lademia Eveline, Rachael A. Nora, John Seeley, Sidney Lee, Joseph Vance, Minnie Pearl, Florence Gertrude, Thomas Richard

Flossie Ethel, the one who went with me; Elisha and Elijah, twins.

The following articles were found in the Historians Office at the Church office:

From the Early Church Records:

Seeley Owen, Sen. 20th Quorum Seventies; b 22 March 1805, Milton Rutland, Vt.
Parents, Ethan Owen, Hannah Seeley.

From the Journal History of the church Daniel Tyler writes:

Seeley Owen

I left six quarts of California peas with Br. Seeley Owens who proposed to raise them on shares, giving me one half of the proceeds on my arrival the next year. On my arrival in the fall of 1847, with my family, Bro Owens delivered to me half a bushel of dry peas, stating that they were all he had saved. Some of them had been ready for use as green peas about June. His provisions being exhausted, he and his family had mainly subsisted upon them until the late heavy frost stopped their bearing. Up to that time a new crop had come on as fast as the first was picked off. He proposed to make compensation for what he had used over the portion due him, adding that he would like a few for seeds if I could spare the, as he did not wish to be out of the prolific variety. I informed him if he would take one half of what was left, the matter would be satisfactorily settled. The next spring these peas were planted and produced heavily until heavy frost. After provisions became more plentiful these peas dried up and died after the first crop.

(We feel that the date of 1847 above is an incorrect date as Seeley Owen came to Utah July 24, 1847 with the first company to enter the valley and returned east 22 days later to get his daughter so was traveling most of that summer. This probably occurred a year or two later.)

Joseph Young ordained Seeley Owen, March 18, 1845, Sr. Pres of 20th Quorum of Seventies at Provo. (This date cannot be correct either.)