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Biographical Sketch

of

Washburn Chipman

Pioneer Year 1847

A. O. Smoot's Company

by Sadie Chipman, daughter

December 29, 1930

Born 16 Apr. 1829 in West Leeds County, Canada

Married Mindwell Houston, Nov. 1855

Died in American Fork, Utah, 1 Nov. 1926

Washburn Chipman was born in West Leeds County, Canada April 16, 1829.

Washburn and his two sisters, Beulah and Sinah and one brother, Henry, with their parents Stephen and Amanda (Washburn) Chipman who were converted to Mormonism in 1836, having had the Gospel brought to them by John Taylor, Parley P Pratt, and John E Page, left their old home in Leeds County, Canada in the fall of 1837.

From Canada they traveled in two wagons with two yoke of oxen and three milk cows to New York where they stopped near Oswego for the winter and in the spring of 1838 followed the emigration of Saints westward arriving in De Witt, Carrol County, Missouri where they stopped two weeks, thence on to Far West where the main body of Saints were located. They went through all the persecution to which the Saints were subjected in Missouri.

Leaving Far West they moved eastward to De Witt where Washburn's youngest brother, James Chipman, was born.

While in De Witt they were engaged in breaking prairie, farming on rented land and fencing for different men and for this work they earned money which helped them pursue their journey westward to the Rocky Mountains. Washburn saw the Prophet Joseph Smith when he visited De Witt to investigate the depredations heaped up on the Saints in that locality by their enemies.

After living in DeWitt three years they moved toward Nauvoo. Instead of joining the Saints in Nauvoo they located in Iowa across the Mississippi River in a farming district called Muddy Lane which was on the main road between Montrose and Keokuk.

At Muddy Lane they lived in a log house of three rooms where Washburn's youngest sister, Martha Chipman Harrington, was born.

Here they owned forty acres of timber land (oak, hickory and walnut) and one hundred and two acres more. They remained here five years and toiled at farming, prairie breaking and logging for the St. Louis market, passing through all the trials and persecutions to which the Saints fell heir.

While in Muddy Lane the children attended school in a log cabin a few months out of the year. Washburn being the oldest son, his education was necessarily somewhat limited; however he improved every opportunity to acquire knowledge. The family remained here until the exodus from Nauvoo in 1846.

After the battle at De Witt in the spring of 1846, Stephen Chipman purchased forty head of four year old steers at ten dollars a head. He had purchased these steers with the intention of using them on their westward journey.

After the exodus they moved to Little Pigeon, which is ten miles from Council Bluffs, Iowa. Here they built another log house of one room where Stephen Chipman and children stayed all winter. Washburn and his mother returned to Missouri to work. Washburn worked for nine months in timber for house-building at twenty five cents per day and Amanda Chipman worked at a hotel.

Stephen Chipman went to Missouri in the following spring and with Washburn loaded two wagons with cornmeal to reinforce supply for their westward journey.

They moved on with the main body of Saints to Winter Quarters leaving in the spring of 1847. They organized at the Horn River in A. O. Smoot's hundred and Major Russell's fifty and Daniel Russell was captain of the ten. The Chipman family left with four wagons of supplies. One was a light wagon with one horse, two of these wagons had two yokes of oxen on each. Washburn then a lad of seventeen drove four yoke of oxen, pulling the fourth wagon heavily loaded with supplies. They left June 22, 1847, and arrived in Salt Lake September 23, 1847 - the second emigration.

Soon after their arrival the family located on land near the mouth of Cottonwood Canyon in what is now the Mill Creek district, where they began to till the soil and irrigate and make themselves a home. Their first house in Utah was of logs having three rooms. In the spring of 1848 Washburn planted sixteen small potatoes, no larger than the end of his thumb. In the fall, he gathered three bushels. He planted these potatoes again in the spring of 1849 and harvested twenty five bushels.

What may have been the first syrup made in Utah was made by Washburn Chipman and Henry Chipman under the direction of their father Stephen. In the year 1849, at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon, near where the temple granite was being quarried, they tapped the boxelder trees, obtaining the sap or juice and boiling it down into syrup. The Chipman's had made maple syrup in Canada and Iowa. Washburn said the product of the boxelder was rather sickly and not very palatable.

Late in the fall of 1847, they busied themselves cutting hay until the snow came and during winter of 1847-1848, Washburn and Henry went out to Cottonwood to take care of their cattle at that place.

In 1848 Washburn went back to North Platt to bring on emigrants.

He helped build fort around Salt Lake City.

Washburn and Barnabas Adams hauled logs from Cottonwood to Mill Creek to build houses for the winter of 1849-50.

In July 1850, Washburn Chipman, Arza Adams, Barnabus Adams, John Eldredge, Ira Eldredge, Alanson Eldredge and Stephen Chipman came to American Fork and surveyed the first tract of land. In the fall of 1850, Brigham Young called Washburn with others to Iron County for the purpose of encouraging home-building in the south. While there, Washburn built a log house and broke up seventy acres of land. He helped build public corrals and assisted in the construction of the Parowan canal which was 9 miles long. Washburn returned to American Fork in 1851 and became actively engaged in building up the community, reclaiming the land and making it fruitful, which activities continued practice up to the time of his death.

Washburn Chipman's chief occupation was that of farmer and sheep and cattle raiser, in which vocation he was highly successful, developing a splendid farm, a good big portion of the proceeds from which was used to assist those who were in less fortunate financial conditions, for he was a very generous man to those in need.

The first irrigation ditch on the west side of American Fork was made in 1851 by Washburn Chipman in conjunction with John Cole and Solomon Thomas.

In 1855 he served in Walker War.

In 1857 went back to Devil's Gate to bring on emigrants. Took part in Johnston Army troubles.

In 1863 he was called to Nephi to help in settlement building. Helped build fort at American Fork.

Served in Utah Nauvoo legion from the beginning. He was a captain in the militia and was a lieutenant of artillery in an early day.

In 1865 he was promoted by Brigham Young to Colonel of Second Regiment under Brigadier General Pace and held that office until the Legion was disbanded in 1870 or 71.

In 1866 he appropriated thirteen hundred thirty five dollars for guns, ammunition and accouterment for Black Hawk War.

In 1872 Washburn returned to Omaha to purchase Chicago-Pitt threshing machine and Manna reaper and mower combined.

In 1851 Hyrum Mott, father of Stephen Mott owned the first threshing machine in American Fork. He ran it for two years then sold it to Washburn Chipman and Stephen Mott who ran it two years longer. Washburn was one of the pioneer threshers of Utah County and in 1855 he with John Myers forged the iron for two threshing machines.

The ironwork of these two threshing machines was made of discarded government wagon tires heated with welding heat and then welded together. They cut cogs and made all bolts and nuts, cut threads in bolts and nuts. The big wheel of these two threshing machines were made of government wagon tires which were on and one fourth inches thick and two and one half inches wide. It took about two months to forge the iron.

Shadrach Driggs, an excellent pioneer workman and father of Ben Driggs built the woodwork for Washburn's threshing machine.

The box was made of maple and the horse power was made of pinewood gotten from American Fork Canyon. Washburn ran this machine about eight years.

In civil affairs he took an active part and was a loyal law abiding citizen.

He was one of the first City Councilmen in American Fork. He served three different times as City Councilman.

In religious affairs he was a faithful latter Day Saint. Not only in helping with his time and talents, but he was liberal with his means. Was for many years a president of the sixty seventh quorum of Seventies and was a High Priest at the time of his death.

In business life he was one of the organizers and a director of the Z.C.M.I. and of the Provo Woolen Mills and a director for many years of the American Fork Co-op. One of the directors of the County Co-op herd.

He was very willing to give liberally of his means for the upbuilding and good of the community.

He was simple and regular in his habits, temperate and honest, his acts of charity are too numerous to mention, many a widow's heart has been made glad by him in time of need, and his fellow man in less fortunate circumstances than he, has cause to bless his memory for on numerous occasions he refused the current price of hay, grain, flour and other supplies because the price was higher than the individual could afford to pay.

Washburn Chipman had in his life time three wives. His first wife was Mindwell Houston whom he married - Nov. 1855 and to this union nine children were born. His second wife was Margaret Vance McNichol whom he married Oct. 6, 1860. To this union twelve children were born. His third wife was Caroline Mayhew whom he married May 30, 1868. To this union four children were born.

After an illness of three days he passed away at his home in American Fork, Nov 1, 1926.

His career was most honorable and upright throughout and one to which his children and generations yet unborn may well point with pride.