

Life of Joseph Smith Hall

(This was retyped from a manuscript written by Elnor Hall and edited by Grandma—I found her handwritten notes all over it. EHL)

Joseph Smith Hall was born December 12, 1854, in Springville, Utah. He was the seventh child of Edward and Nancy Eleanor (Ballinger) Hall and had four brothers and sisters.

The house where he was born was a two-story log and frame home. A ladder nailed to the wall led to the two attic rooms. The large fireplace in the kitchen was made of rock and had as a hearth a large grindstone. Joseph's father had cut it in Grindstone Canyon in Hobble Creek, but because of the flaw it was never used as a grindstone. The fireplace was used for cooking during Joseph's early childhood. It was later replaced by a large cast iron stove, the first in Springville, which his father brought back from Iowa when he went there to settle up his affairs.

Edward Hall and his twin brother, Edwin, had extensive holdings where the city of De Moines, Iowa is now located. When gold was discovered in California, the brothers decided to move west. Edward and his family were to go first, while Edwin remained to settle their affairs there. However, Edward's wife joined the church of the Mormon immigrants with whom they traveled to Utah and after going on to California, Edward joined the church also and returned to Utah to make his home. His brother, Edwin, remained in Iowa.

Along with the stove for himself and the three others for his married children, Edward brought back from Iowa many good things for his family, such as clocks and dishes. He also brought back suspenders for his boys. They were the first to be seen in Springville, where a buckskin string or belt was the usual means of anchoring pants. Joseph threw his away because of the ridicule of the "string" brigade.

Joseph had as much schooling as most boys had at that time, with one teacher teaching all grades, usually in a room of her home. He was taught reading, writing and arithmetic. He was very good in mathematics and helped teach it to the others. He always wanted to be a lawyer, but yielded to his parents' wishes and remained at home. He always hoped the one of his sons would be a lawyer and when his youngest son, Theron, was thirteen years old, he bought him a set of law books.

He and his friends liked to gather at the mill pond, north of town, to swim and play. A favorite sport was to choose sides and make clay balls which they threw at each other from the ends of pointed sticks. This game could become quite rough.

As a boy, Joseph often went with his father to the canyon for tan bark. This was the inner bark of the red pine tree and was used in making leather. It was on such a trip that Joseph met a bear, the story of the bear delighted his children and was a favorite with his grandchildren as well. This is the story as his son Theron told it to his own small children.

Although Joseph was only eleven years old at the time of the Back Hawk Indian war, he took his turn herding the cattle and acting as a minute man, watching for Indians.

Joseph's father had homesteaded 360 acres of land along the foothills east and north of town and here Joseph herded his father's livestock. On part of it, north of what is now second north street, he helped his father plow two irrigation ditches and helped

plant cottonwood trees along them. The trees grew fast and furnished pleasant shade for picnickers for many years. Later when Joseph married, he father gave him land near there.

In 1872, Joseph's cousins, Eddie and Jasper Hall, came to Springville from their home in Iowa and they taught the boys how to play baseball. Joseph used to act as umpire.

As he grew older, he enjoyed dances and home dramatics in addition to picnics and parties. He became very good at "stump" speaking and was often called on to speak at local gatherings.

When he was sixteen, he went with an older brother, Jim, to work in the timber. They worked at Soldier Summit, Craig Canyon and at Scofield, cutting mine props, ties and timber. In the winter he hauled cedar posts across Utah Lake on the ice.

The winter he was nineteen, he went to St. George on a work mission to help build the temple there.

It was a family custom to have a big celebration on Father Edward's birthday. All the family would gather together and an especially nice meal would be prepared. At one such gathering, he looked at the table with its bounteous spread and remarked that such a lovely meal should celebrate more than a birthday and was worthy of at least a wedding.

Then the talk began as to who could accommodate and be the lucky couple. Someone suggested the Joseph and his sweetheart be the ones. After talking it over they agreed and Joseph and Sarah Sophronia Perry, surrounded by all their loved ones, were married that day, November 15, 1878, at his father's home. His bride was his brother William's step-daughter and Jode and Fron, as they were always called, had been friends since childhood.

After his marriage, Joseph continued his work in the timber for several years, renting out the farm land his father had given him. Later, he farmed it himself. He traded two pairs of oxen he owned for a team of horses and always had good horses after that.

He was very interested in politics and civic affairs. He was a great admirer of William Jennings Bryan and always subscribed to his paper, "The Commoner," which he read and discussed with his family.

He was greatly respected by his associates and his word was as good as his bond. He was honest, truthful, loyal, kind and generous. It pleased him to share with others the fruits and vegetables that he raised. He was a tall, large man with blue eyes and medium brown hair. He was always neat in his appearance, especially with his shoes and hats.

The last year of his life he suffered greatly with rheumatism. He and his wife went to Bingham, Utah to visit their four married children who lived there, hoping the change would help and rest him. He grew worse, though and the doctor there advised them to return home immediately because of the condition of his heart. At home again, he lived for several more days. He died Sunday, October 1, 1916 in the home in Springville, where he had spent most of his married life and was buried in the Springville City Cemetery.

Like his father Edward, and his Grandfather Jacob, he was the father of eleven children, seven of whom lived to maturity: Elwood, Edna, Own, Clifton, Maggie, Elner and Theron and four who died in infancy: Henry, Ivan, Lydia and LaMar.

To his numerous posterity he left the example of his life, full of honesty, integrity, faith in his fellow men and goodness of heart and soul and the priceless heritage of an honorable, respected name.