

## Benjamin Thomas Clark History

### HISTORY OF BENJAMIN THOMAS CLARK

Benjamin Thomas Clark was born at Chesterton, Cambridgeshire, England, February 20, 1799 to Thomas Clark and Elizabeth Eusden Bell. He had four sisters, Elizabeth Frances, Martha Ann, Sarah Frances and Frances. When he was 13, his mother died. Her father, Joseph Bell, was a builder and he employed Benjamin in his own brick and tile making plant where Benjamin learned the industry, also construction and carpentry. On September 25, 1820, at the age of 21, he married Ann Shuker who was lively and charming. She was the daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Harvey Shuker. They established a home in Cambridge and raised a family of twelve children. He was devoted to his wife whom he described as "an angel fair and lovely." Ann passed away on June 24, 1848 at the age of 47. With the help of his married daughter, Ann, Benjamin was able to keep his family together. Their home was a long brick house with tiled roof located at 55 Victoria St., Chesterton (suburban section of Cambridge, England).

The gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was first brought to the family in 1849. Benjamin's son, William Bell Clark, a boy of 15 at the time, broke his collar bone. His father was going to send him to the hospital, but William asked him to first send for the Mormon missionaries who were preaching nearby, for he had heard that they had the power to heal. The missionaries, Elders Thomas Cope and William Goats, accordingly came and administered to William. He was instantly healed. He even heard the crack as the broken bones came together. Benjamin and all his children, except three, were converted to the gospel and were baptized on December 26, 1849. Previously he belonged to the Methodist church.

At this time, Ann Southwell, whose first husband, William Seymour, had died of consumption, (pneumonia) leaving her three children, had also heard of the Mormon missionaries who performed wonderful miracles. She attended their meetings and believed their teachings. There she met Benjamin Thomas Clark, and they fell in love with each other. On April 20, 1850, Ann was baptized a member of the church, and one month later on May 25, 1850 they were married.

The following year after their marriage, Benjamin's son William, 16 years old, left England and came to America. Benjamin began making preparations to emigrate. He wanted his family to receive all the blessings that had been promised them; little did he realize the hardships that were facing them.

On May 14, 1852, Ann had her first child, Lorenzo Southwell Clark, in her new marriage. As soon as the mother and baby were strong enough to travel, Benjamin and most of his family came to America. Benjamin was a wealthy man who owned a livery stable, a brick yard, and a number of houses which he rented out. He sold all he had in order to finance the trip. Besides his own wife and children, he helped several other families make the trip. His son, William, was not the only one who had already come to America. Thomas as well as Frances and her husband, James Stratton had preceded the rest of the family by a year. Joseph and also Martha stayed in England where they raised their families. Charles made his home in Australia.

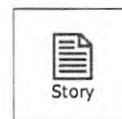
On January 23, 1853, the family sailed from Liverpool to emigrate to the United States and Utah. Under the leadership of Jacob Gates, 14 members of the "B.T." Clark family including two sons-in-law and three grandchildren sailed on the "Golconda" for 44 days to Bolize at the mouth of the Mississippi River, then a steamer tug took them to New Orleans. The steam packet "Illinois" carried them upriver to Keokuk. Ten of the family arrived in Salt Lake City on October 6, 1853 in the Cyrus W. Wheelock Company, where they spent their first winter in a dugout in the banks of the gulch made by Parley's stream in the vicinity of the present Sugar House district.

The following spring Benjamin purchased ten acres of farm land, lots 15 and 16 in a 5 acre plat in the "Big Field" survey, facing east on County Road, now 11<sup>th</sup> East Street for the price of one yoke of oxen. His sons Thomas and William who were already in Utah, helped him build a large two story adobe house with a large family room with a fireplace, storage room and loft above for extra sleeping space which was reached by a ladder. Homemade furniture was provided for needs and comfort. This was possible because Benjamin had worked in construction previously in England and had brought with him a chest of fine tools including a whip saw. The house became a landmark for the traveler, and its hospitable doors always opened to whoever needed shelter. Also, many times, neighborhood gatherings were held in their home.

Benjamin began farming his land the first spring. On lot 15, he planted some seed he had brought from the old home on Victoria Road in England. He had forgotten the name of the seed, but as it had originally come from Lucerne, Switzerland, he called it Lucerne. Brigham Young, seeing the value of the seed, bought all of Benjamin's surplus seed each year for \$1 a pint. He then distributed this seed through the land, and the name Lucerne was adapted for what is now known as alfalfa.

Sugar House Ward was organized April 13, 1853 with A. O. Smoot as Bishop. The meeting house was about a mile from the home. When Sunday came, everyone around who was not sick in bed, attended the meeting which was held at 11:00 a.m. Later, Sunday School was held at 10:00 a.m. That autumn the people were ready to build a meeting and school house. Benjamin was given the job. He kept a detailed account of materials used and of labor cost. It was built of logs.

### Media Objects for Benjamin Thomas Clark



BT Clark email  
Michael Howard



Benjamin T Clark  
by Kathleen

### Attached to in this tree



**Benjamin Thomas Clark**  
1799 - 1867

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by mugsie1949 on 2 Sep 2012

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by patriciaobrien101 on 8 Jun 2012

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by MaryKinney78 on 12 May 2012

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#### McDole Family Tree

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#### CeDenia Tovson Thomas

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by Pauline and Mark Smith on 19 Sep 2012

#### Team Keating Family Tree

by perry keating on 19 Aug 2012

Benjamin's daughter, Ann, and her husband Joseph Clark, and their two children remained in Keokuk awaiting birth of a child, which occurred there August 31, 1853. This group came to Utah later, and after some time (about 30 years) returned to the east and joined the Reorganized Church in Independence, Missouri.

Benjamin was devoted to his family and they lived together in the large adobe house until the married couples could get a start and set up housekeeping independently. They were a musical family and entertaining and happy with each other. Many evenings, Benjamin read to his family from the Bible or other books which came into his hands. At such times, his wife, Ann sewed. The older children from Benjamin's first marriage did something useful with their hands, and the younger children sometimes, for a special treat, shelled and ate carefully hoarded squash seeds.

The farm had it's ups and downs. Some years, hoards of grasshoppers and crickets would destroy the crop, and the family would come close to starvation. Each person would be rationed two small pieces of corn bread twice a day, and they were very fortunate when they also had milk. In years when the crop was good, the family would often gather and feast upon the plentiful food they were fortunate to have. Such occasions were really joyous.

In the winter of 1856 when the Edward Martin handcart company arrived in Salt Lake, Benjamin and his family took Ruth Briggs and her five children into their home. The children were frost bitten and ill from lack of food. Ruth was badly frozen and was in bed most of the winter. She had buried her husband, John Briggs, and two children by the wayside. Their children were getting so thin and worn that John gave most of his portion of rations to them thinking he could get along until relief came, but he became so weak that he passed away.

The Clarks loved Ruth and her children and gave them a good home. Ruth became very fond of Benjamin and his family and on June 28, 1857, Benjamin married Ruth in plural marriage. One child, Alice was born to this marriage. Ruth was very happy living with the Clarks as Benjamin's wife. They were very kind to her, but she never recovered fully from her terrible trip across the plains and on March 6, 1859 she passed away; little Alice followed her in 1860.

In 1858 Benjamin's family became a part of "The Move". They traveled to Spanish Fork, Utah, and spent the summer there in a dugout, about 14 or possibly 16 feet square and nearly four feet deep. Since provisions taken on the trip had to last until their return home, rations were short and the family was hungry most of the time. During the stay at Spanish Fork, Benjamin also planted some crops although he didn't remain long enough to harvest them. At the end of the summer, the family made the return trip home. They drove a yoke of oxen, old Tom and Charley, the same yoke of oxen they had driven across the plains to Utah in 1853.

Unable to send his children to school, Benjamin educated them himself. He taught them the multiplication table song which became their mathematical foundation. The chorus of this song was the "fives" table to the simple rhythmic tune of Yankee Doodle.

On March 3, 1866, Benjamin married again, this time to Martha Larkins, a spinster in her forties. No children were born to this marriage. Then the following year on November 4, 1867 Benjamin died of pneumonia, contracted while serving as water master of Kennedy Ditch. In his will, he bequeathed special properties to his 15 year old son, Lorenzo, provided that he would take care of and support the dependents of the family. These were his two wives, Ann and Martha, one daughter and three adopted daughters.


After Benjamin's death, Charles Seymour wanted his mother, Ann Southwell, to annul her sealing with Benjamin and be sealed to his true father, William Seymour. Ann preferred to remain sealed to Benjamin, and Charles, being angry at her, was sealed to his own father and had his father sealed to a girl friend of his youth.

One of Ruth Butterworth's sons, James, fulfilled a mission in England. When he returned, he wanted his parents to be sealed; so he broke Ruth's sealing with Benjamin and had his mother resealed to his father, James Briggs.

Benjamin's fourth wife, Martha Larkins, not being left with any money after Benjamin's death, married a man who owned a drugstore and would take care of her. He was a Josephite, but Martha probably remained active in the church. Martha was a semi-invalid whom they called "Aunt Patty."

Benjamin was short, blue-eyed, had curly hair and was active, energetic, quick and could not tolerate laziness. He was honest and fair in his dealings and had the confidence of all who knew him. As watermaster of the Kennedy Ditch, the main irrigation stream of his locality, he gave faithful, outstanding service. By his industry and frugality, he had accumulated considerable property - a home, sheds, cattle, wagons, farm equipment, and he owned about 80 or 90 acres of land. He helped others cure cattle of their ills and also cured some human ailments. He always responded generously to any call for assistance from his fellow man. He was known to be a man of his word, a wise counselor, humble, sincere and was devoted to the church, the church leaders and to his family. He always paid an honest tithing. He was respected by all who knew him. He left his family a heritage they were and are proud of. They loved him.


Harris/Stone Family Tree

by  VirginiaL.Benson99 on 18 Aug 2012

Parsons Family Tree

by  Jack Parsons on 14 Jun 2012


Orr, David T. Family Tree


by  garryginny1 on 9 Jun 2012

stone whitworth Family Tree

by  dudlee930 on 23 Apr 2012

...and 18 other users.

 aw analefy added this on 7 Jun 2012

 kengan originally submitted this to [Handley-Olsen Family Tree](#) on 3

Jun 2010