

## **Cabin at John Hutchings Museum**

### **Built by John Austin**

John Austin was the third child of Joseph and Ann Mills Austin. He was born December 3, 1822, in Studham, Bedfordshire, England, where he spent his youth and early manhood. He married Emma Grace March 20, 1847, on her twentieth birthday. She was a daughter of Thomas Grace and Mary Jayce Grace, and was born in Whipsnade, Bedfordshire, England, March 20, 1827. Soon after their marriage, this couple moved to Kinsmouth, Hartfordshire, where they resided for about one year, when they returned to Studham.

While in Kinsmouth; Mrs. Austin was converted to the Mormon faith and was baptized a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, January 5, 1848, by Elder Benjamin Johnson, and two years from that day Mr. Austin was immersed in the waters of baptism.

Soon after their conversion, this couple had a strong desire to emigrate to Utah to the body of the Church, as the principle of gathering was preached considerably throughout England at this time. It seemed to be a hopeless undertaking, however, as it was about all they could do to get the bare necessities of life for their ever-increasing family. Mrs. Austin, who was a woman of great faith and determination, was very anxious to do something to increase their scanty income, that her family might at some time be permitted to gather with the Saints in the valleys of Utah.

One day in 1854 a man came to her door selling straw for braiding. He persuaded her to buy a number of bundles to sell to her neighbors, offering her about one cent per bundle for profit.

Mrs. Austin was quite successful in this venture, and bought more bundles of straw, which she also sold at a profit. From this small beginning, in the

course of time, a business was built up and a small store was conducted, which helped materially to swell the coffers of the family.

By 1866 sufficient means had been saved to send two of the children to Zion, accordingly the two oldest, Harriet and George, were sent. Two years later the father decided to emigrate, as perhaps the opportunities for making money were more plentiful in Utah than in England.

Two weeks before the vessel sailed on which John expected to travel, one of their neighbors who also expected to emigrate to Utah at this time offered to lend the money for the entire family to go. This man was Bartle Turner, the father of the Turner families of Lehi, and it is needless to say that the offer was thankfully accepted, the necessary preparations hurriedly made, and the family, which at this time consisted of father, mother, and nine children, was soon on its way to the West.

They crossed the ocean on the sailing vessel, "John Bright," and the plains in Captain Joseph S. Rawlins' mule train, which left Laramie City July 25th, and arrived in Salt Lake City August 20, 1868. They came at once to Lehi, where their son and daughter, who had preceded them, were living, and have since made this place their home.

Soon after his arrival in Lehi, Mr. Austin took up farming and in connection with his sons was among the first to take up land on the bench north of Lehi on the Bull River Ditch. The father and sons have been eminently successful as tillers of the soil and when the sugar factory was located at Lehi, the Austin brothers were among the foremost to bring about the successful cultivation of the sugar beet.

John Austin built a two room log cabin on his property at Bull River, New Survey. They lived in the home for the first few years of life in Lehi. They were close to their fields.

John wanted to be closer in Lehi and to the civic happenings and moved to Lehi. John's son Parley Pratt Austin and Charlotte Elizabeth Butt were married at their fathers house in Lehi on January 22, 1884. They moved into the two room log cabin on Bull River, Lehi Bench, that his parents had vacated sometime before. He became a farmer, but it wasn't easy, and as children came along, life was very rough for all of them particularly Charlotte. The first six of their children were born while they lived in that two room cabin, which had about as many comforts as a stable-no running water, no indoor plumbing, but plenty of cracks in the walls for wind, dust and cold to enter. They lived in pioneer drudgery, as good or bad as it gets, depending on your point of view. They lived in this cabin until the Late 1890's when they built a home in Lehi.

Daughter Ethel Brown remembers, even as a tiny girl, a frightening blizzard that came up when there was no firewood in the cabin to keep them warm. Father had gone to Lehi and left Mother and us children alone. Mother placed us children on the bed, under quilts, then went out in the blizzard to find wood. She came back with the last armload that she could find and would carefully add a stick at a time to the small fire. Soon a knock came on the door; it was a man from Alpine who was returning from Salt Lake when the storm hit and he could not get home. But he went to work, cutting fence posts and gathering sagebrush so we could e warm. In the morning he shoveled snow and cut more wood. Later in the day Father returned home. We were ever grateful to the man who saved us.

The cabin was later moved into Lehi to the Austin Property as a grainery barn.

This article is taken from the 1913 Lehi History and the Life and Time of Parley Austin by R. Paul Larsen.

