



Mt. Trumbull Historical Overview

By Loretta D. Nixon

During the construction of the St. George Tabernacle and Temple, Brigham Young looked to Mt. Trumbull for an increased source of lumber. In April 1873 a survey team was sent to Trumbull and surveyed and located twenty-five quarter sections of land.



Roads to Trumbull

In order to transport the lumber to St. George from Mt. Trumbull, adequate roads had to be built.

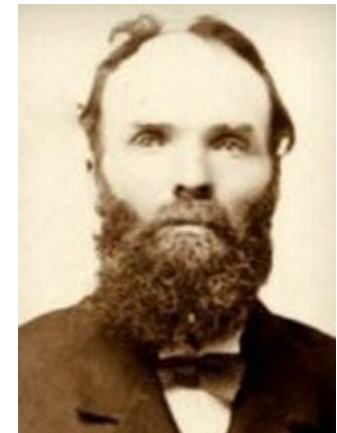
Robert Gardner



In a letter dated May 2, 1874, Robert Gardner wrote to Brigham Young and said, “the Trumbull road was all done but hurricane ridge.”

Origin of Small Sawmill at Trumbull

- Soon after the survey, a sawmill, owned by Ebenezer Bryce and Samuel Burgess of Pine Valley, was sent to Trumbull. Ben and Fred Blake also had a sawmill on Trumbull. It was located close to the Bryce and Burgess mill. The Blakes said, “ the hardest thing they ever did was take their sawmill up the Hurricane Fault.”
- Upper left: Ebenezer Bryce
- Upper right: Samuel Burgess
- Lower left: Fred Blake
- Lower right: Ben Blake



Hauling Lumber by Oxen



The trip from the Mt. Trumbull sawmill to St. George, was as a long, tedious journey. The oxen traveled slowly. There were many miles of desert country and water was scarce. It took nearly seven days. The drivers needed more than skill and experience, they needed great courage and exceeding faith.

On February 9, 1874, the United Order of St. George was Organized, Robert Gardner, President; Daniel D. McArthur and James W. Nixon, Vice Presidents; Henry Eyring, Secretary; James G. Bleak and Alexander F. Macdonald, Assistant Secretaries.



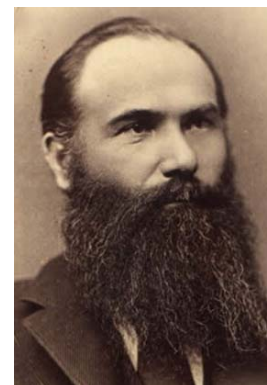
Robert Gardner



Daniel D. McArthur



James W. Nixon



Henry Eyring



James G. Bleak



Alexander F. Macdonald

In May 1874, Alexander F. Macdonald reported to President Young that **five good teams were fitted last week and gone to Trumbull for temple timbers.** He indicated that the cutting of the lumber, rock hauling and temple work was moving right along.

Alexander F. Macdonald



In July 1874, the Mt. Trumbull Lumber Company turned over the "Small Mill", which was the original Bryce & Burgess mill, to the United Order of St. George. A letter from Robert Bentley to G. A. Smith telling of the survey of Mt. Trumbull.

St. George
June 9th. 1874

President G. A. Smith
Trustee in Trust
of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latterday Saints:

Dear Brother,

I am instructed by the Mount Trumbull Lumber Company to communicate with you in regard to the New Saw Mill now being put up at Mount Trumbull, as we understand by Bro. Wilcox for the Trustee in Trust.

A year ago last March it was reported to Brother Joseph W. Young that there was a large body of fine pine timber growing on and about Mount Trumbull, and that there were outside men who intended to locate and claim it for the purpose of making lumber for the Pioche market. Bro. Young immediately got up a small party of the Brethren who went and examined the country and found the report to be true so far as regarded the

timber. On his return to St. George Brother Young organized a company, called Mount Trumbull Lumber Company and had it incorporated according to Law. The company sent out a party with the Surveyor and had Twenty four Quarter sections of timber land surveyed and located, soon after they purchased a Steam Saw Mill of Messrs Bryce and Burgess of Pine Valley. The Trustee in Trust is represented in this company by a subscription of the amount of \$500. The ostensible ^{purpose} for which the mill ^{was put} there at present, was to furnish lumber for the finishing of the St. George Tabernacle and the building of the Temple. At the time Pres. Brigham Young proposed to the company to put in a larger mill, it was understood both from himself and Pres. John W. Young that if the large mill was put in there, it would go in as Capital Stock in the company. Is this your intention still? and if so upon whom appraisement; the Company have no special choice; but if it is your wish to unite the mills in one interest they would prefer doing so now and have it understood either way.

There is room and timber enough for the

In the later part of 1874, the lumber production was slowed for various reasons, such as machinery breaking down, labor problems etc. In the early part of 1875, Robert Gardner, an experienced lumberman and President of the United Order of St. George, was asked by Brigham Young to go to Trumbull and expedite the lumber production. Gardner's history states:

During that time the Temple construction was being hurried with all speed, President Brigham Young had sent a large steam sawmill to Mount Trumbull to hurry getting out the Temple lumber. He turned the sawmill into the United Order and Bryce and Burgess and their company turned in their mill. Brother Whipple was sent to superintend the work.

However, the snow fell deep and no hay was available for the teams, and many of the men got dissatisfied. As a consequence, the lumber business was stopped. The stoppage was very annoying to Brigham Young and George A. Smith.

Gardner really didn't want to go to Trumbull. He said, "I would rather go to China than Trumbull." But he was faithful and dedicated to The Church and did go. He recorded in his history:

Eli Whipple



Within a few days after, I went with Brother Whipple and took an inventory of all the property and took possession of both the steam mills, teams and all of the outfits [outfits]. I returned to St. George in a few days and found the masonry work of the Temple finished, and the workers were having a jubilee. As soon as I could, I started back to Mount Trumbull with two cooks, men and provisions. Soon I had the mill running. I fitted it out with men and took six men with me into the woods; four with cross-cut saws and two with axes. I took my “bill of lumber” for the Temple and my ax and measuring pole and selected and marked suitable trees for the choppers to cut. When they were cut down, I measured and marked them for the men with the cross-cut saws.

Frederick Blake tells that Gardner turned over a lot of the responsibility of Trumbull to him after Gardner made the initial push to get the lumber production going again. Fred and his brother, Ben, and William McCullough were experienced teamsters who hauled a great deal of the lumber by ox team to St. George. Members throughout Utah were called to help in all aspects of building the St. George Temple such as preparing the foundation, cutting the stones, carpenters, lumber jacks, teamsters etc.

From February 1874 to January 1877, James W. Nixon served in various capacities in the United Order, such as President, Vice President, Director and Treasurer. He became involved with the Mt. Trumbull Lumber operations while serving in these leadership positions.

In July 1876, the same month he married Hannah I. Fawsett, Erastus Snow reported to Brigham Young that there were considerable delays and some sickness as well as repairs that needed to be made on the mill-tank, carts, wagons &c. Snow stated, "Despite the obstacles, some fifty thousand feet were sawed with prospect of steady work hereafter. Ultimately over a million board feet of lumber was produced for the St. George Temple from the stand of ponderosa pine timber located on Mt. Trumbull. The following year James married his third wife, Zepher Kelsey.

Erastus Snow



In September 1876, under the direction of President Young, the "Big Sawmill" from Mt. Trumbull was taken to Arizona and located near Mormon Lake. Lot Smith wrote from Sunset, Arizona to President Young on October 4, 1876, "The mill has arrived."

James W. Nixon II, reported, "When the big mill was no longer needed for the temple building, it was shipped to Arizona."

According to Warren Tenney who had worked at Trumbull, the mill was well used and not in the best of shape. Warren was commissioned to transport the mill to Arizona. It took seven wagons, plus four more for supplies and 72 oxen to carry out this task.

Lot Smith



James W. Nixon II



Warren Tenney





James W. Nixon I



Johanna M. Schultz Nixon



Hannah Isabel Fawsett Nixon

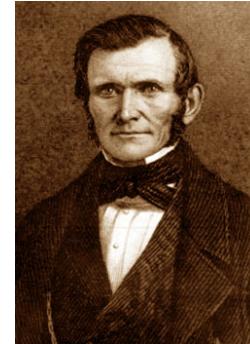


Zepher Kelsey Nixon

James W. Nixon I And His Three Wives

Not only was James W. Nixon deeply involved in the operation of Mt. Trumbull and other aspects of the United Order, he was called as Bishop of the St. George 3rd Ward. He was set apart by Apostle Wilford Woodruff in the St. George Temple on April 17, 1877.

Wilford Woodruff



Eli Whipple, who was previously called to superintend the mill, was set apart as Presiding Elder of the Mt. Trumbull Branch on May 11, 1877. By June 1, 1877, there were 31 men, women and children at Trumbull. They were organized in the United Order which was attached to the United Order of St. George. According to one account, there were forty men who worked at the mill plus women who worked in the boarding house to help feed and take care of the mill hands. Hannah Nixon, one of James Nixon's wives, gives a vivid account in her history of what it was like to cook and care for the men at Trumbull. It was not an easy task.

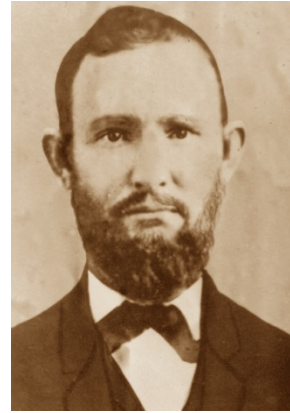
Aaron Nelson



September 25, 1877, James W. Nixon I records in his history that he took A. Nelson to look for water. Water was critical in running the steam operated mills. Before Nixon Springs was located, it took one man full time to supply water for the mills. In order to carry water from Nixon Springs to the mill, the water had to be transported by gravity in man made wooden troughs for nearly a mile. The stream was small and ran only one gallon per minute. The troughs would have to be kept clear of refuge that would be placed there by animals. Keeping the mill running to capacity was very difficult. Sources for additional water came from the Big and Little Springs that were located several miles from the mill. A. Nelson was probably Aaron Nelson who was an early pioneer of St. George.



James W. Nixon I



John P. Chidester

At the beginning of 1878, it was decided at the United Order of St. George Board Meeting those who desired could draw out their capital stock. This was the beginning of the dissolution of the United Order of St. George. In March 1878, James W. Nixon, along with John P. Chidester were elected to take an inventory of all the property of the United Order held by the Trumbull Department and appraise it at a fair trade valuation, using Rio Virgen Factory Pay as a basis.

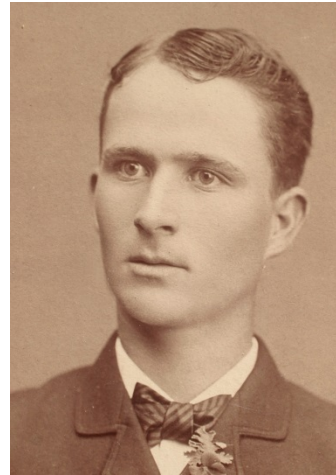
James G. Bleak writes that on June 6, 1878, Bishop James W. Nixon, who was a devoted adherent to the United Order from its commencement in 1874 and who recently had, with a few others, purchased from the United Order of St. George, the Mt. Trumbull Lumber interest and sent a letter requesting his release as bishop of the St. George 3rd Ward. He was not able to fulfil his duties as bishop and devote his energies to the business at Trumbull.

From June 1878 to 1880, James Nixon and his family tried to make a success of Mt. Trumbull. Lower Left, Hannah, Jennie and Mary Nixon . Lower right, Frank, Zepher and Melba



James William Nixon II records in his history:

James William Nixon II



About 1880, when he was fourteen years of age, his father lost his health, having overworked at the mill. He [his father] was very ambitious, a man who always crowded his work and was called a hustler. He had always made a success of his business matters until he had this ranch and the second hand sawmill thrown on to his hands which he had to operate under adverse circumstances. . . The mill was old and continually needed repairs, which were expensive and took a long time to get extra parts for the mill or engine. Often a shut-down was necessitated while repair went on.



- James William Nixon I, died after two years illness on February 19th 1882. Johanna Marie Shultz Nixon and her family inherited three fifths of the business on Mt. Trumbull. Hannah and Zepher and their families each inherited one fifth interest. No record has been found to date of the “others” who purchased Mt. Trumbull from the United Order. However, James W. Nixon’s son, James said that Anthony W. Ivins, one of the Apostles, had an interest in Trumbull. Somehow between 1878 and 1882, James William Nixon came into full possession of the Mt. Trumbull operations.
- The heritage of these stalwart pioneers, will forever be remembered for their faith and dedication to their God and to their families.

Men and Women named by James W. Nixon II who worked at Trumbull:

Alexander McDonald, manager

Ebenezer Bryce, engineer, Eli Whipple, Samuel Carter

Tom Pierce, John McConnel and Will Perkins, loggers

**David Park, Will Perkins, Pen Wilbanks, John McConnel, Fred & Ben Blake,
William A. McCullough,**

William Hunt, William Ferry, Sam Carter, Isom Waler, drivers

Hate Horten,, -----Higbee and ----- Stewart

Retta Pierce Hall, Maria Empy Gould, Millie Pearce, cooks

Hannah, Zepher and Johanna also cooked when needed



Mt. Trumbull about 1910-1920 , Grace Nixon Stewart Collection
James William Nixon II standing by tree



Mt. Trumbull, Grace Nixon Stewart Collection



Nixon Spring's home, Grace Nixon Stewart Collection

Lone Tree, Mt. Trumbull, James W.
Nixon standing by tree. Grace Nixon
Stewart Collection.





Hurricane Cliffs, picture by Adam Helman



Mt. Trumbull from the North, Adam Helman Picture