

## History of Benjamin Cazier Sr.

By Helen Cazier Norton

Eighty-seven years after he passed from this life, I am attempting to construct a word picture of Benjamin Cazier Sr. from the little bits of his journal, historical, public and church records and the recollections of those who knew him.

Small details vary between the numerous information sources but they are consistent enough to furnish very definite proof that he was a stalwart of whom his numerous descendants can be proud.

His brother, James and John, and his sister, Maranda, had been born at Elizabethtown, Wood Co., West Virginia where his parents, William and Pleasant: Drake Cazier, owned forty acres of land on the Kenawha River. In 1821 they decided to migrate to Brownsboro, Oldham County, Kentucky, a little farming community just outside of Louisville. to the north East. Benjamin was born there 4 January, 1824, the first of the seven more children born to the couple there. The other were William (who died at a young age), Elizabeth, Samuel, David, Charles Drake and Rosannah. Their mother had named her youngest son Charles Drake after her ancestor who was the brother of Sir Francis Drake.

The Caziers were members of the Baptist Church. In 1832 their pastor, Benjamin Allen, became a follower of Alexander Campbell, taking most of his congregation of 209 members with him. Evidently the Caziers were among the group who followed.

Along about 1841 the family decided to move on to Illinois where land was cheaper and plentiful. Accordingly they settled at Lovington, Moultrie Co. where they ran the Black Horse Inn for John Kellar. At the same time they were developing their land on the prairie.

In the spring of 1844 missionaries for the LDS Church came through their area. Most of the family was baptized in August of that year. The records show that Benjamin's baptismal date was 1 December 1844, performed by George Best. Benjamin's mother, Pleasant Drake Cazier, died at Council Bluffs, Iowa in November of 1846 from the hardships the Saints who took refuge there had to undergo.

The marriage of Benjamin and Olive Lucy Shaw, daughter of John and Polly Maria Fox Shaw, took place on 7 March 1848. Both families had resided at LeHarpe, Illinois. He states in his journal that on May 19, 1848, in company with Ezra Chase, John Shaw, C. H. Bryan and Mertillo Shaw they started from Highland

Grove, Iowa. They were in the Lorenzo Snow Company.

His obituary in the Deseret News says, "He built near Salt Lake City at first but in 1849 moved to Weber County, first settling on the Ogden River at what is now known as Farr's Fort." Their first child, Frederick, was born January 3, 1950 in a one room log cabin just west of the present site of the Old Mill near the mouth of Ogden Canyon.

A group of Saints in 1851 decided to try to re-establish a settlement at North Ogden, three miles north of Ogden City. It had previously been necessary to abandon the one started by the Campbell brothers because of Indian troubles. Benjamin's second wife, Isabel, often told her family that he and his first wife, Olive Lucy, were one of the first three families to arrive at the scene. The date of March 4th is always celebrated by North Ogden as its founding date. Credited with being there by 1852 were Thomas Dunn, Lemuel Mallory, John Riddle, Benjamin Cazier, Newton D. Hall, Newman Blodgett, Enoch Burns, Solomon Campbell, David Garner, Gideon Alvord, Amos Andrus and Bailey Lake.

The Cazier history parallels that of the North Ogden community. The North Ogden history in the Church Historian's office tells that a common school was started in 1852 with a widow by the name of Gheem as the school teacher. Good crops were gathered that year.

In 1854, the history continues, the Indians became so bad that a fort was constructed. Benjamin and Lucy's land, about 27 acres, was in the heart of the settlement, a narrow strip from the present 2600 Street to 2100 Street with the eastern border being about 575 East. Accordingly several families built their homes on the Cazier property inside the southwest corner of the fort. The old Cazier home was located on the east side of what became known as Pioneer Street. It was back of the southeast corner of the present garage at the present address 2568 North 550 East. Their first two large rooms were of adobe. Later a brick addition of two more large rooms were added.

Olive Lucy's parents originally located on the east side of Washington Blvd. Canyon Road was their south boundary line and the center of Mill Creek the north line and east eighty rods. Their sons, Myrtillo and William located there also. Ambrose located on the west side of Washington in that same area. Later John and Polly built by Benjamin and Olive Lucy's flowing well across the street from their home at the present address of 2557 North 550 East.

Quoting again from the North Ogden history, peace was established

with the Indians that year but close watch was kept until the snow got deep enough for protection. Warm weather in the spring of 1855 hatched out hordes of grasshoppers. The settlers tried vainly but not enough grain was saved to provide seed and food. People lost nearly all their cattle because they had nothing to feed them. The winter ahead was unusually severe and the snow covered the ground until nearly the end of April. People, with hardly any exceptions, divided what they had. They dug sego roots. None died of starvation. In the spring they ate the early weeds and vegetation. The year 1859 was a prosperous one for North Ogden.

An account in the Deseret News in 1864 states that Independence Day was celebrated with considerable enthusiasm in North Ogden that year. There was artillery firing at dawn, national flag ceremony and martial music at sunrise. Then followed the procession, reading of the Declaration of Independence, oration by Henry Holmes, speeches by Major Benjamin Cazier of the Utah Militia, George Rose and Major Jefferson Hunt. Afterward there was a sumptuous dinner served beneath the bowery. Three veterans of the Revolutionary War were present but their names were not given.

The militia used to drill down on the barrens west of Pleasant View near the Hot Springs. The Joseph Cazier family has placed the coat Major Benjamin wore in the Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum at Salt Lake City. Benjamin, Jr.'s family was given the sword as a keepsake and William's family the hat.

It was Benjamin's privilege to keep the flag at his home. His fourth son, Joseph, could hardly sleep the night before any important occasion because he was afraid he might oversleep and miss the glorious experience of going with his father to run up the beloved flag at sunrise.

Like many other North Ogdenites, Benjamin took a contract to work with his teams and equipment on the railroad which culminated in the Golden Spike connection at Promontory Point. When the work was completed it was found the railroad did not have enough money to pay in full. Inasmuch as the railroad was a great boon to the future of Utah, Brigham Young advised the people to accept the settlement offer of twenty-five cents on the dollar. They surely could have used that other seventy-five cents cash but the eventual progress made up for it.

Benjamin and Olive Lucy had seven children: Frederick, Olive Ann, Viola, Celestia, Permelia, Benjamin Jr., and Pleasant Polly. On 14 September 1861 Olive Lucy died in childbirth. The baby Pleasant Polly lived 13 days, until 17 September. They were

buried in her parents lot in Ogden City Cemetery. A Mrs. Mallory took Benjamin Jr. into her home. The Shaw family took care of Celestia and Permelia.

On 25 May 1862, Benjamin married Isabel Montgomery, daughter of Robert Sr. and Mary Wilson Montgomery. They had seven children also. They were William R., Mary Elizabeth, Deseret, Joseph, Alma, Alexander and Grace. Two of them, Alma and Grace died as babies. His daughter, Celestia, grew to young womanhood and was engaged to her step-mother's brother, Joseph Montgomery. She had been ill but had recovered sufficiently that she was able to attend a dance. In her weakened condition she began to perspire heavily and stepped out into the cold winter night air to cool off. She died from the pneumonia she developed as a result.

Following Benjamin's second marriage, at a meeting held November 8, 1863 he and George Rose were sustained as counselors to Branch President Henry Holmes. Benjamin resigned in 1867 and his place was taken by James Barker. Late in the autumn of 1876 Henry Holmes died in a smallpox epidemic. Cyrus Wheelock was put in as branch president. Benjamin Cazier and Nathaniel Montgomery were his counselors.

Weber Stake was re-organized May 28, 1877. The North Ogden Branch was organized into a regular ward. In the vestry of the Ogden Tabernacle Amos Maycock was set apart as the first bishop of the ward. At a meeting held June 7, 1877 Benjamin Cazier and Nathaniel Montgomery were set apart as his first and second counselor, respectively. During their term of office work was started on a new brick church, which was to serve the Saints of North Ogden until it was torn down in the 1950's. Work commenced on it in 1880. Benjamin retired from the bishopric in 1882. The building cost \$8,000. It was used a few years in the rough before it was finally completed and ready for the dedication in 1894.

Vordis Cazier, son of the eldest son, Frederick, tells the following story: "Benjamin owed his position in the branch presidency to the fact that Brigham Young felt that with a father in the presidency, Fred and two of his chums could better be brought under control. The leaders were considerably concerned about the wild and wooly attitude of the three boys who had been raised in the wide open spaces, often with Indian boys as companions. Their latest escapade had been to enter the church dance and lasso some of the girls and drag them outside. Most were in favor of excommunicating them but Brigham Young said to be patient awhile longer. One of the boys was called on a mission which apparently turned the tide for him. Fred and the other one were evidently tamed to an acceptable degree.

Civil government was instituted in North Ogden in 1852. Crandall Dunn was the first Justice of the Peace, 1852-1869. Benjamin Cazier, Sr. was elected to that office in 1869 to 1873 then re-elected in 1873 to 1875.

The North Ogden Canal Company was reorganized in the spring of 1876 with a capital stock of \$20,000. Nathaniel Montgomery was made president and Benjamin Cazier was vice-president.

Being a native of Kentucky, Benjamin came naturally by his love for fine horses. The Cazier children saw lots of them as they were growing up at Brownsboro. One especially fine horse Benjamin owned at North Ogden was named Troy. His son, Joseph heard men say, even forty years afterward, that Troy was the fastest horse that had ever been in this part of Utah. Troy had to be broken all over again every time he had not been ridden for awhile. A neighbor by the name of Callahan always rode him for Benjamin. One time as they were handling him he went so high in the air that Benjamin pulled him back by the rope on his neck. Upon impact one of his front legs broke and they had to shoot him.

Along about in the mid 1870's Benjamin read in a newspaper about the strange circumstances of woman whose child's grave was being claimed by another family. A Jacob Cazier of Vermont settled the matter for them. Benjamin wrote to Jacob and received an answer from him. Benjamin wrote to him again, explaining the Mormon religion to him and never heard from him again.

A co-op store was effected in the fall of 1868 with a capital stock of \$2,000. A store, the first brick building in the community, was erected at a cost of \$1,550. The majority of the stock was owned by Sidney Stephens. Henry Holmes was president and superintendent. Benjamin Cazier, Sr. was the clerk. The stock of the store was finally merged into one opened by Sidney. A library of somewhat under one hundred books was maintained at the store for public use.

Benjamin kept store in one room of his house for awhile On April 30, 1881 he and James Storey formed a partnership in the store they built by the canal on the northeast corner of the 400 West 2600 North intersection. Storey bought Benjamin out several years later.

In recent years a woman who is a native of North Ogden told Benjamin's granddaughter, Edna Card Dee, the following story. She said her mother died leaving a large family. Her father was determined to keep all the children together but it was a real struggle for all of them. One day as she was passing the store, shabby and forlorn, Ben Cazier came out and kindly took her into

the store where he replaced free of charge her desperately ragged shoes with a shiny new pair. This is just one of the many expressions of his kind and charitable nature. Of such things are truly great men made.

Isabel Montgomery Cazier's niece, Grace Bailey Anderson, remembered being at the Cazier home to attend the wedding of one of the daughters. Grace had willingly relinquished her doll to another child to play with it. As an unexpected reward for being such a good Girl "Uncle Ben" took the most beautiful doll she had ever seen down from the wall and let her play with it for awhile.

His son, Joseph, said often that his father was a kind, gentle man but when it was necessary for him to be firm he could be FIRM. When he said "No" he meant "NO"! He loved to visit with his married children on Sunday afternoons.

Whenever asked to describe his father, Joseph repeatedly said, "My brother Ben's son Earl is the most like my father of any of the many descendants." Earl was a comparatively small man, about 5 feet 7 inches and carrying the weight of around 145 pounds. We assume this description fits Benjamin also. This size tendency was inherited down through his maternal Drake line. .

Benjamin died February 20, 1889 at the age of sixty-five as the result of a fall down the cellar steps. Joseph heard him and helped him up into the house and into bed. Being so badly injured he developed pneumonia and succumbed to it.

His obituary in the Deseret News 4 March 1889, stated, "He was a kind and affectionate father and a staunch LDS. Funeral services were held in the large meeting house on Saturday, February 23, 1889.

We will let the life he lived speak for itself.