

The following information on Charles Drake Cazier was gathered and compiled by the family genealogist, Fern Rutledge.

Charles Drake Cazier, first bishop of the Afton Ward, Star Valley Stake, Lincoln County, Wyo., was born Jan. 21, 1837 in Kentucky, the son of William Cazier and Pleasant Drake. Becoming a convert to Mormonism, he joined the church in his youth and was baptized about 1847 by Ezra Chase.

On his arrival in Utah in 1851, his family located on Salt Creek, Juab County, and thus became one of the founders of Nephi. Charles took his place as a worker on a farm and continued farming until 1879, when they moved to Idaho. He passed through all the scenes and hardships of pioneer life. He served in the military service during the Walker War and later during the Black Hawk War. His life was often exposed to great dangers while he was standing guard and discharging other military duties.

He was ordained a seventy in the LDS Church May 18, 1857 at Nephi by Timothy H. Hoyt. and a high priest by President Brigham Young July 7, 1877.

On June 12, 1858 he married Harriet Gates, the ceremony taking place in an Indian Wickiup in Payson, Utah. By this marriage he had twelve children: Charles G., Margaret, Lydia, William H., Samuel G., Sarah Ellen, Harriet, Eve, George, Maranda, Artello and Willard Otis.

In 1879 he moved to Clifton, Idaho and in the fall of 1880 to Star Valley, Wyo. He was one of the first settlers of Afton. In 1881 he moved to Bennington, Bear Lake, Idaho but was called back to Afton as presiding elder. The church authorities instructed Charles D. Cazier to lay out and survey a townsite containing 30 blocks, each comprising ten acres, a fourth of a block selling for one dollar. The surveying was done by using a common carpenter's square and rope. When officially surveyed later it was only in error a few feet. The townsite was surveyed by Henry M. Harmon in the year 1886 at a cost of \$39.10.

Mr. Cazier became the bishop when the ward was organized September 21, 1887. This position he occupied until 1894. After that he served as president of the high priest quorum in the Star Valley Stake.

For four years Charles D. Lazier served as state senator while residing in Wyoming. He filled many other positions of responsibility in Utah and Idaho. He was ordained a church patriarch Aug. 15, 1894 by Francis M. Lyman. He died May 21, 1915.

His wife Harriet Lazier acted as president of the Relief Society in Afton for many years. She was long known for her charitable deeds. She freely 'gave of her services to the poverty stricken, brought hope and cheer to the sorrowful, nursed the sick and served as caretaker when the grim reaper took his toll.

The Honorable Charles Drake Cazier

(Author Unknown)

No roster of Wyoming's progressive men, not even a partial one, would be complete without an honorable mention of Honorable Charles Drake Cazier. One of the foremost citizen of Unita County, who has a well improved and highly cultivated farm adjoining the town of Afton, where he exemplifies, from day to day, fidelity to duty, earnest interest in the affairs of the community which he was one of the first to form, active and prudent zeal in commercial enterprise and exalted devotion to the welfare of his church.

Charles parents both descended from old colonial families that bore their past courageously in all the struggles of their county and section, whether on the field of battle or in the arduous but productive pursuits of peace. The father was a cooper by trade and worked at the craft and also farmed in Kentucky for years. They moved to Iowa, and from there in 1851 to Utah where he died in 1878. His mother, Pleasant Drake passed away in 1846. The family consisted of 10 children, of whom Charles was the 9th.

To Charles fate denied the advantage of a scholastic education gathered in the schoolroom, but well supplied the deficiency by thorough teaching in the hard but effective school of experience. When he was but fourteen he encountered daily peril and nightly apprehension, the hardships and privations and the wearying toil of a journey across the plains with his parents, making the trip by ox team.

On his arrival in the land of their chosen residence he was at once obliged to take his place as a workman on the farm to aid in subduing the wilderness to which they had come, and gave of his best endeavors in making it fruitful.

He continued farming in Utah until 1879 when he moved to Idaho, thence in 1880 he came to Wyoming. He soon returned to Idaho where he remained until he came to Wyoming with the intention of remaining and taking up a place adjoining the then unpeopled site of Afton, began to improve it and build it into a home.

He was one of the first nine householders to settle in the valley and he contributed his full share to the inspiration and work necessary to make the lonely and uninhabited region, in which they first pitched their tents, the popular, progressive, highly improved and well developed section it has become.

His home is one of the chosen ones in the valley and all that there is appertaining to it of comfort, convenience and artistic adornment, is the results of his industry, enterprise, intelligent husbandry and judicious taste. His excellent judgement and store of worldly wisdom have won him the confidence of his people and in 1880 he was appointed postmaster of Afton being the first official of that class in the valley. In 1894 he was elected to the State Senate from this county and made a creditable record in the legislature. In church affairs he has been active since his early manhood. He was the first Bishop in the Mormon Church of all this country and held this office for a number of years. He is at present (1902) the president of the High Priests

Quorum and Patriarch of the Stake. To the duties of these responsibilities and important positions he gives the most careful and conscientious attention.

On June 12, 1858, in Utah he married Miss Harriet Gates, a native of Michigan and a daughter of Samuel and Lydia (Downer) Gates. The former born in New York and the latter in Vermont. Twelve children, six sons and six daughters have blessed this union, but only six are now living. Those are Charles, William, Samuel, and George, all married and living in Uinta County. Sarah E. now the wife of Charles C. Leavitt of Afton and Willard O. who is still one of the parental household. Those deceased are: Lydia, Margaret and Evelyn who died in Nephi, Utah in infancy, Harriet, former wife of A.V. Call of Mexico who died in that country at the age of twenty two years, leaving one child (Miranda) Artello who died in Idaho in childhood.

Mr. Cazier's life has not been entirely calm, for he saw dangerous service in all the early Indian Wars of this section, and for years, like others of the people carried his life in his hands from day to day. Many times he was in desperate situations. Many times he narrowly escaped a cruel death at the hands of hostile savages. Many time he was compelled to endure great privation from hunger, thirst and from exposure to the fury of the inclement elements. Through all these vicissitudes, he bore himself bravely, even cheerfully and now finds that the recollections of trials past, but sweetens the enjoyment of rest and comfort thereby secured. Charles was ordained patriarch August 15, 1894 by Francis M. Layman and served 21 years. He died May 12, 1915.

The following statements were written by Thomas F. Burton who served as a counselor to Bishop Cazier.

Charles D. Cazier was called to serve as Presiding Elder over all members of the church in both the Upper and Lower Star Valleys. He served in this position until September 21, 1887 when the Acton Ward was organized and he was sustained as Bishop of the Ward with James Harrison as first counselor and James Dinsdale as second counselor. William H. Kennington was ward clerk. Later James Harrison moved to Idaho and Archie Gardner, the old mill builder of Utah, succeeded him as Bishop's counselor. A littler later James Dinsdale moved to Utah and Thomas F. Burton succeeded him as counselor. It was while this Bishopric was serving that the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated on April 6, 1893. We, in a body, attended the first session of the dedicatory service. He dedicatory prayer was offered by President Wilford Woodruff and was intensely interesting.

In August 1894 we were released as the Bishopric and Charles D. Cazier was ordained a Patriarch, the first in Star Valley, which was organized as a Stake on August 14, 1892 by Joseph F. Smith, later President of the church.

Charles Drake Cazier: The Silent Call

(Author Unknown)

The funeral services of the late Patriarch, Charles Drake Cazier, were held in the stake tabernacle last Sunday afternoon, and the service was largely attended and floral offerings many and beautiful. Interment was made in the city cemetery.

During the newspaper career of the writer it has fell to our lot to record the death of many pioneers but believe that never before have we been called on to record the death of one in whose life's book the pages were so complete, as that of the subject of this obituary.

Charles Drake Cazier was born in Oldham County, Kentucky in the year 1837, he emigrated with his parents to Utah, settling what is now known as the town of Nephi. At the time of his death he was 78 years old.

After residing in Utah for some thirty years, he together with his family, again were emigrants and this time to Star Valley at which place he resided until his death.

He was the first Bishop in Star Valley and had under his jurisdiction both the valleys which territory now embraces eleven wards. (1915) At that time Star Valley belonged to the Bear Lake Stake, and to make his reports to the Stake authorities he was obliged to make the trip to Paris on snowshoes. As modern conveniences were unknown in those days he was obliged to obtain his wearing apparel for himself and family as best he could and on one of his Stake meetings, he wore a new buckskin suit, and gained the name of "The Buskskin Bishop of Star Valley".

Mr. Cazier was a man who united sound sense with strong convictions and to him, perhaps more than others, can be credited the pioneer development of our beautiful Star Valley. Besides many friends and near relatives he leaves to morn his loss four sons and one daughter. All of which were present at the funeral. The speakers at the funeral were: A. Lu Hale, O.H. Eggleston, L.J. Halling, President Gardner, Thomas Walton, and Bishop Osborne Low. He was buried in the Acton Cemetery.