



James Huntsman

HUNTSMAN'S IN FILLMORE



Mary Johnston Huntsman

From among many families in North America, and a few directly from Europe, there came into Utah various families not acquainted with each other until they converged in the intermountain area. Between 1848 and 1860, these Huntsman's crossed through marriages, business associations, church associations, and neighbor dealings. These immigrants came to Utah for various reasons—to escape pressure from hostile neighbors, to be among others of their faith, to improve themselves economically.

James Huntsman is reported to have been born in Pennsylvania, June 6, 1801. The early background of Mary Johnston Huntsman is most obscure. According to Milestones of Millard, p. 778, she was born in Holland. She has also been reported to be a full-blooded Indian. Here also, family tradition varies. One story says that she came from a Cherokee family while another claims she was Seneca, a tribe in the Iroquois Nation. If Seneca she might have come from around New York State, but if she was Cherokee her place of origin could have been from someplace in the southern Appalachian Mountains, roughly in the area of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The children of James Huntsman and Mary Johnston Huntsman were: Lavina, Sarah, Isaiah, Catherine, Kisiah, William, Gabriel, Jesse, Jacob, and Peter. Most of these were born in Ohio,

listed as Parry, Ohio. (This name does not appear on modern maps.)

The following 4 paragraphs of excerpts were taken from: ON THE TRAIL WITH THE CARSEN'S 1851; Researched by Lynn R. Carsen

George A. Smith sent a letter to Orson Pratt from Sandy Bluffs (280 miles from Winter Quarters) dated 12 August 1849, in which he gives the following advice. "We would suggest the propriety, and recommend the same to all the Saints that propose emigrating, to provide themselves with plenty of good grass rope, one half or five-eighths in diameter for tying up, about ten feet to an ox, or steer, or cow, and also to provide some good heavy ox chains."

Garden Grove Company and also the Harry Walton Company, set out on its trek from Garden Grove to the Great Salt Lake Valley June 8, 1851

He writes, It is the 19th of August, and our ancestors are about 480 miles from the Great Salt Lake Valley. The official camp log for this date states that "James Huntsman being dissatisfied with our company, went on ahead with five other wagons." This is the only mention of any Huntsman in any of the accounts. I have not been able to determine who James Huntsman was, or who was in the other five wagons. It is probable that these wagons joined the Garden Grove Company some time after it left Winter Quarters. Evidently it was

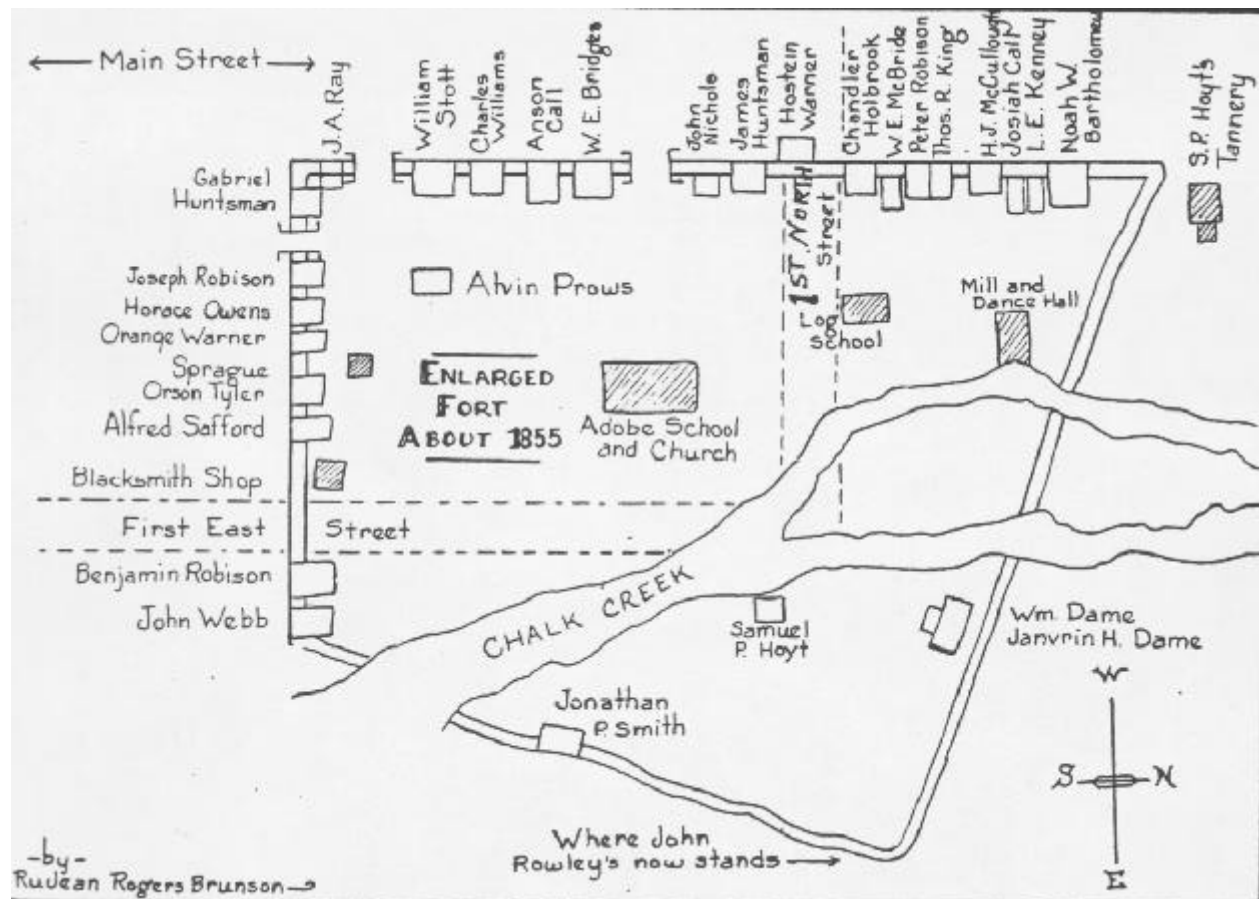
not unusual for wagons to leave a company.

On Wednesday morning the Garden Grove Company of Saints had breakfast and then moved up and over the last hill. Crooks wrote in his journal "Arrived in Salt Lake today September 24, 1851 with 60 wagons."

A typical immigrant family would usually first arrive in Salt Lake City, Utah, itself a newly formed community established as a headquarters for Church and Territory. They were assigned by the leaders of Church and Territory, (They were one and the same for the most part.) to new colonies such as Fillmore, and Holden, Utah. Assignments were not made at random, but efforts were made to utilize the many skills of the colonists to ensure that each community had a core of skilled carpenters, metal smiths, medical personnel, and others needed in the new settlements.

Thus, two families, the Huntsman's and the Carlings, arrived in Fillmore in 1852, a year after the settlement was founded. These were James Huntsman, his wife Mary and their children and John Carling and his wife Ann and their children. A Territorial Legislature action on October 4, 1851, created Millard County, and it designated a settlement called Fillmore as its county seat. Even though there were no settlers here at that time, Brigham Young had made a journey through this area and had already decided where the colonies would be located. In a display of loyalty to the United States, the names Millard and Fillmore were selected because that was the name of the President of the United States at that time. Then the very first colonists were assigned to settle in Fillmore, also during October of 1851.

In 1853 the name of James Huntsman appears as an alderman for the town of Fillmore. Evidently,



the family was assigned quarters in the newly built, fortified community in the middle of the west side of the structure. James' son Gabriel had quarters on the southwest corner. Gabriel Huntsman was already 22 years of age at this time.

By January 1852, there were already about 30 buildings constructed, including a log schoolhouse. These buildings were arranged near Chalk Creek in a sort of triangle in order to form a fort. The "Saints" had been instructed throughout Utah to build forts in case of an outbreak of hostilities with the local Indians. Already an individual Pahvant Ute had stolen a few head of cattle, and one settler had been knifed in a dispute with an Indian.

Christmas in 1852 was celebrated with a picnic and an all night dance. There is no record, however, about Santa Claus or what the children did during the celebration. In 1853, another Huntsman family arrived in Fillmore. They were Isaiah, his wife Rebecca and young son, Ezra.

Isaiah had served with the United States Army in the "Mormon Battalion," a unit of volunteers from among the Mormons who had joined to help the country in their war with Mexico. He had been en-route to Utah with other immigrating Mormons, but at the request of recruiters and encouraged by Brigham Young, he joined the Battalion.

After their enlistment, the battalion made one of the longest marches ever made by a U.S. Army unit. They left the Midwest and traveled through New Mexico, Arizona, and then northward through California. The successful conclusion of this war left these states, plus Colorado, Nevada, and Utah in U.S. jurisdiction when heretofore it had been Mexican.

The battalion was not released until after Salt Lake City had been founded,



Isaiah Huntsman

so when the discharges traveled to their new homes they went eastward from northern Californian. One of these soldiers discovered gold at Sutter's Fort near Sacramento, triggering the great gold rush of

1849. Upon their release from the battalion, Isaiah Huntsman traveled to Salt Lake City and finding his Parents were not there, went back east to join



Rebecca Carter Huntsman

his relatives there. There, Isaiah and Rebecca Carter were married and they had one child, Ezra. They came West with James and family in 1851.

The first crops of wheat grown by the colonists in Fillmore had to be harvested with cradles. After the wheat was cut with these simple devices the crops next had to be raked up and then bound into bundles, mostly with hand labor. There were threshing machines available to the farmers in the United States at that time, but they were not yet available in the West. Instead, the antiquated method of threshing by using horses to tromp over the harvest to release the grains from the husks, and then it was winnowed by hand. There was no gristmill so the grain was ground in small family-sized coffee mills, which a few families brought with them to Fillmore. The grinders were scarce in number so the families shared. This meant long tedious hours to prepare the grains for using in cooking and

baking.

Later, in 1853, a thresher was brought into Fillmore, and even a gristmill was built. The mill was originally constructed on land, which later became the property of Gabriel Huntsman.

During 1853, relations with the Ute Indians became troubled. The source of the trouble started nearly half a century before the Mormons arrived in the area. A local chief, called "Chief Walker," began to lead large parties of mounted Utes on forays between the Great Salt Lake and Los Angeles, California. They raided other Indian camps such as the Shoshones and Pauite, the Spanish American rancheros and white settlers to obtain horses and sometimes even Indian children, to sell for profit. A great packhorse thoroughfare, now called "The Old Spanish Trail," developed between Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Los Angeles, California, via Utah, and it was along this infamous route that Walker and his band roamed during their depredations.

When the Mormons arrived they founded several of their colonies astride this "Old Spanish Trail" and they even took measures to try to stop the trade in stolen horses and kidnapped children. Chief Walker and his men reacted to this threat to their trade by attacking some of the Mormon villagers. Even Provo, Utah was attacked, and this community was much closer to Salt Lake City than Fillmore. Thus commenced the "Walker War".

In spite of their vulnerability there is no record that any members of the families of Huntsman's, Carlings, Ashmans, or others being killed or wounded in this war around Fillmore. Yet, some of the men served as guards and militiamen during the emergency and all participated in devoting time to watching their herds, flocks, and fields,

and in strengthening the fortifications around the community.

In December 1854, the senior John Carling went to the Territorial Legislature in Salt Lake City as a representative from Millard County. Abraham Carling with others in the community produced plays for entertainment. On special occasions there were also feasts and dances, particularly during Christmas, at weddings, on the Fourth of July (our country's birthday), and on the Twenty-fourth of July. This latter date, in Utah, commemorates the arrival of the first Mormon pioneers in Utah.

At the dances, if musicians were paid for their services, it was with produce as potatoes or vegetables. Among the musicians who played for these dances was James Huntsman. Even when standard instruments were lacking, some musical "instruments" were improvised, as when Joseph Sinkler Giles fold a piece of paper over a comb, hummed through it, and made a sort of kazoo. Square dancing and related types were the rule. Couples were not allowed to touch more than an arm or the hand of a partner. Waltzes were not approved until after 1870 because they were thought to be too intimate. After 1870 a brother and sister team returned from a prestigious dancing school in Salt Lake City and introduced the waltz style to the tune of Strauss', "The Blue Danube Waltz."

From the Journal of Volney King we learn, "In the spring of 1855 it was decided to enlarge the farms by making a canal to the sink of Chalk Creek". They did it by using a plow that was invented by Isaiah Huntsman and J. H. Dame and they also owned the plow. It was a right handed and left handed plow connected together, which threw dirt both ways. Upon settling in Fillmore, Isaiah took up farming and continued to work as a blacksmith,

which skill he had learned while in the Mormon Battalion. Also in 1855 a severe plague of grasshoppers damaged the crops. Far more important during this year, was the arrival of Brigham Young and his entourage into the community. At this time he urged the people to join in an experimental socio-religious organization called "The United Order." Some family members responded and joined the Order.

The United Order was a communal socio-religious structure. It was introduced on an experimental basis in just a few communities at first. Fillmore was one of these. The over-all head was a Board of Trustees in Salt Lake with Brigham Young as Director. There was also a local director. Not all residents of the community volunteered to join the plan, but among those who did participate were Isaac V. and Ann Carling, Isaiah Huntsman, Gabriel Huntsman, James Huntsman and John Carling. People who became members of the Order could not be in debt at the time they accepted membership, and they were required to give all of their property to a common pooled ownership. All who joined were to share in its benefits alike. Produce from the common farms was to be stored in a common building, but it could be drawn upon whenever families needed it. The Order was regarded as a religious privilege and duty, and the participants, to qualify, had to pass an appraisal of their temperamental qualities, reasoning faculties and social and domestic faculties.

In all communities where the experiment was attempted it failed in a year or two. It was obvious that its membership could not adjust to the severe demands on their individual industry. Internally, there was dissension over the matter of some working hard while others shirked; yet shared in the same benefits. When the United Order was abandoned property was



Emma Melisa King
Huntsman

redistributed to former owners.

Isaiah Huntsman in 1856 entered the Order of Plural Marriage and took Emma Melisa King as his second wife,)

By 1856 converts to Mormonism from Europe were coming to Utah in increasing numbers and Brigham Young sought a way to move the travelers and their possessions more cheaply and expeditiously between Nebraska and Utah. He embarked on a plan where the travelers would walk the distance, hauling much of their belongings in handcars. Some wagons, however, were to be made available through the services of "missionaries" from Utah, and these were used to carry heavier equipment such as tents and farming implements, or for the transportation of travelers who were unable to walk.

James Huntsman and his sons farmed in addition to raising cattle to make a living. James built a brick home at what is now 150 W. Center Street. (This home was remodeled by the new owners years later).

Gabriel Huntsman was among the missionaries called. So in April of 1856 he left with a team and



Gabriel and Eunice Huntsman

wagon, leaving behind a wife and five-month-old baby named Gabriel Riley Huntsman. During his absence the crops of the local people were seriously damaged by grasshopper plague and an infestation of voracious worms. His membership in the United Order, however, assured

his family their food and some other supplies during his absence.

Gabriel Huntsman was later called on a mission to eastern Canada and once again he had to leave his family. However, he, along with several other missionaries was recalled home to "Zion" when the U.S. Army was ordered into Utah to quell the "Mormon Rebellion". This was in 1858 and the Army units were under Albert Sydney Johnston.

By 1857 the isolation of the Mormons in the western mountains and deserts of Utah began to be eroded by the coming of many non-Mormons. These non-Mormons resented the domination of the Mormon Church in civic and government affairs. The political situation in Utah convinced President James Buchanan to send a contingent of the U.S. Army to Utah to quell the "Mormon Rebellion." As the army moved westward, many of the people prepared to move in flight from hostile adversaries. Diplomacy prevailed, however, and the move was cancelled. Among those who had prepared themselves to move, if necessary, to the Colorado River plateaus, were the Huntsman's, Ashman's and Carlings'.

In November 1860 Judge John A. Ray assigned James Huntsman as road supervisor to build a road between Fillmore and Pioneer Creek (Holden), for which he was paid from county taxes. In June 1861, other road supervisors were appointed to oversee the construction of roads in the areas of Cedar Springs, Deseret, Corn Creek, Meadow, and Cove Creek.

When the Civil War erupted in 1861 Brigham Young telegraphed Abraham Lincoln that Utah Territory would remain loyal to the Union. However, Utah was not asked to contribute manpower to serve in this war, so there are few if any Civil War veterans in the family.

In 1860 James Huntsman was sent on a special mission with his wagon and team to southern California. The roadway between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles had been improved sufficiently to permit wagon traffic to pass along "The Old Spanish Trail." One of its purposes was to allow immigrants to continue the ocean voyage around Cape Horn and up the coast of two continents to California where they would travel the last few hundred miles overland along this trail. James Huntsman was sent to assist these travelers.

In October 1871, Gabriel Huntsman left on a regular church mission to the eastern states and later served again in Canada. He had a store in Fillmore as early as 1855. At least once he combined one of his missionary trips to the Missouri River country with freighting goods to be sold in his store. Part of the stock consisted of four lamps, one of which he kept for the use of his own family in Fillmore. The others he sold to three widows. These lamps were quite a novelty in town in those days. In 1872, Gabriel built a hotel in Fillmore with brick obtained from Provo, Utah.

Gabriel Huntsman's name appeared in a County Expense Account in 1859 presumably for the sale of supplies from his store. By now, besides James Huntsman, the names of Gabriel, Peter, and Jacob Huntsman are listed as being landowners in Millard County. James Huntsman lived in Fillmore until he died, November 10, 1876.



Peter Huntsman, brother of Gabriel Huntsman, husband of Jesse Powell Huntsman, son of James.

In 1867 Peter Huntsman was a member of a U.S. Marshall's posse in pursuit of cattle thieves south of Sevier Lake, in Millard County. In 1869 he was elected sheriff of Millard County, a position that he managed to retain for several more years.

Sarah Huntsman Giles was born in Nauvoo, Illinois, June 3, 1841. (Some records say Parry, Ohio was her birthplace.) She married Joseph Sinkler Giles in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1869. Joseph Sinkler Giles was one of those soldiers sent to the west with Johnston's Army. In 1858 he arrived in Fillmore to find employment, was introduced to the Church, and lived in this area until he died in 1921. Sarah died in Fillmore April 5, 1881.

Gabriel Riley Huntsman was the son of Gabriel Huntsman and he was a newborn baby when his



G. Riley Huntsman and his wife, Hannah Hanson Huntsman, Sept. 16, 1885.

father had to leave Fillmore in answer to a missionary call to travel to the Missouri River. He was born November 1, 1856. Through his life he developed into a local commercial entrepreneur, first with his father and then on his own. They had a merchandise business, and then added a hotel

to their enterprises. By 1900 the department store had ads in the local paper for "G.R. Huntsman, General Merchandise." The Deseret News also reported in 1900 the completion of brick department store south of the Gabriel Huntsman Hotel.

Stories about Gabriel Riley Huntsman have become legendary. He was the kind of person around whom stories are built, whether true or not. He was said to have been a large person who cussed a lot, but was very kind to people. One former Fillmore resident reported that, "If anyone had a fire he was the only one who had a hose long enough to be of much use. He was a

huge fellow, and he'd appear with the hose wrapped around him. On the way to the fire he'd cuss the people for not getting here sooner.

Maggie Giles Malouf was hired once by him as a clerk in the store, and she said that his swearing was not as bad as people claimed, and that with all his faults he was kind to people. He was a heavy smoker, though, and his language was colorful. Some people came into his store just to hear him talk. He was not particularly profane, but



The G. R. Huntsman Department Store in 1904 before the addition was built. Riley, Hannah together with children stand in front of store. George was only three and Nelda wasn't born.

he did swear some. But he had an unusual vocabulary. "Harriet (Aunt Hat) was the only one who could tell him off though. She worked in the store for years, and really attracted business there and made the money for uncle Riley. Some said he would have gone broke if it hadn't been for Aunt Hat. One thing he had good honest prices. But if it was Stevens at his store everything would always be five cents above all other prices. The store was a two-story brick structure and he had furniture for sale on the second floor, while on the main floor he sold textile goods, nails and hardware.

Gabriel Riley Huntsman, often called “Doc” Huntsman wasn’t a medical doctor. No one could say where he got that name. Joe Giles Carling thought he might have obtained it because he use to give a little medical first aid, pulling teeth, etc., in the earlier days of Fillmore.

Joseph Carling continued, “When I used to go to school I’d see Riley almost every day during autumn and spring, out milking his cow. He would do this out in front of his store. The store was a beautiful building---he had a gas lamp out in front, and there was a tie post there for horses. He had a nice Jersey cow, which he would let out at night to eat grasses along the ditch banks and roadways. He left a halter on her, and in the morning several times I saw him with her tied to the post. And he’d be milking her right in front of the store. He was a character.

Doc Huntsman bought a new car, a Maxwell, which was for those days a thing of beauty, and one in which he took great pride. He was driving along Main Street when a cow decided to pass across the street in front of him. The cow was struck broadside, killing the animal and badly damaging the vehicle. Doc Huntsman got out of the car fuming with anger over the damage. ‘What damn fool let his cow roam the streets? I’ll sue the devil out of him, the stupid idiot.’ Then he saw the brand on the dead cow. It was his own!

You have probably heard about the gag where a man got out on a tree limb and sawed it off. Doc Huntsman is said to have done just this thing, and had to be taken to a hospital. Actually, he wanted to remove a limb from a tree, but to saw it off was a difficult task from a more secure position on the tree trunk. So, he got out on the limb expecting to cut it just part way from this more convenient position. Anyhow, it required more than a band-aid to repair the damage to him.

In 1918 the Telluride Electric Company was constructing a power line from the Sevier River Valley near Richfield westward across the mountains to Fillmore. Up to this time there were no electric lines available in the area, and the best lighting was with gas lamps or kerosene lamps. It was a long, tedious task using comparatively primitive equipment, yet they had to cross a difficult and high mountain range to accomplish it.

As the line approached Fillmore the workmen began to come into Fillmore to shop, and for weekend and evening recreation, the people in town heard them talk about “running the juice over the mountain,” or “bringing the juice into Fillmore.” Doc Huntsman like other citizens had heard this talk of “juice”. When the line was nearing completion, representatives from the company came into Fillmore to sell the service to homeowners and businesses. Naturally, Doc Huntsman was contacted since he operated some of the main businesses in town. He was deeply concerned though, and replied, “I don’t know about it. That mountain east of here is pretty **** high, and when that juice comes running down those wires into this store it might come so fast it will wreck the place!”

JAMES Huntsman Obituary: The Deseret News, Vol. XX, No. 44, Wednesday, 6 Dec 1871: Died: In Fillmore City, on the 10th inst., of inflammation of the lungs, JAMES HUNTSMAN, aged 70 years, 5 months and 4 days. Brother Huntsman was formerly from Pennsylvania. He was baptized in the early history of the Church, and has, till the day of his death, shared in all the toils and hardships of the Saints with unflinching fortitude. He was true and faithful to the trust reposed in him. With his last words he exhorted his family and friends to be firm and steadfast to the truth.

James Huntsman’s wife, Mary Johnston



The Huntsman Hotel, home of the Gabriel Huntsman Family; built in 1872 by Hans Hanson, who had the contract; James and Ralph Rowley laid the brick. All of the fancy

scroll work was done by Hans Hanson. There were twenty-four rooms, an attic, and a two-roomed basement.

Huntsman, sometime after the death of James, moved to California to live with her son Jacob and family. She died 15 August, 1895 in Arroyo Grande, California.

References: **Day, Stella; Ekins, Sabrina C.** (Compilers)

Everything is Relative: by Stella Huntsman Day.

1851-1951 Milestones of Millard. Millard County Chapters of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers.

The Huntsman Annals.