

THE BENNION FAMILY RECORDER



Group photograph of surviving pioneers that entered the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. This photograph was taken in 1897 or 50 years after they entered the Valley. Notice the pioneer ribbons they are wearing. (by permission of the Utah Historical Society.)

President's Message

by Lynn R. Stratford

Taylorsville Made a City—On a hot July 1st afternoon of last year, I attended a gala at Salt Lake Community College celebrating Taylorsville being made a city. A top quality musical play, *Over Jordan*, narrated by Bruce Lindsay and Brooke Anderson Healy (Salt Lake City news broadcasters,) took the audience through the history of Taylorsville from the very beginning in 1847 up to the present time.

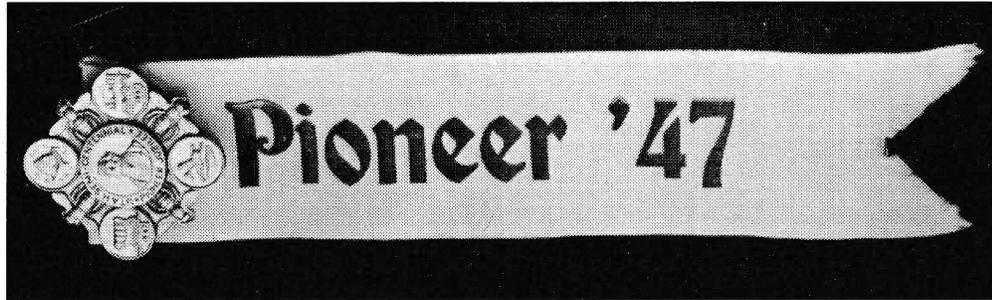
I learned that “*over Jordan*” meant that Samuel and John Bennion were the first pioneers to settle “over Jordan” or West of the Jordan River. I listened with pride as the story unfolded as to how Samuel and John Bennion were instrumental in establishing this great pioneer area.

The End of a Chapter—With the publication of this *Recorder* I am retiring after serving

two-and-a-half years as president/editor and two years as vice president. The reins of The Bennion Family Association (BFA) will be turned over to the able leadership of the new president, M. Grant Sharp. As this era ends, it is good to reflect on the accomplishments during the last several years and look, with great expectation, toward the dreams of tomorrow.

Motivated by the recent and growing number of Bennion descendants (and the increased costs and complexity of communicating with them) we have made significant changes in the direction of the BFA. *The Recorder* will be published about twice a year without the attached family group records. The BFA will encourage Bennion descendants to form their own smaller and connected family associations and reunions, using their grandfathers as the starting point. The BFA will continue as a resource and research facility, getting family history information out to descendants using new lost-cost and efficient methods, such as CD ROMs and internet access.

"As I have been involved with the Bennion Family Association and connected with the committed people of past and present executive committees, my appreciation for Samuel and John Bennion has grown immeasurably."



Photograph of the 1897 medallion and ribbon given the surviving pioneers of 1847. (by permission of the Utah Historical Society.)

Bennion Family History Volume VI (John & Elizabeth Bennion prior to 1837,) compiled by Helen S. Madsen, should be published this year. It will be followed by the Samuel Bennion book. Volume V, which we thought would be printed by now, should be sent out this spring (see related article by Steve Bennion.)

We sold and sent out lots of books, T-shirts, and information to help promote Bennion history. We also raised funds to continue operations. In 1996, we had a Bennion Reunion - West, in Pleasanton, California, and for 1997, there are possible plans for a big splash celebrating the 150 year anniversary of the Bennion brothers entering the Salt Lake Valley. The exciting news is that despite what we have accomplished, there remains lots yet to do.

Parting Thoughts—I volunteered for this leadership service without having the least bit of knowledge about Samuel and John Bennion. I had never read any of their history nor looked at any Bennion family information. When asked to serve, I actually thought they had mistaken me for my able, genealogy-entrenched brother.

As I have been involved with the Bennion Family Association and connected with the committed people of past and present executive committees, my appreciation for Samuel and John Bennion has grown immeasurably. I now love these two wonderful men. My life is enriched because of their remarkable history and outstanding example.

During sobering moments, I tried to place myself back in Wales in the shoes of John Bennion. Would I have accepted a very dif-

ferent religion as taught by those early Mormon missionaries? Would I have taken my young wife, uprooted my life on a tender testimony of a new church, and sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to Zion? What was it like to associate with the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo? Could I endure the rugged trek West to the Great Salt Lake and bury my beloved father and nearly 2 year old daughter along the trail? Would I have had the strength of character and physical/emotional stamina to survive their many trials and leave a legacy of honor to my posterity. I hope so.

So a family name, and the rich heritage associated with it, can bring strength, encouragement, and direction in our lives - if we let it in. So it has been for me with the name... *Bennion.* ■

Family Stories from the Book of Mormon

by M. Grant Sharp

OUR BENNION FOREFATHERS were faithfully committed to the principal concepts taught in the Book of Mormon that influenced so much of their lives. See how quickly you can recognize these two families from their experiences in the Book of Mormon. Each series of descriptions depict just *one* family.

1. Son worked for his father, who was on the job full-time until his death. (No early retirement for this old dad).
2. Both dad and son were in the army.
3. In hand-to-hand combat, at the *front* of the armies, both father and son person-

"The obedient younger brother prayed to the Lord "according to that which had been spoken by the mouth of (the older brother)" and the Lord granted all three requested miracles."

- ally slew thousands of the enemy's strongest warriors in battles that spanned decades of time.
4. Even when dad was leading troops at age 75, both he and his son won in combat more often than tens of thousands of their fellow soldiers, who were killed all around them.
 5. Dad and son were the only few righteous men among their entire civilization, including both the enemy as well as their own people. They fought along side of, and against, wicked and cannibalistic men.
 6. This surviving warrior son, after the final battle, presumably buried his father, mother, brother, sisters, wife, and all his children. None of his family survived with him.
 7. After surviving the final battle, this son became a fugitive, hiding from the enemy, continuously changing his location to prevent detection, and always without a home, with no living friends to help or comfort him. For nearly 36 years after the battle, he constantly feared death, if he were discovered.
 8. In his later life, this successful giant of a warrior was humbled to accept his call to become a writer, ever fearing that the Gentiles would "mock... our weakness in writing," and pleading with us to "condemn me not because of mine imperfections."
 9. Famous words of this valiant warrior turn writer, spoken to us in this latter day, "Jesus Christ has shown you unto me, and I know your doing."

Now, if you haven't guessed the identity of this valiant Book of Mormon family, the answer is encoded at the end of this article. Let's try another family story - this is family number two:

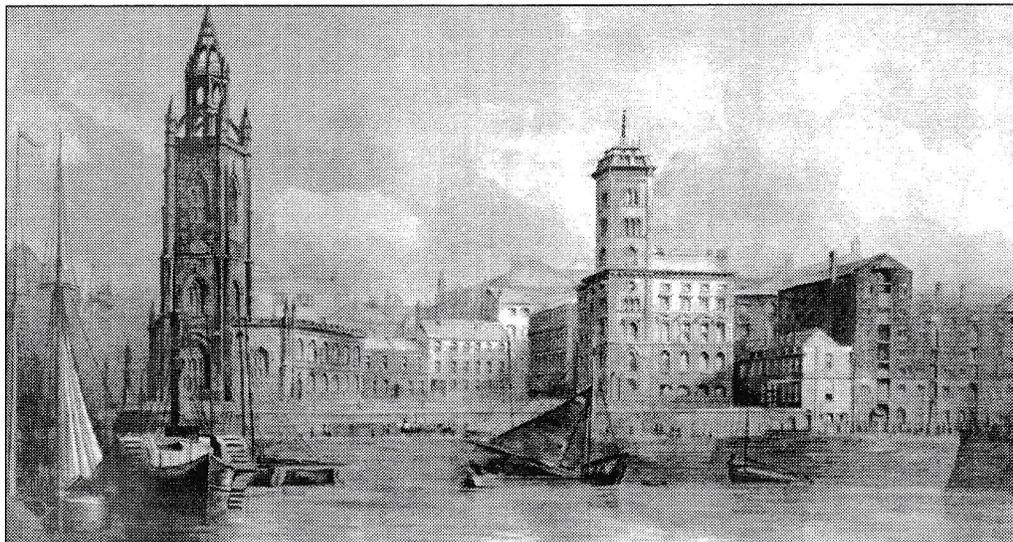
1. The warrior-writer above wrote the account of this next family.
2. An older brother asked his younger brother to seek three specific, significant miracles of the Lord, because the younger brother was "highly favored of the Lord."

3. The obedient younger brother prayed to the Lord "according to that which had been spoken by the mouth of the older brother" and the Lord granted all three requested miracles.
4. Later when the brothers were in their old age, the people wanted to appoint a king to take their place, and the younger "highly favored" brother said it would be unwise, but the older brother said, "choose ye out from among our sons a king."
5. During this family's travels, they spent five years living at the beach, during which time they neglected their prayers. As a result, the Lord appeared to the younger brother in a cloud and for three hours "chastened him because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord."
6. Subsequent to the chastening, the Lord said of the younger brother, "never before has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast."
7. This faith-filled brother "said unto the mountain Zerin, Remove - and it was removed."
8. During 344 days in a tempest-tossed barge on the ocean, this faith-filled brother "did thank and praise the Lord all the day long; and when the night came, they did not cease to praise the Lord."
9. Of this younger brother, the warrior-writer observes that never were greater things made manifest," because so strong was his faith that the Lord could not withhold anything from him."

Who was this faith-filled advisor to his leader and brother, whose advise in ancient times would have spared the people from the devastation of subsequent kings? Both he and his admiring warrior-writer taught us in just a few short chapters more than volumes could say about how faith works.

We would do well to learn from the experiences of these two Book of Mormon families. (answers coded backwards: #1=inorom, #2=deraj fo rehtorb) ■

"Enlist relatives
to commit to
make the
reunion happen;
no one person
can do it
efficiently alone."



St. Nichols Church in Liverpool, England where Samuel Bennion and Mary Bushell were married in 1839. This was the departure point for many Saints from the Great Britain area as they began their voyage to the United States. The church also served as a beacon for ships landing in Liverpool. (by permission of the Liverpool City Library, Liverpool, England.)

How to Throw a Grandfather-line Family Reunion?

A FAMILY REUNION WILL HAPPEN when someone takes the lead and engenders enthusiasm to get family members together. Use this outline to make it happen with your family.

Date—Get out the calendar and *set a date* trying to miss major conflicts (no time is perfect for everyone). Summer and Saturday around noon sounds good.

Place—Select a park, large house, school or picnic area which is central to the families or near some historical site.

Promotion—Collect names, addresses, and phone numbers and get them on a computer mailing list, if possible. Send out a flyer 4 months, 1 month, and 10 days before the reunion or use a calling committee for the last contact.

Delegate—Enlist relatives to commit to make the reunion happen; no one person can do it efficiently alone. Make assignments in areas such as promotion, food, program, phoning, etc. The more people you muster,

the more will come to the reunion.

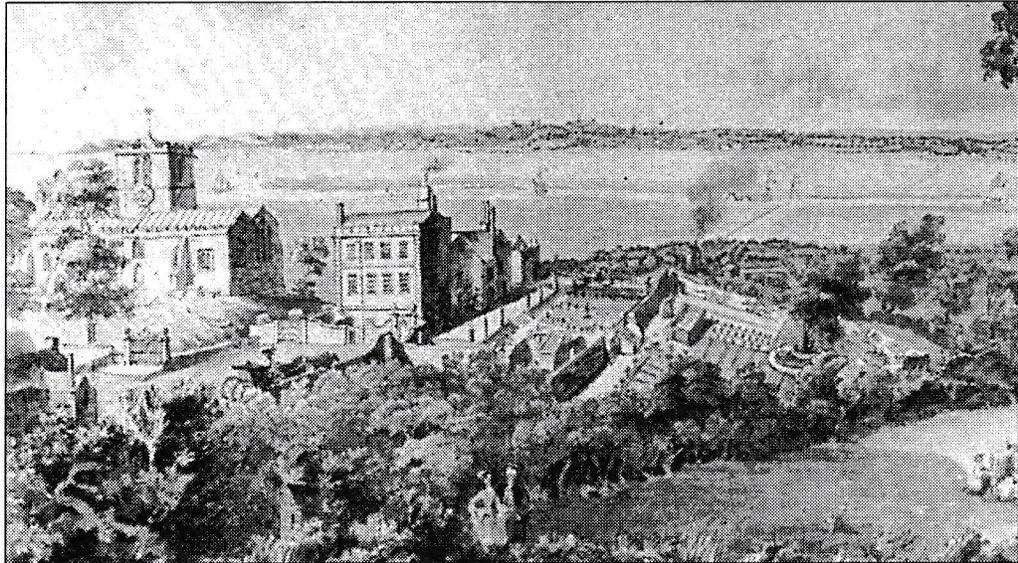
Food—Begin lunch with each family bringing their own food (the committee providing drinks/desserts) or assign each families different food-types. Set tables or place cards so families are mixed together. When people arrive, provide them a name tag that includes their family line.

Games—Have some sports activities, such as 3-legged races, baseball, volleyball, tug-of-war to get families together and children involved.

Program—This area will be where you can engender appreciation of family history, but be well organized so it doesn't last too long. To begin, have each family come to the front and be introduced by the parents. Each family could put on a presentation prepared in advance, such as a family song, historical skit, dance, etc., or bring some historical memorabilia and explain its meaning. Ask a main speaker strong in family history to tell about your ancestors or ask/answer questions about your forefathers. Set the date of the next reunion and assign a family to be in charge.

Displays—Include displays of names & addresses, family photographs, historical memorabilia, family history (PAF disks), and

"John Bennion left the Missouri River with two yoke of oxen, two cows, two heifers, and seven sheep. All but one of the sheep died on the way to the Salt Lake Valley."



Hawarden Church and Rectory in Flint, North Wales (circa 1756) where William Bennion was christened; he and Elizabeth were married on 10 Mar. 1785; and where all their children were christened. Notice the River Dee in the background. (by permission of Flintshire Records office, Hawarden, North Wales.)

a suggestion box for the next reunion.

Extras—Each reunion should be tailored to the talents and desires of those involved, so adapt these suggestions to fit your circumstances. You may want T-shirts (family pictures, logo, motto, historical sites, etc.); videotape the program; family and group photographs; demonstrations how great-great-grandmother made soap, candles or spun wool; family reunion awards; video presentation of family history from photos/old movies; address labels to write family missionaries in the field; samples newsletters for some budding editor, etc. All of the efforts will be well worth the results. Good luck. ■

From Wool to Bennion Cloth

by Joyce B. Peaden

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS from the journal of John Bennion in 1855 (bolded and italicized words represent actual text written by John Bennion):

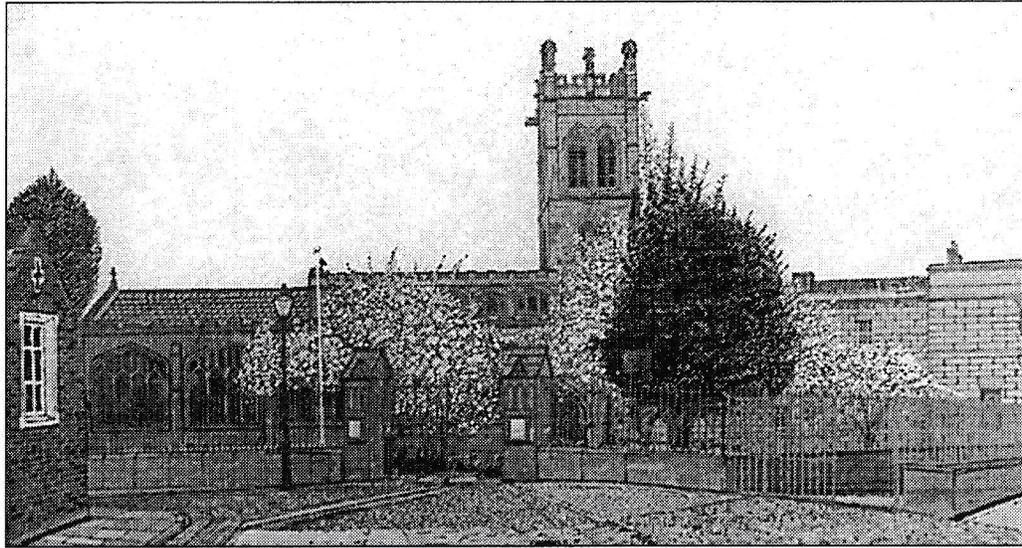
"May 11 Washed the sheep in the river."

John Bennion left the Missouri River with two yoke of oxen, two cows, two heifers, and seven sheep. All but one of the sheep died on the way to the Salt Lake Valley. By 1855 John with his brother, Samuel, had built up sizable herds of cows and sheep. There was wool not only for the use of the family, but for tithing and for sale.

May 12 to May 30—Sheep were sheared on most days during this period, with a John Hague helping some of the time. A good worker can shear a sheep in ten minutes or less. We can only imagine how many hours per day they worked.

"May 23...I was getting Milling done, and got 15 pounds of rolls."—Soon after the Saints came to the Salt Lake Valley, in 1850, a man by the name of Gaunt began building a woolen mill. Until that time the Bennions would have carded their wool by hand. First they had to "*Skirt*" the wool, separating the long-staple wool from the poorer quality, and dirty, belly wool. They had to do a preliminary washing of the wool to remove the dirt and dry leaves. Then they washed it again in soapy water, rinsed it several times, and spread

"Carding can be compared to combing. It untangles and loosens the wool fibers and allows any remaining debris to fall to the ground."



St. Mary's on the Hill in Chester, England where John Bennion and Elizabeth Roberts were married on 14 Sep. 1811.

the wool out to dry. At this point, with a good deal of lanolin left in the wool, it can be hand-carded.

Carding can be compared to combing. It untangles and loosens the wool fibers and allows any remaining debris to fall to the ground. A handful of wool is set on the teeth of one of the set of carders (two boards about 6 by 8 inches with wire "teeth" and handles). The second carder is pulled against the first until the wool fibers are generally pulled in one direction, and cover the surface of the carder. The wool is then rolled off, and is called a "roll."

A roll is divided and drawn into a "sliver" which is twisted, or "spun" into yarn to be wound onto bobbins or spools ready to be woven. Carding is hard work. I know because I learned to card when I was six years old.

I am sure the Bennion family appreciated the building of the woolen mill. All journal carding experiences refer to wool being taken to the mill, which scoured (washed) the wool and carded it by machine. The Gaunt mill also did the spinning and weaving. A November 15th entry shows the Gaunts also made a pair of blankets for the Bennions. Spinning and weaving are fine skills, probably practiced in England by the wives of Samuel and John. By 1850, in the United States in

general, the arts of spinning and weaving were passing from the home to the factory.

"July 7 Took 21 pounds of rolls to Bro Terrys, Union..."—Brother Terry must have done both spinning and weaving because he received wool as "rolls" and was to furnish "cloth" by January 31st.

Other spinners and weavers were Mother Farr, who "came out with us to work for us at spinning" (September 30) and McKinneys, from whom John Bennion "Recieved of cloth...20 yards of linsey...27 yards of jeans." in December 1855. John also "Went to see a weaver about weaving some shawls" on January 31, 1856. April 7th. Sarah Griffiths went to the Bennions to do "sewing."

By May 21, 1856, the Bennion Family were shearing sheep again as the process repeated itself. August 20, 1856 noted "Suppered at Bro Allens and sold him 31 ½ yards of wollen dress stuff at \$1.25 cts per yard." ■

Bennion Brothers Historical Sign

By Gerald Summerhays

"What a great
memento as we
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ON AUGUST 31ST OF LAST YEAR, Bennion descendants Helen S. Madsen, Steve Bennion, and Gerald Summerhays met with the head of the Murray Parks Department, Phil Markham, and Taylorsville historian, Donald Frame. We suggested the funding by the Bennion family of a historical sign on the Jordan River Parkway just south of 4800 South where the Bennion brothers lived. The response was enthusiastically positive for a historically accurate sign about the settling of the Bennion brothers "*Over Jordan*" which would detail their contributions.

There is a trail being built along the Jordan River all the way from Utah Lake to Great Salt Lake. Murray City is especially proud of their development of the Parkway from 6400 South to 4800 South (well worth an evening stroll). Murray is just completing the 4700 to 4800 South portion of the Parkway, which happens to be where John and Samuel lived.

If you would be interested in helping determine the content of the sign, please call Gerald Summerhays in Salt Lake (801-268-4436). Our original thinking was to include a picture of both Samuel and John. We would welcome your suggestions and need help in designing the sign. Murray City already has a contract with a manufacturer to produce and to maintain very high quality signs for the Parkway, so once we design the sign, they will produce it.

How much money will we need for this project? That will be determined mostly by the committee who designs it. The more content on the sign, the bigger and more expensive it will be. Our initial estimate is about \$1500 to \$2000.

Please send your donations to the Bennion Family Association using the back page order form of *The Recorder*. What a great memento as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival in October, 1847 of the Bennion brothers to the Salt Lake Valley. ■



Close up photograph of the 1897 Semi-Centennial medal. (by permission of the Utah Historical Society.)

When Will Vol. V be Available?

by Steven E. Bennion

I RECEIVED A REAL FLOOD of mail last February containing information to be included in the next Bennion book. As you know it will contain the names of all the descendants of John Bennion (1786) and Elizabeth Roberts (1790) along with birth, marriage and death dates and places. This will be organized in family groups and will include a mailing address where available. The form will be like Volume II, printed in 1962 and will include a complete name index.

It has taken longer than I expected to get this into final form; I am sorry about that. Thank you for your understanding. I expect the book to be mailed or available for pickup in early Spring 1997. Please continue to send new permanent addresses to me so as to keep our address list correct and to include them in this book. You can also send incidental additions to the book including new births, deaths or marriages. Please send all information by mail or by email through the internet at "bennion@mail.vii.com".

You may also order books by sending \$25.00 for each book before March 1st and

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\$30.00 after. This has been a great opportunity to document the members of the Bennion Family Association and to get your family in the book and connected to all of your Bennion relatives. ■

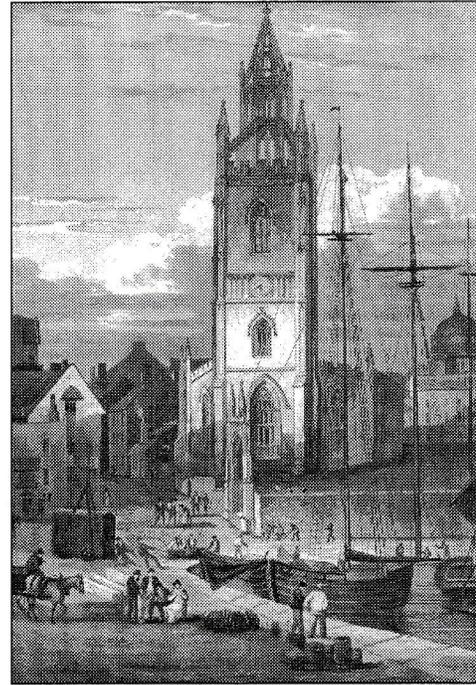
Utah Semi-Centennial (1897)

What could possibly rival the year-long, state-wide 1996 Utah Centennial Celebration? Equal in importance, in the minds of most Latter-day Saints, to being admitted into the Union is the day the original pioneers entered the Great Salt Lake Valley.

July 24, 1997 will mark the 150th year since that monumental day when the first men, women and children found an end to their dramatic quest for the promised land. As we approach what is likely to be a Pioneer Day to remember, let's take a lesson by turning our thoughts back 100 years to the summer of 1897 when the people of Salt Lake celebrated the 50-year anniversary of that great event.

On an otherwise peaceful July 20th, 1897, the Brigham Young Monument was unveiled, and the following five spectacular days were filled with parades, parties and dancing in the streets. The aptly named Utah Pioneer Jubilee drew thousands from all over the state. Lining the decorated streets, men in straw hats, boys in their knickers and women under their black parasols (the July sun was hot that week,) watched as bands played and 10,000 American flag waving school children marched.

Horses, dressed in their parade best, pulled floats depicting the likes of Jim Bridger, old forts, Old West scenes complete with sagebrush and Indians, the mighty silk worm, salt Grottos, and bison. They even had a special float for Miss Utah. The Pony Express flew from one end of town to the other. The original pioneer wagon of Heber C. Kimball and the first covered wagon into the Valley on July 24th, still had enough miles left in them to creak through the city streets.



Another view of St. Nicholas Church in Liverpool, England (see image on page 4.)

As a show of admiration and respect, *The Book of Pioneers*, a compilation of detailed experiences and memories of those who first arrived in the Great Salt Lake valley during 1847, was published by the organizers of the Jubilee. In addition, the actual pioneers that entered the Valley 50 years before were gathered for a group photograph and given a Semi-Centennial badge which included a medallion and a '47 Pioneer ribbon.

The photograph of the original 1847 pioneers on page 1 was taken with the tabernacle on Temple Square as the backdrop. Notice the dignified women dressed in their old-fashioned-black dresses. The men wore dark 3-piece suits, which contrasted with their white hair and long white beards. These were the first pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley. These were men and women of strong character and inner strength. These are our forebears. What a sense of pride and appreciation we feel for this rich Bennion heritage—especially as we approach the meaningful date of July 24, 1997. ■

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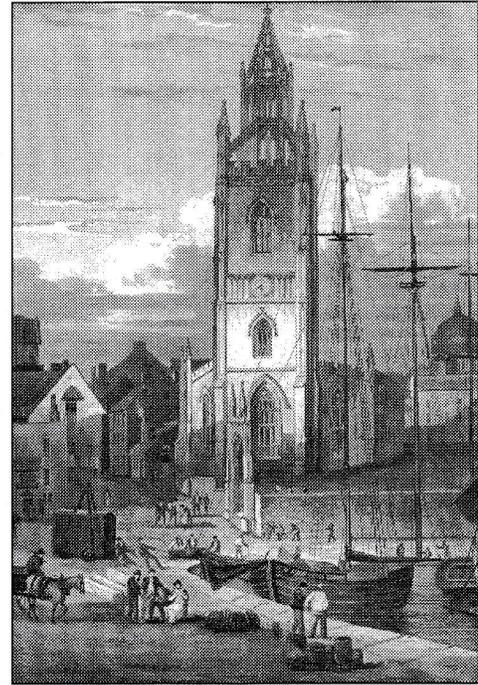
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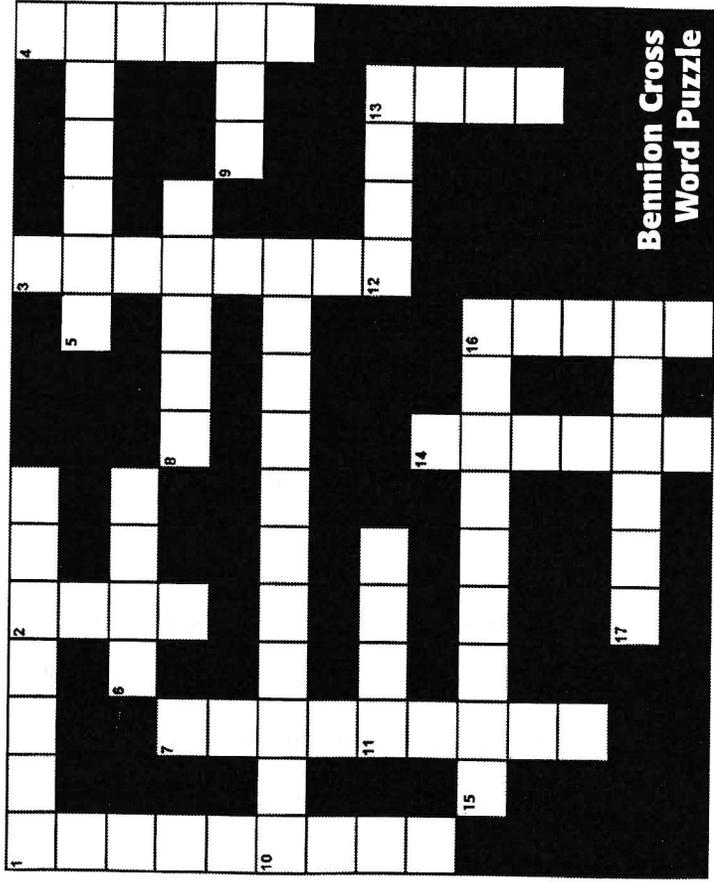
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BENNION ORDER FORM

	Unit Price	Quantity	Totals
Back issues of the Recorder (specify desired issues)	\$.50		
<i>Bennion Family of Utah</i> - Vol. I (hardbound)	\$5.00		
<i>Bennion Family of Utah</i> - Vol. II (photo-copy)	\$10.00		
<i>Bennion Family Vol. IV: History of John Bennion</i> - (new in 1990)	\$17.00		
<i>Bennion Family of Utah</i> Vol. V Subdivision- draft copy; specify family _____	\$3.00		
<i>Bennion Family of Utah</i> - Vol. V (special pre-order price - good only until 3/1/97)	\$25.00		
8" x 10" color print of Daniel Weggland's painting of Samuel Bennion's 1862 Taylorsville home	\$10.00		
Optional annual family contribution; please be generous if you can afford more	\$10.00		
Bennion Brother's Historical Sign Donation	\$		
Please make checks payable to Bennion Family Association			Total

Please send your comments and suggestions to us at the Bennion Family Association. We would appreciate additional family names and addresses (when you include new family names and addresses, please tell us how they tie into the family tree). Ideas, projects, articles, and contributions for the Recorder are also appreciated.

Have we heard from you yet this year? Your address label on the other side of this page; such as "Sub94" indicates the year we last heard from you. If your label is older than three years or is blank, and you want to keep receiving the Bennion Family Recorder (and to place your order), mail this page to Bennion Family Association, c/o Steve Bennion, 1355 Dover Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84108.



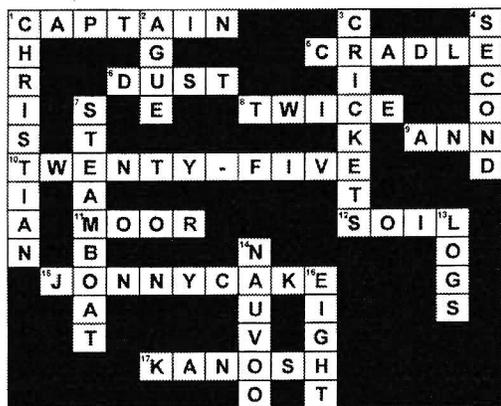
Bennion Cross Word Puzzle

Across

1. What military position did John Bennion hold in the militia?
5. What did the pioneers call the scythe used to harvest wheat?
6. What was one major problem of the wagon trains crossing the plains?
8. How many times was John Bennion sealed to his first wife, Esther?
9. Which of John & Esther's children died crossing the plains at South Pass, Wyoming on 7 Sept. 1847?
10. Approximately how many dollars did it cost for an adult passage from Liverpool to New Orleans in 1842?
11. Name of the lane where John Bennion was born in a humble thatched cottage in Hawarden, Wales.
12. What was the phrase "Over Jordan is a hard row to hoe" referring to?
15. Name of the corn bread the pioneers ate?
17. Name of the 3-year old Indian boy that was traded for a horse and adopted by John Bennion in 1858?

Down

1. Prior to his conversion, John Bennion became a member of what religious Society?
2. What sickness, characterized as a fever marked by fits of shivering, affected many Bennion pioneers crossing the plains?
3. What disaster hit the Salt Lake Saints in the year 1848?
4. Which of John Bennion's wives did Brigham Young change her name?
7. How did John and Esther travel from New Orleans to Nauvoo?
13. What did the Bennion brothers reuse over and over for shelter after arriving in Salt Lake?
14. Where did John and Esther receive their endorsements on 7 Feb. 1846?
16. How many weeks did it take John and Esther to sail across the ocean?



Answers to Bennion Cross Word Puzzle—no peeking!

Recorder provided by the Bennion Family Association Executive Committee

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The Bennion Family Recorder

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Inside this issue:

- How to Throw a Grandfather-line Reunion
- Family Stories from the Book of Mormon
- From Wool to Bennion Cloth
- Utah Semi-centennial (1897)
- Bennion Cross Word Puzzle