

John Burton Pears & Rose Hannah Whitehead Pears

[written by Essie Eliza Summers Clifford]

John Burton Pears was the son of John and Margaret Burton Pears. He was born the 10th of September, 1798, at Bishophill, Yorkshire, England; baptized the 29th of January, 1844, at Bradford, England, and ordained an Elder the 29th of November, 1848, at Hull, England. Rose Hannah Whitehead Pears, daughter of Lawrence Whitehead and Mary Brown Whitehead, was born the 26th of February, 1801, at Yorkshire, England. She was baptized the 24th of January, 1844, at Bradford, England. John and Rose Hannah's residence was at Little Horton Green and Manchester Road, Hannah Gate Smith Street, England. They emigrated to the United States of America the 23rd of May, 1856, with two of their daughters, Margaret and Eliza Pears. One son, John, and two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, remained in England. They were owners of large silk and woolen mills, and he was an auditor and wool comber by trade. When they left England they brought with them many personal belongings, including enough bolts of silk and woolen goods, they thought, to last them until John could make another trip back to England. It took twelve weeks by sailboat to get to New York, then they were put on cattle cars and sent to Iowa City, Iowa. There they got a wagon and a handcart to make the journey to Salt Lake City. They crossed the plains with the Martin Handcart Company in 1856. The winter began early and was very severe, and John died during the night of October 21, 1856, of exposure to the cold. He was buried along the trail in a grave with five other men. Brush was heaped on the graves and burned to keep the wolves from digging up the bodies. His passing left his wife and two daughters to complete the journey alone to Salt Lake City. This was very sad as neither his wife nor his two daughters could read or write, and they had no way to get word back to their son and two daughters that remained in England for help. The family never saw nor heard from them after they sailed for America. Rose Hannah and her two daughters continued on with this Company, and by the time they reached Parley's Canyon, they were nearly frozen to death. One daughter, Eliza Pears Summers (my grandmother), often told us of the severe suffering the Saints of this company endured, and if Brigham Young hadn't gotten help for them when he did, they would have all perished in the snow. As it was, Rose Hannah's feet and legs were so badly frozen that she never walked again. But she did live to get to Salt Lake City, Utah, in November of 1856. After her daughter, Eliza Pears, married Nicholas Summers in January of 1857, Rose Hannah made her

home with them. Although very crippled, she was cared for by Eliza until her death on February 10, 1884 (Cemetery Records). The cause of her death was recorded as "swelling of feet and legs." The place of internment was Plot B, Block 11, Lot 9, in the Salt Lake City Cemetery. The lot was purchased by Nicholas Summers, my grandfather. Survivors were Margaret Pears Smith, Eliza Pears Summers, of Salt Lake City, Utah, and John and Mary and Elizabeth Pears of England. [This history was compiled and written in Rexburg, Idaho, by Essie Eliza Summers Clifford, Great-granddaughter of John Burton Pears and Rose Hannah Whitehead Pears; Granddaughter of Eliza Pears Summers, and daughter of John Charles Summers.]