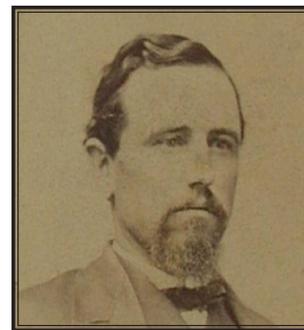


BENJAMIN HAMPTON (Jr.)

Born: 11 February 1837 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Age: 19

Rescuer



Ben Hampton had a rich heritage as an American. His great-grandfather, Joseph Hampton, was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and was at Valley Forge with George Washington. Ben's mother, Patience Schull Hampton, came from a large family of Quakers.

In 1846, the Hampton family moved from Pennsylvania to St. Louis, Missouri, where they joined the Church. In 1905, Ben wrote an autobiography from which the following is taken:

In April, 1853, I left home for the far west, traveling by steamboat to Council Bluffs or Kaneshville, thence by wagons up the Missouri River on the Iowa side to a point opposite Winter Quarters, now Florence, where we swam our cattle and horses across and flat-boated the wagons, went into camp until organized for the long trip across the plains to Salt Lake, and reached our destination in September of the same year, where I went to live with Jedediah M. Grant, my mother's friend.

In the spring of 1855, I was one of the party called the "White Mountain Indian Mission." These missions, by the way, were to explore the unknown portions of the territory, to become acquainted with the Indians, and to teach them agriculture. We carried seeds and simple implements. Our route from Salt Lake was by the present wagon road through Utah to Southern California. We left the main road at the crossing of the Beaver River, where Beaver City now is, and from there on had to make our road. We worked our way down the canyon and out into the big valley known now as Escalante or Beaver valley, and thence northerly, following the river down to a point six miles north of the present Milford. Here the party divided, part making up the pack train for the trip West and the others remaining to explore the big valley. I was with the packers. ... The following spring the same party was called to strengthen the Elk Mountain Indian Mission on Grand River, or what is now Moab, in Grand County, but we got no farther than the head of Salina Canyon, where a messenger overtook us with orders to return. The Indians had attacked the settlers, killing some and causing abandonment of the Mission for the time being.

In October, 1856, I was with the first relief party sent east to aid the "Hand Cart" sufferers. We met them in November on the Platte River, snow bound, and over 400 miles from Salt Lake. After assisting them to "Devil's Gate"—sixty miles—they were put into wagons and sent on to Salt Lake. I remained there during the winter with others to guard the stuff the wagons had contained and about 100 worn out hand carts. It was a tough winter's experience—four months on poor meat, without flour, and the last three weeks on rawhide, straight. [See also Daniel W. Jones in rescuer section of *Tell My Story, Too.*]

The following spring, 1857, John R. Murdock, in charge of the first overland mail enroute east to Atchison, took me as a helper. It was the quickest trip ever made by one set of men and animals, without relays; over 1200 miles in less than 10 days. There were no stops day or night. This was the hardest job I ever had up to that time, and I had some tough ones. We returned to Salt Lake in October of the same year, just ahead of Johnston's Utah army. We passed and repassed them several times before reaching Fort Bridger. [See John R. Murdock (rescuer) in *Tell My Story, Too.*]

Ben's business took him across the plains every year from 1861 through 1866. During that time he acquired and sent out hundreds of wagons, oxen, and mules. Many of these animals had to be broken. Teamsters also were hired and trained. In 1864, Ben married Adelaide Eugenia Grant, with whose family he had lived for the previous 10 years. In 1867, Ben and Adelaide "built the two story stone hotel and the toll bridge at the crossing of the river on the Montana and Oregon stage road, known as Hampton station, costing [them] over \$20,000." Ben offered some philosophical words in concluding his autobiography:

"We are but doing our day's work as it comes to us, paving the way for those who will follow and who will bring more improved methods of development. Every person born is a pioneer for his day."

Source: "Autobiography of Benjamin Hampton," submitted to Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files by his granddaughter, Clara L. Hampton Dewsnup.