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Title: **1827-history-williamheaton-LHA-77**

Provenance:

Category: **Document**

Person: **LaVerna Heaton**

Date:

Laverna Heaton Allen family histories and papers

William Heaton -- Papa's Father

William's journal shows he was painstaking and neat. He was educated -- expressing thoughts, feelings and experiences in well chosen words. He was unafraid -- facing opposition, rebucking and healing. He was grateful for opportunities -- calling them blessings, thankful for a new suit, a bed at night, a supportive wife and family while on his misions. He did his duty in spite of disappointments and insults. He converted many and loved sincerely -- his God, his church, his family and Esther, the young woman who chose to share his life in England, Payson, the Muddy River colony and Orderville.

He had strength to hand mow acres of harvest in the fields, to walk the many miles between quaint English villages of uncommon names as Wilsden, Wheldrake, Wilberfoss, Escrick and Knarsbro-Tadcastes, Acklam, Riccall, and Snainton-Knottingly, Agbridge Rillington and Scarsbro to teach the true plan of salvation. He brought many converts to the Church of Latter-day Saints.

He came of goodly parents, Jonathan and Francis O'Dwyer Heaton who gave him birth March 10, 1827 at Little Horton, Bradford, Yorkshire, England. He died in 1877 in Orderville, Utah. His father, who our Grandpa Heaton was named for, was born in Great Horton, York, England in 1894 and died in Wilsdens, England in 1855. Frances was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, England in 1804. She died in America and was buried in Payson 16 November 1872.

In 22 April 1849 William Heaton was baptized.

Three months later the Weldon Branch with ? members was formed. His brother, Jonathan, was ordained an elder, he a priest, but in 1950 he was made an elder and given a license and certificate and sent out to preach the Gospel with Elder Thomas and Christopher Beilby at different times. He preached in the open about the second coming of Christ. Next on the promise of God to Abraham and showed that we too become heirs of the same promise by faith in God and obedience to His laws. He worked from August to December Conference which was held in Bradford. He had never before been away from home. When he saw his parents, brothers and sisters in the audience he couldn't describe his emotions but his heart swelled with gratitude to Father in Heaven for leading them all into the straight and narrow way that leads to eternal life. "They had all joined in the new and everlasting covenant with me and greatly rejoiced to see me. They were all in good health." unquote.

In 1851 three of Esther's family were leaving for Zion. They saw them off at Liverpool. Esther was sad to see Robert, age 30; Christopher, age 25; and Mary, 24 with three other converts set sail for America. Her father Thomas Beilby had not joined the church. Within three months she and William Heaton had married. He was made president of the York Branch. He was shocked to hear his sister, Rachel, had died, for he thought she was recovering from her illness when he had last seen her. He thanked God for his past year's blessings and prayed that he'd continue working for the restitution of the gospel, that he'd have wisdom to perform his duty, but felt it was a difficult thing for people to put away the traditions of their fathers

and believe that God has sent at message from Heaven in this enlightened age. He writes, "If a person comes forth and professes inspiration from God, he is counted as a fool or madman by the religious world and they treat him as such."

William writes of walking to Wilberfoss, of preaching in the rain to a few people. Of clergy opposition which resulted in difficulty in getting a bed. He tried all the Inns in the village but was refused, and had no better success with several private homes. He was about to despair when he felt moved to try a house when he saw a light in it even though it was 11 P.M. The only tenant was a young man who offered to share his bed. It was raining very hard, he wrote, "I thanked him for his offer and accepted it joyfully and was very comfortable through the night." He also thanked the Lord. Later he walked 75 miles in three days.

A. Thomas Smith had been preaching against the Church and had prejudiced the people against William. A local Primitive Methodist preacher had not thought repentance or baptism were necessary and had listened to William several times and had said he would check with his head preacher. William could not get a house to preach in Acklam, so talked to an attentive congregation in a shed. He distributed some tracts and several offered their houses. By the end of August it was harvest time and everyone was too busy to listen so he helped his wife's father harvest. William mowed 16 acres of corn by hand.

They got word Robert Beilby had died and Christopher and Mary had the fever. His wife had been staying with her parents but she moved to William's parents' home at this time. William ordained his father a teacher and finished the year getting the Branch Records in order. Mary had written Christopher Beilby had also died in St. Louis.

William's mother wrote Esther had a baby boy May 17, 1852. They named him Christopher Beilby Heaton after Esther's brother. William continued to attract new members to the Church. He had attended Priesthood meeting where he was released

from the presidency. They voted to furnish Elder Heaton a new suit of clothes, and that Brother Young was to make them. Right after becoming a father he baptized six people.

He went to Escrick. They walked to Pickering nine miles from Malton. They sent the bellman round to give notice of a meeting. There was a big crowd who seemed astonished at their doctrine. Mary had written from Council Bluffs -- she was on her way to Salt Lake City.

William went by Government train to Scarsbro. He baptized Robert Wharton in the sea, and heard from his wife and mother. Hostile ministers caused hardship, injury, and concern. He labored in Pickering again, and healed a child who had had many convulsions and converted many. His last entry in England was August 16, 1853. He crossed on a ship called the "Enoch Train". His diary was on the handcart he pulled 1200 miles across a wilderness to the promised land in 1856. He was one of 350 converts to leave the ship in Boston. They waited for the handcarts