

WILLIAM PERGRIN
by
Gladys P. Lyman

When Thomas Pergrin married Ann Mathews on the 3rd of May 1808, he was already father of a son, born out of wedlock to himself and Ann Evans, whom they called William.

William was born on the 16th of February 1807. He was raised by Thomas Pergrin and his wife, Ann Mathews. From all reports he was loved and respected as any elder son and brother by his father, stepmother, and all the children who came to bless that home. Anything that William said or did was a worthy example to be followed by one and all.

There is little recorded that I have been able to find about William. In a brief history written by Joseph Perkins of his own life, he says that William was baptized into the Church in 1843, two years before his parents accepted the Gospel and became members. And in some records we find the date of his baptism as 23 October 1844.

William married Jane Mathews and to that union were born fourteen children: Thomas, John, Mary, William, Joseph, Ann, Benjamin, David, Elizabeth, Ruth, Hyrum, Naomi, Martha and Daniel, and they adopted a boy, Daniel Morgan. I said there were fourteen children born to them, but I have heard my own father, Benjamin Perkins, say that his mother gave birth to 21 children. Why, oh why, didn't someone make record of these births and deaths and other important things? Are we that are descended from those people making the records of the events in our lives that would be of interest to our posterity? I sincerely hope that we are and will do so.

Not long after the family became members of the Mormon Church, the spirit of enmity and persecution was so strong against them that none of them could procure a day's work anywhere, and soon they were in destitute circumstances and were sent to the poor house. When officials investigated and found that they were not only able to work but were very eager to do so, they were released from the poor house and work was found for them, even for Ben, only six years old, who was sent into the mine to carry water to the miners.

When John Taylor, who afterward became President of the Church, was in Wales as a missionary, he used to stay at the home of Thomas Pergrin; he suggested that the name be changed from Pergrin to Perkins, so in about 1849 the name was changed.

As the years went by the urge to join the Saints in Utah became so strong that some of the members of the family pooled their resources and took boat for the USA. They came in order to earn money so they might bring the rest of the family. They sent their combined earnings for the rest of the family, and on the 23rd day of August 1869, the first train to ever roll into the city of Ogden carried the rest of the William Perkins family. I picture in my mind that reunion and am filled with deep emotions of gratitude to those people for making it possible for me to be born here in America, the land of the free and brave, a land choice above all other lands.

The Perkins family moved to Cedar City after going to the Endowment House in Salt Lake City where they had their Temple ordinances done on the 4th of October 1869 and where they witnessed the marriage of their son Benjamin to Mary Ann Williams, who had come with them.

William was of a very retiring nature, but an energetic industrious man, and as far as I can learn, a faithful humble man to the end, which came the 4th of January 1876 in Cedar City.