

About Levi Stewart

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Mar 10, 2022

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Levi Stewart is my fourth great grandpa. Levi Stewart was born on April 28, 1812 in Edwardsville, Illinois. When Levi was small, he and his brother Jackson were picking up pebbles by the river and putting them in their pinned-up pockets. As they went around the corner, they saw a small bear but the bear looked enormous to them. It stood on it's hind legs and started to growl at them. Because they were panicking, they started to throw rocks at the bear. Levi aimed really well and hit the bear really hard in the nose and the bear ran away.

Melinda Howard was born on November 7, 1816. Levi Stewart first married Melinda Howard on February 7, 1833. Melinda Howard passed away from phlebitis from childbirth because she had twins. Three out of her ten kids died shortly after her. After her death, he married Margery Wilkerson. Margery and Levi had seven kids together. Their names were William Thomas Stewart (my great great great grandpa), Eliza Luella Stewart, Charles Courtland Stewart, Margery Ann Stewart, Heber Carlos Stewart, Edward Lorenzo Stewart, Lucinda Araminta Stewart, and Hyrum Smith Stewart.

In 1870, the Navajo had been making raids on the settlements. So, the young men took turns guarding their cattle at night from a small dugout. The other men took turns guarding the fort. Jacob Hamblin persuaded the Navajo to come to Kanab to hold a peace conference because there was always tension. In December of that same first year, the guard who was supposed to relieve Mr. Pugh at one o'clock did not awaken, Mr. Pugh went home and went to bed thinking everything would be okay. Although the guard never went to his post. Then, at four o'clock AM, fire was discovered in the Stewart section of the fort. Little Lucinda recalls how her father (Levi) rushed to see what he could do to help. And how her mother (Margery) quickly threw a blanket around herself and

rushed over to the part of the house on fire. Margery's motherly love was stronger than her fear of the fire and rushed into the flames before anyone could stop her. No one knows what happened after that. The kerosene exploded, stopping anyone from getting inside. They found six charred bodies that included Margery and her sons, Charles C, Heber Carlos, Edward, Levi H, Urban Van Stewart. As soon as Brigham Young Heard about the fire, he set out for Kanab to be there for his close friend, Levi.

My great great great great Grandpa had an extraordinary life, full of adventure, traveling, happiness, and sorrow. He was a great man that was loved by his community and family. After the fire, his health started to decline. He served five years as bishop of Kanab, his health started to fail. Either as bishop or as a counselor, he was released from his position. In June 1878, he left home for Salt Lake City. On his way there, he passed away on June 14, 1878 at Blackrock in Johnson Canyon. He was buried in the Kanab cemetery next to Margery and his children who had perished in the fire seven years prior.

April 11, 1950, a tablet was constructed honoring Levi Stewart, first bishop of Kanab where the original Fort Kanab stood. In 2001, a nine foot bronze statue stands in Levi Memorial Park in Kanab. My great grandpa, Leo Stewart was one of the donors to that sculpture and has his name on there with his great grandpa.

I really enjoyed writing this article because I got to learn a lot about not just Levi Stewart, but many others as well in my family history.