

Cedar City Chapter of Sons of the Utah Pioneers



Cedar City Statue – 31 Francis Webster Statue

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Longitude: -113.061667; Latitude: 37.679167; Elevation 5,840'; CC-31; Francis Webster; Bulloch Drug



Francis Webster, started shipment of sheep and wool to Chicago Markets



PIONEER STOCKMAN

FRANCIS WEBSTER

1830-1906

BORN IN ENGLAND, FRANCIS WEBSTER TRAVELED TO UTAH IN 1856 AND PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF CEDAR CITY. A LEADER IN THE SHEEP INDUSTRY, HE WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO BEGIN SHIPPING SHEEP AND WOOL TO THE CHICAGO MARKETS. AN EARLY MERCHANT IN CEDAR CITY, HE HAD A SMALL STORE THAT SOLD CANDLES, SOAP, SADDLES AND OTHER SUPPLIES THAT HE BROUGHT BACK FROM HIS CHICAGO TRIPS. ONE OF THE STALWARTS IN THE MONUMENTAL EFFORT TO BUILD THE FIRST BUILDING (OLD MAIN) AT WHAT IS NOW SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY, HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE AND IS CREDITED WITH PLAYING A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PERSUADING TOWNSPEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UNDERTAKING. HE SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL, THEN AS MAYOR OF CEDAR CITY FROM 1872 TO 1876, WAS ELECTED TO THE LOWER HOUSE OF THE UTAH TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE AND WAS PRESIDENT OF BOTH THE CEDAR COOPERATIVE SHEEP ASSOCIATION AND CEDAR COOPERATIVE MERCANTILE AND MANUFACTURING INSTITUTION.

THE MARTIN HANDCART COMPANY

AS A YOUNG MAN, FRANCIS WEBSTER TRAVELED TO AUSTRALIA AND TWICE TO THE GOLD FIELDS OF CALIFORNIA. AT AGE 25, HE ARRIVED BACK IN ENGLAND WITH \$1,200. FIVE MONTHS LATER HE MARRIED ANN ELIZABETH PARSONS AND BEGAN PREPARATIONS TO TRAVEL TO THE SALT LAKE VALLEY. ALTHOUGH HE HAD SUFFICIENT MONEY TO PURCHASE A WAGON, FULL TRAVEL EQUIPMENT, AND TWO YOKE OF CATTLE, INSTEAD THE WEBSTERS ELECTED TO TRAVEL BY HANDCART, USING THEIR MONEY TO BRING THEMSELVES AND NINE OTHER PEOPLE TO ZION. THEY ARRIVED IN BOSTON AND TRAVELED TO IOWA CITY, IOWA, WHERE THEY JOINED THE ILL-FATED MARTIN HANDCART COMPANY. ONCE ON THE PLAINS, THE HANDCART GROUP WAS CAUGHT IN HEAVY FALL SNOWSTORMS, AND MANY DIED FROM EXPOSURE AND STARVATION. THE WEBSTERS SURVIVED ON A QUARTER-POUND OF FLOUR A DAY AND FOR FIVE DAYS FRANCIS SUBSISTED ON THE MEAT OF A DEAD BUFFALO HE DISCOVERED IN ORDER THAT HIS WIFE COULD HAVE HIS FLOUR RATION. HIS FIRST DAUGHTER WAS BORN DURING THE TREK. RESCUED BY A RELIEF TRAIN, THEY COMPLETED THEIR JOURNEY TO SALT LAKE CITY AND TWO DAYS LATER DEPARTED FOR CEDAR CITY.

STATUE BY JERRY ANDERSON





Cedar City Chapter of Sons of the Utah Pioneers

PIONEER STOCKMAN; Francis Webster, 1830-1906

Born in England, Francis Webster traveled to Utah in 1856 and played an important role in the early development of Cedar City. A leader in the sheep industry, he was among the first to begin shipping sheep and wool to the Chicago Markets. An early merchant in Cedar City, he had a small store that sold candles, soap, saddles, and other supplies that he brought back from his Chicago trips. One of the stalwarts in the monumental effort to build the first building (Old Main) at what is now Southern Utah University, he was a member of the Building Committee and is credited with playing a crucial role in persuading townspeople to participate in the undertaking. He served as a member of the City Council, then as mayor of Cedar City from 1872 to 1876, was elected to the lower house of the Utah Territorial Legislature and was president of both the Cedar Cooperative Sheep Association and Cedar Cooperative Mercantile and Manufacturing Institution.

THE MARTIN HANDCART COMPANY

As a young man, Francis Webster traveled to Australia and twice to the gold fields of California. At age 25, he arrived back in England with \$1,200. Five months later he married Ann Elizabeth Parsons and began preparations to travel to the Salt Lake Valley. Although he had sufficient money to purchase a wagon, full travel equipment, and two yoke of cattle, instead the Websters elected to travel by handcart, using their money to bring themselves and nine other people to Zion. They arrived in Boston and traveled to Iowa City, Iowa, where they joined the ill-fated Martin Handcart Company. Once on the plains, the handcart group was caught in heavy fall snowstorms, and many died from exposure and starvation. The Websters survived on a quarter-pound of flour a day and for five days Francis subsisted on the meat of a dead buffalo he discovered in order that his wife could have his flour ration. His first daughter was born during the trek. Rescued by a relief train, they completed their journey to Salt Lake City and two days later departed for Cedar City.

STATUE BY JERRY ANDERSON



Andrea Nelson's painting by Kenneth R. Turner of Handcart Pioneers Help ([see Readers Theater](#))

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