

## **Winslow Farr Jr.**

A Biographical Sketch by Wilma S. Smith and Randall A. Smith

Winslow Farr, Jr., was born May 11, 1837, at Charleston, Orleans Co., Vermont. Winslow Jr., was the youngest and smallest at birth of the six children who were born to Winslow Farr, Sr., and Olive Hovey Freeman. He was born 10 years after the birth of the youngest of the five older children. Family tradition states at birth his mother's wedding ring would slide completely over his hand. When fully grown he was the tallest and largest of his family, reaching the height of 6 feet 4 inches.

The Farr family, who joined the church May 19, 1832, sold 2,000 acres they owned in September of 1837 and moved to Kirtland, Ohio. In 1838 Winslow Jr. was blessed by the prophet Joseph Smith. In the spring of 1840 the family moved on to Far West, Missouri. When persecutions drove the Mormons from Missouri, the Farr family joined the Saints in establishing the City of Nauvoo, Illinois, where Winslow Sr. built a comfortable home for his family.

Winslow Jr., was baptized by his father Winslow Sr., on his eighth birthday, May 11, 1845. With persecutions mounting, the Saints were once again forced to flee their substantial homes in "Nauvoo the Beautiful".

In June of 1846 the Farr family crossed the Mississippi River and joined hundreds of additional families journeying by wagon train across the state of Iowa.

By the summer of 1847 the Farr's were situated across the Missouri River in the settlement of Winter Quarters, which is known today as Florence, Nebraska. President Brigham Young instructed the Brethren in how to organize companies for emigration to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Winslow Farr, Sr., served on a mission to the eastern states from 1847 to 1849. The Farr family spent their time in Winter Quarters awaiting his return.

June 15, 1850 an emigrating company of 100 was organized on the Missouri, near Council Bluffs of which Joseph Young was appointed president, Winslow Farr Counselor, William Snow Captain, and Gardiner Snow captains of 50. The Winslow Farr Sr. family traveled with the Gardiner Snow Company. Thirteen year old Winslow Jr., walking barefoot, at times wrapping his feet in burlap, helped drive one of their team of oxen across the plains. The Gardiner Snow Co., arrived in Salt Lake Valley in September 30, 1850.

Winslow Sr., eventually moved his family to the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. Winslow Jr., helped his father clear the land and plant the farm. The first pair of shoes ever worn by Winslow Jr., were crafted in Salt Lake City out of rawhide. His mother made him a "best" pair of pants out of a piece of carpet.

In 1857, 20 year old Winslow Jr., was selected as a Captain in the Mormon Militia, who called themselves "The Nauvoo Legion". The Militia had been organized to resist the U.S. Army troops headed by General Albert Johnston, who were rumored to be on their way to the Salt Lake Valley to "kill all of the Mormons". After months of preparation and drilling by the militia and meetings held between the Mormon and government leaders, the U.S. Army entered peaceably into the Salt Lake Valley on the 26th of June 1858.

In September 1858 Winslow Jr., journeyed by team and wagon to southern Utah. On October 17, 1858, at 11:00 a.m. Winslow Jr., and Emily Jane Covington, daughter of Robert D. Covington and Elizabeth Thomas were married at Washington, Washington Co., Utah.

In 1860 the young couple were called to help establish a new settlement in Northern Utah. March of 1861 found them living in a dugout home on a farm in Paradise, Cache Valley, Utah. Soon after their arrival Winslow Jr., was appointed to the fence and school house committees and on March 3, 1861, was elected town marshal and a Captain in the Minutemen Militia. Groups of men were assigned to work together in the fields and to stand as guard against depredations in the Valley from the Indians.

Winslow Jr., had a saying "I am not a musician, I just love to fiddle around". As recorded in his diary, he tells of playing the violin for parties, weddings, dramatic productions and dances as well as many other special occasions. In 1867, Winslow Jr. and Emily Jane sold their farm and moved to Ogden, Utah where their home was built on the corner of 20th and Washington Boulevard.

In 1868 Winslow Jr., was called on a mission to Great Britain. He left by mule train from Laramie, Wyoming where he embarked on a train for New York City and set sail on the steamer, *France*. He labored in the Liverpool conference under the direction of Moroni Ensign.

He was honorably released from his mission in July of 1870. Upon his return to New York City, he was appointed Captain under Karl G. Maeser, to bring Saints to Utah.

When he returned to Utah he went to work for the Z.C.M.I. Co-Op Store. In 1871 he was ordained a High Priest by President Wilford Woodruff.

On May 5, 1873, Winslow took a plural wife named Susan Melvina Bingham.

Winslow Jr., was called and set apart as Bishop of the Ogden 3rd Ward North Weber Stake on May 28, 1877, by Franklin D. Richards & President John Taylor.

Records reveal that in February 1881 Winslow Jr., obtained a patent for a home-stead for an 80 acre homestead in West Weber, Weber County, west of Ogden, Utah. Winslow Jr., and Emily Jane's sons Lafayette and Lorin cleared the land where they built a granary, followed by a new adobe home near the front of the property. Winslow Jr., moved Emily Jane and her children to this farm.

On December 12, 1878 Winslow Jr., took another plural wife, Matilda Halverson. Matilda lived in her own small home on Farr Avenue in Ogden.

In March of 1882, the U.S. Congress passed the Edmunds Tucker Act which strengthened the U.S. law against the practice of polygamy. In October of 1885 word was received by Winslow Jr., while working at the Z.C.M.I. Co-op store, that the Federal Marshal's were on their way to arrest him. He made his escape by being nailed inside of a wooden box, which was carried away by team and wagon.

Winslow Jr. fled with his third wife Matilda, and their children to southern Utah. In 1887 Winslow Jr. spent time with the Navajo Indians, where he preached to them about the principles of the gospel and introduced them to the Book of Mormon. He told them that the Book of Mormon was a record of their forefathers that once lived in this land.

The Navajo understood his plight and offered to help him hide from the Federal authorities. The Indians invited him to stay with them; however, he moved on to Colorado. After two years of self imposed exile in San Juan, Utah and Cortez Co., Winslow Jr. returned to Ogden, Utah in November of 1887 to surrender to the Federal authorities. He was released on bond and stood trial on May 27, 1888.

## THE TRIAL

### THE OGDEN STANDARD EXAMINER NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Sunday morning, May 27, 1888

The case of the United States vs. Winslow Farr, unlawful cohabitation was called. Kimball & White and N. Tanner, Jr. appeared for the defense. After calling some twenty jurors the following were impaneled:

John O. Thomas, Charles Jay, A.F. Danielson, Geo White, Albert Herrck, Peter Christiansen, James Brown, James Iverson, W. T. Washburn, Francis Oliver, Joseph B. Sewell and Frank A. Benedict.

Mrs. Emily Jane Farr was the first witness. She had been married to defendant twenty-nine years; knew Susan Farr, but not prior to 1883. She claimed the privilege of exemption from testifying, as she was the legal wife. She was excused.

Mrs. Susan Melvina Bingham was called. She was married to the defendant fifteen years ago; defendant had visited her occasionally during 1883; had several children who bore his name. The youngest was 3 years old; he had not held her out as wife for several years.

The prosecution rested.



The case was submitted without argument.

The court charged the jury and they retired, making two juries in consultation, one on adultery and the other on unlawful cohabitation.

After an absence of ten minutes the jury in the Farr case returned and rendered a verdict of guilty. Time for sentence was waived and defendant was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and to pay a fine of \$300 and costs."

Winslow Jr. was convicted of unlawful cohabitation and was sentenced to six months in the Utah Territorial Penitentiary with a fine of \$300.00.

While he was in the penitentiary he studied bookkeeping and the Spanish language. He also worked outside, as a trustee, on the prison farm. While incarcerated, he made sixteen (16) fancy wool mats, one each for his three wives, with their initial woven into the center. He made ten (10) canes out of little oaks that grew around the penitentiary. He gave them to his fellow inmates, including one cane to George Q. Cannon. When released from prison on November 24, 1888, the Ogden Third Ward gave him a grand reception and welcome home party.

Winslow with his wives Melvina and Matilda and their children left Ogden in 1890 and journeyed with other Mormon families to establish farms in Mexico. Subsequent return trips to Ogden were made easier and affordable when his brother Lorin provided a railroad pass.

In 1897 Winslow Jr. was called in a letter from the first presidency, to locate permanently in Mexico. Before departing Ogden for Mexico, he deeded his interest in the homestead to his wife Emily Jane.

Winslow Jr., located in Colonia Dublan, Mexico, where he was called and presided as Bishop of the Dublan Ward, Juarez Stake from 1889 to 1899. On January 10, 1899, Winslow married his fourth wife, Sarah Mitchell Graham in Colonia Dublan, Mexico. He was released as bishop in September of 1899 and soon after was ordained a patriarch.

Winslow Jr., made a number of round trip journeys between Ogden and Mexico. He spent most of his time in Mexico; however, he made return trips to Ogden which lasted anywhere from a few months up to a year.

Winslow Jr., and all of his wives were in Utah in the spring and summer of 1903. In April 1903, Winslow's second wife Melvina, with her two youngest sons, returned by train to Dublan, Mexico. When Melvina took sick she was taken to the hospital in El Paso, Texas, where she died on November 6, 1903 from a ruptured intestine. She was buried in Colonia Dublan, Mexico. Winslow Jr., accompanied by his son, Joseph, returned to Mexico in November of 1903. Winslow's fourth wife, Sarah, accompanied by Winslow's brother, Lorin Farr, returned to Dublan, Mexico in December 1903. Winslow remained in Mexico until July of 1906, when he made his final return trip, by train to Utah, where he resided until his death.

Between 1906 and 1913, Winslow Jr. resided with his fourth wife Sarah in Salt Lake City. On occasion he traveled by the Bamberger rail line to visit Matilda and her children in Ogden and by horse and buggy to visit Emily Jane and her family on the farm in West Weber. Winslow Jr., his wife Sarah and his brother Lorin, spent many days working in the Salt Lake Temple.

Winslow Jr. was the father of thirty one children. Fourteen (14) with Emily Jane Covington Farr, eleven (11) with Susan Melvina Bingham, six (6) with Matilda Halverson and none by Sarah Mitchell Graham.

On February 2, 1913, Winslow Jr. suffered a stroke. Emily Jane and Winslow Jr.'s, four sons moved him from Salt Lake City to the Farr family homestead in West Weber (now known as Taylor, Utah). His sons, Lafayette, Lorin, Barnard and Aldebert took turns attending and sitting through the night with their father. Winslow Jr., died February 18, 1913. Internment was on February 19, 1913 in the Ogden City Cemetery, Weber Co., Utah.

Those who gave the eulogies at his funeral spoke of his honesty, integrity, fairness in business matters and his special ability as an interpreter and peacemaker between the Indians and the communities where he had lived.

His descendants admire his talent with the violin, his robust, strong pioneering spirit and his unwavering dedication to the principles of his religious beliefs.

## "SOURCES"

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*Walton Printing, Barnwell, SC (Covington Family)*

3) *Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah 1898,*

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4) *Treasures of Pioneer History by Kate B.*

*Carter, Volume three, 1954.*

5) *Womens Voices by Kenneth W. Godfrey,*

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6) *Ogden Standard Examiner - Newspaper*

*articles*

1) *May 27, 1888 (Trial)*

2) *November 27, 1888 (Release)*

7) *Unpublished History - History of Robert*

*D. Covington, Copied by B.Y.U. Library. Manuscript returned to Mrs. Marian C. Bradshaw of Orem, Utah*

8) *Brief History - Winslow Farr Jr. written*

*by Evelyn Farr Mower*

9) *Interviews with grandchildren*

a) *Mabel Farr Harris Decker - Daughter of Barnard & Susan Alvord Farr;*

b) *Kenneth Alvord Farr - Son of Barnard & Susan Alvord Farr;*

c) *Evelyn Farr Mower - Daughter of Lorin Freeman Farr & Sariah Buck Farr;*

d) *Glen Farr - Son of Lafayette &*

*Nancy Hipwell Farr*

