

Review of 1863.

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William Fowler

Lucy Pratt Morrison

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Sigs Lily Camp.

William Fowler was born in Auburn, Australia May 9, 1830, the 5th son of John Fowler and Budget Neel. His father, an officer in the English Army had his family in Australia with him, where they lived until William was 3 year old. His father was then transferred to India where they remained for 5 years.

Following an honorable discharge from the army John Fowler took his family back to England and they settled in Sheffield. Two years later John Fowler died and 3 years after that his wife followed him leaving William an orphan at the age of 14 years.

His parents had gives him a good education and he was an accomplished musician. He played the violin, piano, piccolo, and harp. Also he composed and wrote music.

When the gospel was brought to England by the missionaries, he received and accepted it and was baptized July 29, 1849, by J. V. Long. The same month he was appointed to do missionary work and served for 4 years.

He was married to Ellen Bradshaw in 1854 and they had 3 children; 2 girls + 1 boy: Harriet A. Florence, and Henry Amos Fowler.

He wrote many songs and poems that were used in meetings and entertainments.

He was a silversmith by trade and worked for one of the leading cutlery manufacturing Co. in England, making knives and razors.

On learning that he was going to join the church, his employer, fearing he was becoming a religious fanatic, told him if he joined the church he could no longer employ him but would give him 2 weeks to reconsider.

William told his employer, who was very bitter toward the church, that his answer would still be the same and so by the end of 2 weeks

he was discharged without recommendation.

He was without employment for several months because of this, as his employer had made contacts with other firms not to employ him because he had joined the 'Mormons'.

His faith never wavered, even tho he spent many weary hours looking for work. Finally he sold some of his fine furniture to buy food and clothing for his family.

At the end of one of the fruitless days of walking ^{searching} for employment. he came home exhausted and asked his wife for pen and paper and he sat down and wrote the first 2 verses of "We Thank Thee O God For a Prophet". The first verse one of thankfulness to God and the 2nd verse one of consolation. At a few months later he wrote the 3rd verse which is one of praise.

This song was received by the saints and became very popular. It was brought back to America by the Elders and has now gained great popularity as it is sung at every General Conference and at many, many meetings all over the church.

He & his wife decided to come to Zion and so they sold all of their possessions and booked passage on the ship "Amazon" which was the world's largest passenger ship.

They left England June 4, 1863 and he also brought his brother Strang's family with him, while his brother stayed to complete his mission in England.

There were 900 saints on the ship and they were divided into wards. Williams was Captain of one ward. It took 7 weeks & 3 days to come across the ocean and they landed in Castle Gardens N.Y.

The journey across the Eastern part of U.S. to the Mississippi River was a very hard trip. The time being during the Civil War, the soldiers hid the trains so the saints had to travel in cattle cars and it was very uncomfortable and slow.

They joined a wagon train at Florence Nebraska consisting of 50 wagons. He herded

the open at night & times when they could not travel
He suffered much exposure and fatigue and
contracted Tuberculosis from which he never recovered

They arrived in Salt Lake Nov. 4, 1863 and
stayed there the first winter then moved to Mantie

His trade didn't help him much here in America
but his knowledge of music brought him a teaching
position and his wife helped him in this in their
own home. He died in Mantie in August
1865 at the age of 35 years.

The D. U. P. sponsored a movement to place
a monument at his grave at Mantie in honor
of his famous song.

He was 5'6" tall and had ^{dark} brown hair
and brown eyes. of slim build.

His family have in their possession 2 razors
that he made in England and his Violin is
on display at the Utah State Capital.

He was my Great Grandfather, his daughter
Harriet being the mother of my own mother Clara
Allen Pratt.

Lucy Pratt Morrison.