

William Strong



And His Wives

Martha Alvord



Harriet Neeley



Sarah R. Garlick



This biography was written by Lewis W. Strong, great, great grandson of William Strong and Harriet Neeley. Written in 2020 while quarantined during the coronavirus epidemic.

William Strong

October 30, 1827—December 24, 1888



William Strong as a young man

William Strong was born October 30, 1827 at Strongstown, Indiana County, Pennsylvania. He was the oldest son and third child born to Jacob Strong and Sarah Hill Strong. His grandfather, James Strong, was the original settler of Strongstown, PA.



Jacob Strong and Sarah Hill Strong

When William was still a boy, about the age of nine, his parents joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They were baptized by Elder Erastus Snow in Pennsylvania on October 20, 1836. (Elder Snow was 18 years old). William was not baptized at that time. Jacob and Sarah and their five oldest children moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, arriving there on March 18, 1840. They were happy to join with the other saints in their “city beautiful”, the city of Nauvoo.

While in Nauvoo the Strong family became friends with the Prophet Joseph Smith.



A daguerreotype of Joseph Smith from the time period

According to William he was baptized by Joseph Smith in the Mississippi River during the month of July, 1842, William would have been about fifteen years of age at the time. This event was recorded twice, once in the “Biographical Encyclopedia” located in the Church Historian’s office and again by William himself in his home ward in Salt Lake City. The Tenth Ward in Salt Lake City was the Ward most of the Strongs resided in. At one time records were updated in the 10th Ward which included information about when and by whom you were baptized and when and by whom you were blessed or confirmed. William indicated he was baptized by Joseph Smith in the Mississippi River and confirmed by Levi Hancock after the baptism. This record has been copied on the next page.

10th Ward - Film # 02669

RECORD OF BIRTHS, BLESSINGS, BAPTISMS, CONFIRMATIONS, & DEATHS Of the Members of the Church of Jesus Christ

NAME	PARENTS' NAMES		BIRTH		BLESSING		BAPTISM		CONFIRMATION									
	FATHER	MOTHER	Month	Day	Year	Where Born	Month	Day	Year	By Whom	Month	Day	Year	By Whom	Month	Day	Year	
★ Charles Strong	James Hill	Barbara Thompson	Sept	7	1806	York Co Penna					Oct			1836	Eleazar Snow	Oct		
★ William	Jacob Strong	Sarah Hill	Oct	30	1827	Pennsylvania					July			1842	Levi Hancock	July		
★ Harriet	Louis Nedley	Elizabeth Hill	Sept	10	1837	Virginia								1855				
★ Louisa	William Strong	Maria Howard	April	23	1813	Virginia	John Lane							1861				
★ Elizabeth	"	"	July	4	1829	Virginia								1867	William D. Rice			
★ Mary Sedgwick	"	"	March	7	1811	"								1867	"			
★ William Hill	"	"	Feb	21	1803	Westchester Co N.Y.								1877	Reuben Boyington			
★ Elizabeth	"	"	"	"	1865	"								1873	Robert Miller			
★ Charles	"	"	June	13	1809	"								1873	James S. Jones			

Salt Lake Tenth Ward Records showing William Strong's Baptism in Nauvoo by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1842

William participated in the Nauvoo Legion in Nauvoo and again in Salt Lake City. He was a captain in the Legion in Salt Lake. During the last days of the Saints in Nauvoo William had the opportunity of receiving his endowments in the Nauvoo Temple.



Daguerreotype of the Nauvoo Temple taken sometime in the 1840's

Prior to William receiving his endowments he was a victim of malaria fever, like so many others in Nauvoo. Because of this fever his knee was left with a white swelling which necessitated his using crutches. Nevertheless on February 7, 1846 William was taken to the Nauvoo Temple in a neighbors buggy to receive his endowments. While in the Temple William received a very special blessing from Brigham Young. This occasion was so special to William that whenever he related the experience afterward it would always bring him to tears. William was blessed to be released from the pain and effects of the malaria. After the blessing William was able to walk back home in the morning on his own, a distance of about four miles.

The persecution of the Mormons continued in Nauvoo prior to the main body of the Saints being driven out of Nauvoo by the growing mobs. The Strong family joined with the other fleeing members of the church as they attempted to cross the Mississippi River in the middle of winter and escape to Iowa and safety.

William headed west from Nauvoo with the rest of his family in 1846 and got as far as the Missouri River.



While the saints were stopped at Council Bluffs, Iowa a detachment from the U.S. Army came into camp enlisting men to fight in the war with Mexico. Jacob Strong, William's father, was too ill to join up so William, barely 18 years of age, joined with the "Mormon Battalion" for a one year enlistment instead. He was enlisted into Company E under command of Daniel C. Davis. At this time William was undersized and in ill health, nevertheless he volunteered to take the place of his father in this historic march. Quoting from his brother James T. Strong's history: "On October 13, 1846 [July 16, 1846], they began their arduous journey and heroic march across the burning plains and rugged mountains of new Mexico to southern California. In all the battalion marched from the Missouri to the Pacific, a distance of over 2,000 miles, pioneering most of the way through an untrodden wilderness, braving dangers and enduring hardships, short rations, lack of water, excessive toil in road making, well digging and over marching which caused much suffering, sickness and some deaths, arriving near San Diego late in January 1847."

William kept a journal of his time in the Mormon Battalion, but lent it to a friend at the end of their march. That journal was never returned and has never been found since. A few stories of his experiences were related to his granddaughter, Dorice Hoggan Rogers. We have her to thank for these few remaining stories related by William.

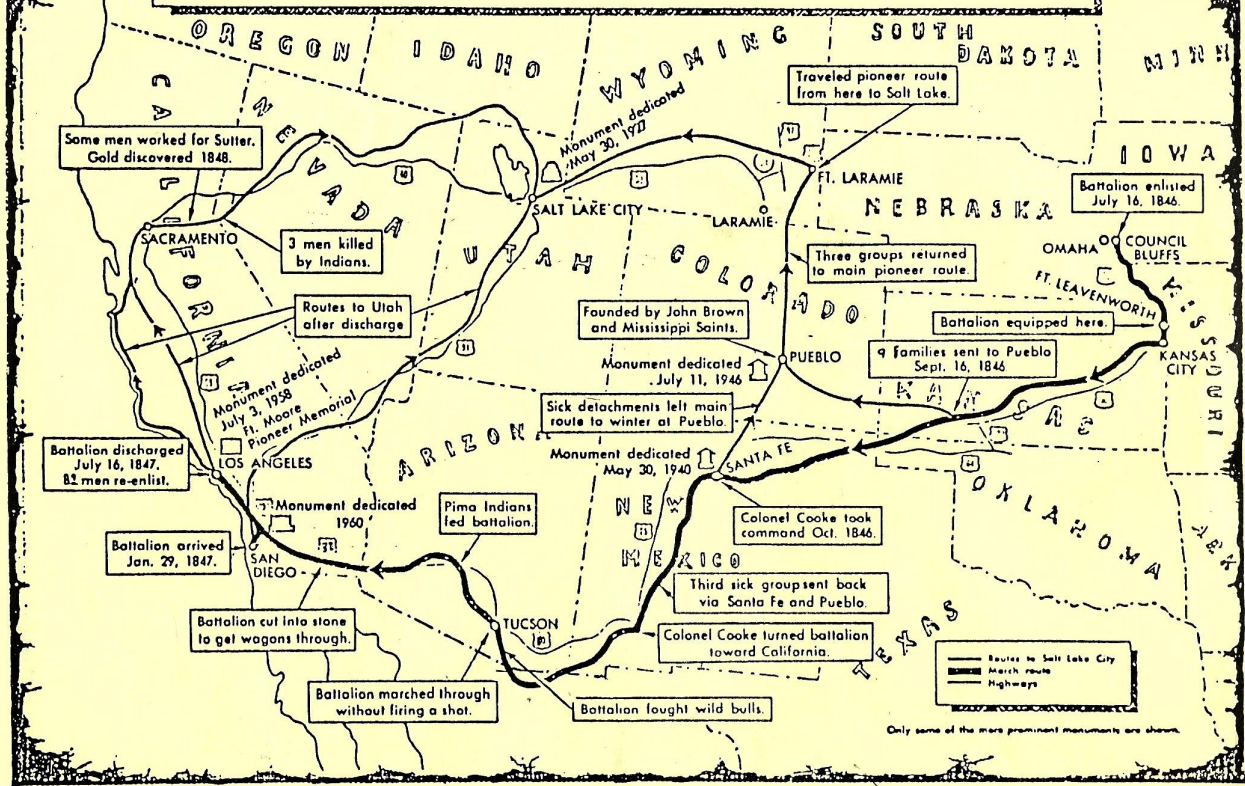
William often talked of how cold the wind blew as they marched all those miles and how freezing and biting it was on the men. When they reached the desert areas he mentioned how hot and searing the sun was. He told his granddaughter how his head baked in the sun and that he became so parched with thirst that his whole tongue was swollen up. He said his eyes burned with the heat and the sun day after day. Many times he said the Battalion reached watering holes only to be turned away by the locals or by the military leaders. William also told of digging holes in the sand and having the soldiers cover themselves up so that they could feel the coolness of the sand around them and breathe air that was not so hot. There they would fall into a fitful sleep.

One story that he related often was of his being so hungry one night that he gave in to his hunger pains and “pinched a piece of fresh hot scone”. He was caught and punished. He was to go one entire week with no rations at all. Luckily the cook in the camp would sneak the scrapings from the frying pan to him every day, enabling him not to starve to death. William suffered greatly with the rest of the valiant soldiers in the Mormon Battalion. He helped build roads, dig wells, was forced to over march and was treated very badly by the Battalion medic, Doctor George B. Sanderson.

Using information provided by witnesses when his wife applied for a government pension we know that In January 1847 he became very ill with rheumatic fever and was under the care of Doctor Sanderson for at least two months. He was also involved in a battle with natives in the Coast Range Mountains and that during this battle he was wounded in his left shoulder by an Indian arrow. He never fully recovered from the rheumatic fever or being shot in the shoulder by an arrow. He was not able to work on account of his injuries. He was discharged from the battalion in Los Angeles on July 16, 1847.

For a time William recuperated in Los Angeles from his shoulder wound and from the rheumatic fever. He was tended to by several doctors during this time period. Eventually he recovered enough to travel to Northern California. It was recorded that he helped build a saw mill in the Santa Cruz mountains. He was apparently part of a detachment of Battalion brethren who bought two brass cannon from Captain John H Sutter and helped bring them back to the Salt Lake Valley. He donated six dollars toward the purchase of those two cannons.

THE LONGEST INFANTRY MARCH IN HISTORY



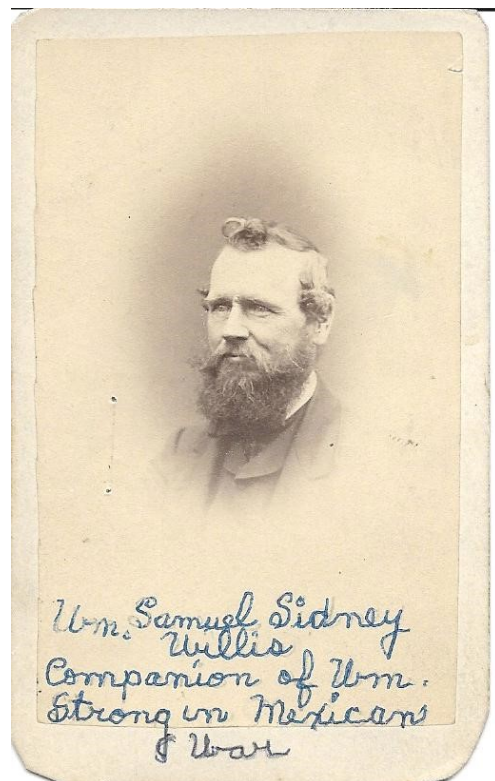
COME HEAR THE STORY OF THIS FAMOUS MARCH

In San Diego's Old Town, 2510 Juan Street

9 to 9 dally---including Sundays and holidays

Route William and the Mormon Battalion took in 1846

William Sydney Willes
 William Strong's companion during the
 Mexican War.



It is possible that William was at Sutter's Fort when gold was discovered since that is where the two brass cannon's were purchased. He helped bring those cannon's back to the Salt Lake Valley for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These cannons were to be a defense against possible Indian attacks en route home and for defensive use against a like foe in the Salt Lake Valley.



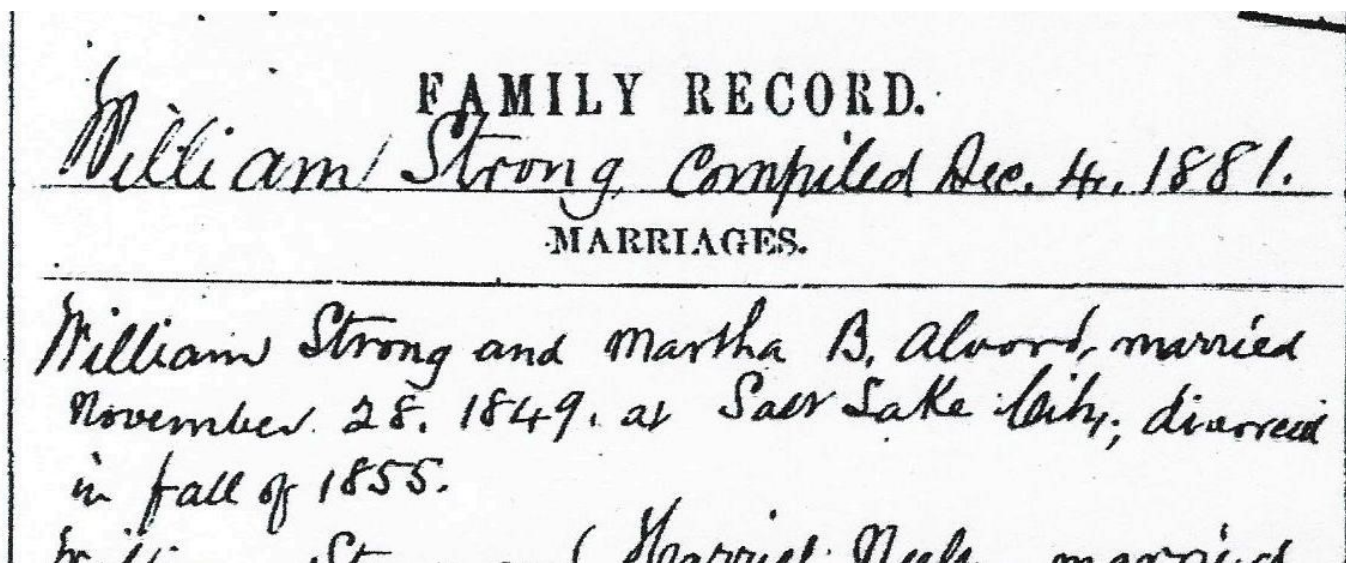
Brass Cannon on display at the St. George Temple grounds

This old cannon had an interesting history. It was made in France and used by Napoleon during his siege on Moscow. During Napoleon's hasty retreat, however, the cannons were left behind. They were later dragged to Siberia, then Alaska, and finally ended up at a fort in California. Members of the Mormon Battalion acquired the cannons, had them mounted on wheels, and brought them to Utah. Today, one of the old cannons is displayed on the temple grounds in St. George, Utah..

According to William's oldest daughter, Lucinda and a statement in the Church Historian's office, he arrived in Salt Lake in the fall of 1848. William arrived in the valley with Addison Pratt and others. Addison Pratt was not part of the Mormon Battalion but according to LDS church history he arrived in the valley having completed a five year mission to the Society Islands. Addison and his group of Mormon Battalion members arrived in the valley September 28, 1848.

William received his Patriarchal blessing from the church patriarch John Smith on August 5, 1849. This probably occurred right before he headed east to help his family come into the valley He had been asked by Brigham Young to make this journey.

Late in the summer of 1849 William drove east with an ox team and met his family assisting them in their journey to the valley. It is very likely that William was in the company of Zadok Knapp Judd Sr. In his journal Zadok reported that "Late in the summer of 1849 I was called with another chap about my size and age to go with thirteen yoke of cattle and a wagon to meet the hind company of the emigration. We traveled with our thirteen yoke of cattle all hitched to the wagon until we passed through Fort Bridger, a distance of one hundred miles. Then we began to meet companies of emigrants coming in. My comrade soon met his folks with the companies. He turned back leaving me with the cattle and wagon to manage as best I could." We know William went east to fetch his family during this same time period and took a wagon and oxen. It is possible William was the "chap" that was with Zadok. William, while assisting his family, met a beautiful young lady by the name of Martha Bromley Alvord with whom he fell in love. He saw her washing clothes in a stream and told her he had seen his future bride in a dream doing exactly the same thing. The young couple were married on November 28, 1849, by Bishop David Pettigrew of the Tenth Ward.



In 1849/1850 William and Martha lived in the old fort in the Salt Lake Valley during the first winter of their marriage. Some time in 1850 the couple moved to Ogden, Weber Country, Utah. Their daughter, Harriet Louisa was born April 23, 1853 at Harrisville, Weber Country, Utah.

In the year 1850 William was employed with Captain Stansbury's surveying party to discover the definition of the shores of the Great Salt Lake. They were to explore the lake defining its shore lines, islands and sand bars. As part of this expedition a mountain was named after William: Strong's Knob.



Strong's Knob



Strong's Knob, 2020



One of three monuments made by the Stansbury Company, Gunnison Island



★ *Harriet Louisa Strong, daughter of William and Martha B. Strong, born April 23, 1853, at Ogden Weber County.*
Sarah Elizabeth Strong, daughter of William and

Birth of Harriet Louisa Strong, William Strong family bible pages

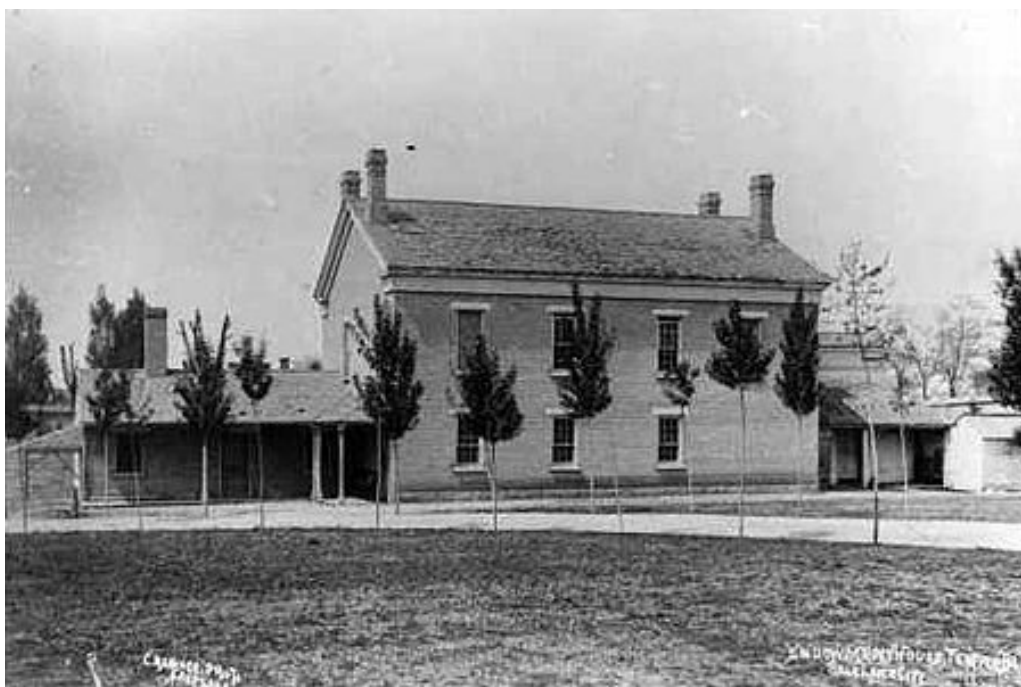
When Harriet Louisa was quite young the family moved to Farr's Fort, near Ogden. In 1854 William was ordained to the office of a 70.

THIS CERTIFIES THAT,
William Strong has been received into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, organized on the sixth day of April, 1830, and has been ordained into the Quorum of Seventies, this ~~day of~~ ~~185~~, and by virtue of this office he is authorized to preach the Gospel, and officiate in all the ordinances thereof, in all the world, agreeable to the authority of the Holy Priesthood vested in him; we therefore in the name and by the authority of this Church grant unto this our brother this letter of commendation unto all persons wherever his lot may be cast, as a proof of our esteem, praying for his prosperity in the Redeemers cause.
Given under our hands at Great Salt Lake City, Deseret, this *Twentyfirst* day of *May* 1854.
Clerk. *J. S. Young* President.

During this time period William and his two brothers, James T and Hyrum, were called to go with an armed militia to Echo canyon and prepare to meet Johnston's army as they advanced toward the valley of the Great Salt Lake. They were very successful in slowing the advance of this army.

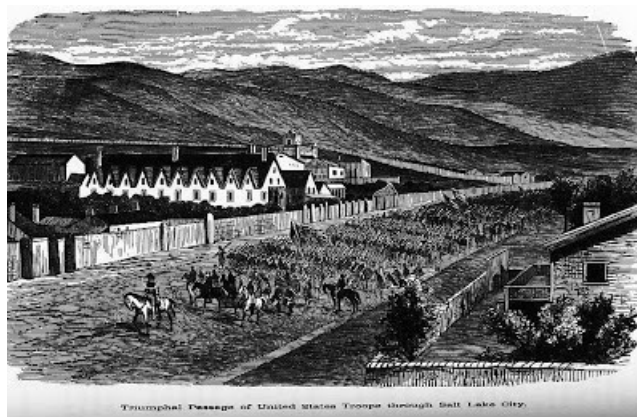
This was a terrible time for all the people living in the Wasatch Front area. The crops had not recovered from the cricket invasion of 1848. For two years the crops had struggled to survive. There was a severe drought occurring, in 1856 grasshoppers invaded and Johnston's army was still advancing towards Utah. Many of the pioneers were starving and had resorted to eating the Sego Lily roots which were abundant in the foothills around Salt Lake City and other places.

During this time period William and Martha had made fast friends with a young lady by the name of Harriet Neeley. Also William had promised a good friend from the Mormon Battalion, Benjamin Richmond, that he would marry his widow (if he should die) and care for her after his return to Salt Lake. William believed in plural marriage and vowed to marry both women. Martha decided she did not want to share William and thus in the Fall of 1855 she divorced William. William then married Harriet Neeley and Sarah Richmond in Brigham Young's office in the Endowment House in Salt Lake. He married both women the same day on the 17th of April, 1856. The ceremonies were performed by President Brigham Young, the witnesses were Jacob and Sarah Strong, William's parents, who had been sealed the same day.



Endowment House, Salt Lake City

As Johnston's army approached Brigham Young ordered the possible burning of all buildings in the Salt Lake Valley. Johnston, using wisdom, did not stop his troops in Salt Lake but marched through the city establishing Camp Floyd 20 miles South.



Johnston's Army marching through Salt Lake, past the Lion House

William and his two wives and children then left Salt Lake and moved South about 40 miles to Springville, Utah. Two children, John Albert and James Jacob, were born to Sarah and William while living in Springville. According to the best information available from the children of William, Benjamin Richmond had extracted a promise from William on his death bed that he would marry his widow for this life only. To this marriage were born two sons, . These two boys, together with the little nine month old son, Alonzo, (Benjamin's son), were sealed under the covenant to their mother and Benjamin Richmond for whom William stood proxy. Benjamin Richmond was with Company C in the Mormon Battalion and died after returning home from the march. He is buried in the Fillmore Cemetery in Fillmore, Utah.

Four children were born to William and Harriet in Springville: Sarah Elizabeth, Harriet Lucinda, Mary Lodema, and William Hill.

While in Springville, William Strong was one of the few saints who consecrated all he had to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is quoted from records of the day: "Territory of Utah, Utah County, the property of William Strong, Springville, Utah, which he dedicated to the Lord, dated February 6, 1857. 1 log cabin valued at twenty dollars (\$20), farm tools, etc. ten dollars (\$10), 1 clock five dollars (\$5), household furniture and bedding etc. one hundred dollars (\$100), 400 pounds of flour (six cents per pound \$24) and five bushels of corn twelve fifty (\$12.50). Total amount of property \$386.40—I certify that the foregoing schedule of property was consecrated to the Lord this day and year above written, Signed, Recorder of Utah, Utah County, Utah Territory."

In the Echo Canyon Expedition in 1857-58 William spent about three months in the mountains. He also took part in a dangerous Indian expedition and made two trips east to assist emigrants coming into the valley. He went once to the South Platte and another time to the Sweetwater. In 1865 William and his family moved from Springville back to Salt Lake. The family settled in the 10th Ward around where the present day Strong's Court is located in Salt Lake City. During this time period William also helped build what would become known as the "Mormon Battalion Ward". Today it's known as the old Tenth Ward.



“Mormon Battalion Ward”, the Tenth Ward, Salt Lake City, Utah

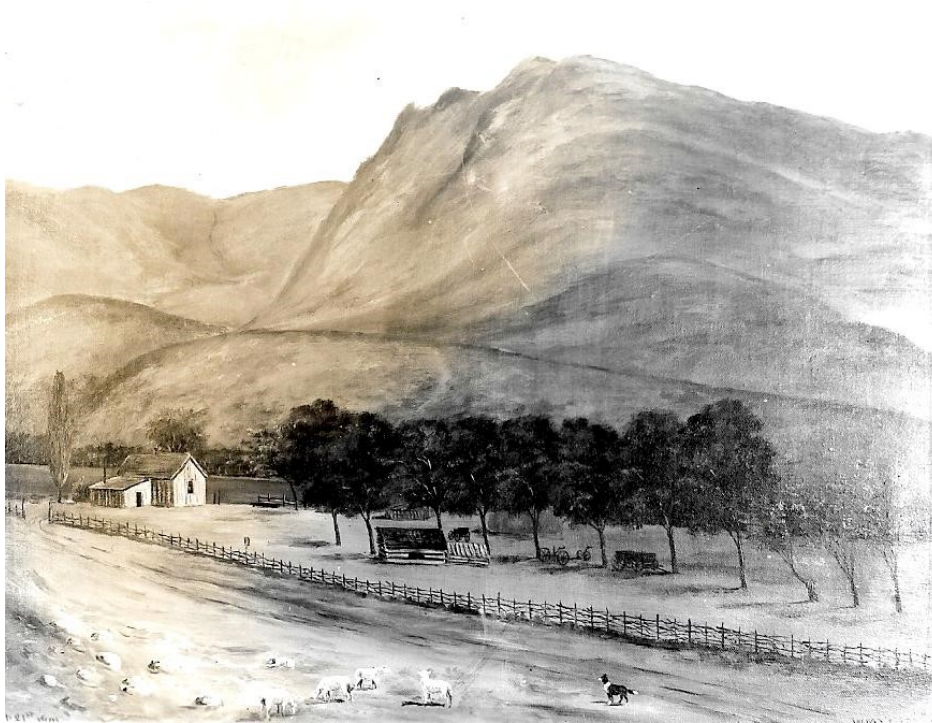
Although in very poor health during the years of 1868-1869, when grasshoppers did so much damage to the crops in the Salt Lake Valley, William strapped his bedding on his back and he, with other members of his family, walked to Echo Canyon, a distance of about eighty miles. There he worked helping to grade the road to prepare for the completion of the transcontinental railway. This railroad would connect the East and the West and do away with emigration by handcart and ox team.



Driving of the golden spike, promontory point, Utah

In 1873 William filed on one hundred and sixty acres of ground in the mouth of City Creek canyon for the city. He needed to live there for about one year. He was given five hundred dollars for pre-emption of this land, according to his daughter, Harriet Louisa. He was appointed watchman of the water works.

About 1878, the Strongs, William, Hyrum and James T, owned Strong's Wide Hollow in Emigration Canyon. William and his family lived on it. The Strong's homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres and obtained another forty acres further up the canyon under the Deseret Act.



Strong Farm in Emigration Canyon (about where Ruth's Diner is now)

This land is known as Strong's place. "To the left is Strong's Corral Hollow. Corrals and barns were up this hollow. To the left of the road, about 40 feet, were the three Strong cabins. To the right of the present road at 2.8 miles was the home of young Willy Strong (William Hill). The Strongs farmed the big field to the right and raised spuds, alfalfa, grain, and garden truck. They kept cows also. The Strong place ran up the canyon to the Cederlof homestead. Strongs homesteaded 160 acres and obtained another 40 acres further up the canyon. Later they sold their water rights to the city and moved off this place."

The following children were born to William and Harriet in Salt Lake City: Emmaline Jane, Lewis Napoleon, Heber Parley, Alice Louisa, Helen Maud, LeRoy Neeley, Ida Violet, Ira Armenious, and Marvin Albert. In all there were thirteen children born to this union.

William passed away very suddenly with a heart attack December 24, 1888. According to his grand daughter William had a pleasant disposition and numerous friends.

FAMILY RECORD.	
DEATHS.	
Jacob Strong, my father, died,	Feb. 18, 1872
Sucinda Strong, my sister, "	December, 1857.
John Albert Strong, my brother "	Oct. 18, 1846
Susan Strong, my sister "	July 17, 1856
Sarah Elizabeth, my daughter, "	Feb. 20, 1860
Lewis Napoleon my son	Dec. 23, 1867
Sarah Strong, mother	May 9, 1884
William Strong son of Jacob Strong died	Dec 24, 1888
Heber P. Strong son of wife	May 7, 1889

William Strong Family Bible, death record



William and Harriet Strong Tombstone, Salt Lake City, Cemetery



Hand made wooden box made by William Strong in about 1880
Kept by his Grand Daughter Harriet Strong Speirs

Information about William and all three of his wives taken from various histories written about him and his wives, most notably the ones written by Harriet Strong Speirs