



Isaac Dunford and his son, Alma B. Dunford

## Isaac Dunford and Family Utah Pioneers

### 1851 Census at Trowbridge, Mortimer Street

Isaac Dunford head 26, weaver, his wife Leah Dunford, 23, son, William Dunford and Hannah Dunford, (age not recorded).

### Isaac Dunford

Son of John Dunford of Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England. Born June 24, 1823, Trowbridge, England. Came to Utah October 4, 1856, John Banks company.

Married Leah Bailey 1843 at Trowbridge, England (daughter of Jacob Bailey of Trowbridge, England). She was born September, 1825.

#### Their children:

Mary, died;  
William, married Melvinia C. B. Whitney;  
Savinia, died;  
Alma B., married Susa Young;  
Seaborne, died;  
Moroni, married Sarah Bridwell;  
Albert, married Mary Nelson;  
Eliza, died;  
Parley, married Mary Jacobson;  
Oliver, married Ida Osmond;  
James, married Eliza Jacobson;  
Leah, married David A. Brogue.

Family home Bloomington, Idaho.

President of branch of church at St. Louis. Merchant.

Died October 4, 1877, Salt Lake City.

### **Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, by Frank Ellwood, 1913**

#### **The Dunford family were part of the following group, whose journey is recorded below:**

Isaac Dunford, 32, b 23 June 1824, d. 4 Oct 1879  
Leah Bailey Dunford, 28, b 16 Sept 1827 d 6 Dec 1892  
Alma Bailey Dunford, 13, 19 Aug 1850, 1 Feb 1919 (*son*)  
William Dunford, 9 17 Jan 1847 17 Oct 1891  
Moroni Dunford, 1, 8 June 1855, 29 Jan 1910 (*son*)

#### **The Journey to Utah, 1856:**

300 individuals and about 60 wagons were in the company when it began its journey from the outfitting post at Florence, Nebraska (now Omaha). Also known as the St. Louis Company. The company arrived in Salt Lake City between September 22nd and October 5th.

#### **Summary of the Journey**

Known as the Saint Louis Company, this party included English, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish Saints, some of whom had stopped for a while at St. Louis en route to Salt Lake City. A steamboat carrying 170 of these emigrants, with 30 wagons, arrived at Florence, Nebraska Territory, on June 14, 1856. Other party members had arrived earlier; some would arrive a little later. Florence was then the Mormon outfitting point for plains travel. Not until June 18 did the emigrants' 100 yoke of oxen arrive. After that, the travelers held a meeting where they were entertained by the St. Louis brass band and where they organized themselves, selecting John Banks as company captain. Banks was exceptionally qualified as a leader. Before emigrating from England in 1850, he had presided over the following: (1) the branch of the Church in Preston, Lancashire, England; (2) the Edinburgh, Scotland Conference; (3) the Manchester Conference; and (4) the London Conference. He had also served as second counselor in the presidency of the British Mission. Now he was returning to Utah after serving a mission in Indiana.

Not all of the company left Florence at the same time. The first group (24 wagons) started west on June 26 but traveled only two miles before making camp. The next day, an equal number of vehicles belonging to English Saints set out, traveled five miles, and then stopped at a stream in order to build a bridge. On the 28th a contingent of Scandinavians with 26 wagons joined the train. [Charles South Diary, pp. 7-8, 65] These first few days of travel provided interested spectators with a great deal of amusement because few of the emigrants had prior experience with oxen and all of the animals were wild. Several wagon tongues broke and were replaced with green wood.

Finally, the train began its journey in earnest. It was divided into two segments and on alternate days each half took its turn leading out. At night the circled wagons formed a corral while, just beyond this enclosure, tents and campfires made two more concentric circles. The men took turns guarding the cattle when they were out on the range. All members of the party were reportedly in good health on June 29. On July 1 the train crossed the Elkhorn, but before it reached the Platte, five oxen and one woman had died. It was very hot. On July 5, the company arrived at Mormon Ferry on Loup Fork. Until then the train had been traveling through woodland. Now it entered open country. On the 13th the emigrants camped south of Wood River, where they had their first experience cooking with buffalo chips. Continuing along the north side of the Platte River they began to see occasional Indian camps. On July 14 the travelers saw their first buffalo. Later they would hunt these beasts and add a little buffalo meat to their diet. One hunt ended in tragedy, however. Two men, trying to get close to a buffalo, crawled out through some tall grass, one behind the other. Suddenly the second hunter's gun accidentally discharged, shooting his

companion in the thigh. The wound was fatal. Early in August the travelers met two different parties that were returning from California. On August 7, they passed Chimney Rock. Then tragedy struck again. A buffalo bull charged the train. When the men shot at it, the cattle stampeded, and a wagon ran over a young man, killing him. The train then passed Scotts Bluff before reaching the Platte River ford near Fort Laramie on August 13. At the fort the emigrants saw a large encampment of Sioux Indians. Most Mormon emigrants crossed the North Platte River at Laramie so that they could follow the well-traveled road south of the river. But because his company received word that Indians recently had killed some travelers on the main route, Banks decided to stay north of the Platte, following a trail that had been pioneered in 1850. One member of Banks' company later recalled that this northern route was very rocky and mountainous, with steep hills to traverse. In some places the men had to double-team the wagons in order to get up the grades, and then they had to chain the wheels when descending (the wagons reportedly had no brakes). Though the Banks party did not have any accidents, they saw the remains of numerous wrecks-silent testimony that other travelers had not been so fortunate.

A later generation named this segment of the trail "Childs' Cutoff." It followed a meandering route, periodically leaving and then returning to the North Platte. Passing the site of modern Hartsville, Wyoming, it went through Rocky Pass and down Emigrant Hill. Later it passed Box Elder Springs (then called Alder Clump Springs), Red Canyon, and the sites of modern Orin and Douglas. North of the latter place it entered fairly rugged, mountainous terrain, crossed a high rocky ridge and then passed the future site of Orpha before rejoining the main trail at the upper crossing of the North Platte. It was September before the company finally left this river and headed for the Sweetwater. Nights were getting cold. When the train camped at Devil's Gate, it snowed and the ground froze into thick ice. Some cattle died. At some point along the Sweetwater, the travelers met a relief train from Salt Lake City, taking supplies to the handcarts. Near Pacific Springs, Edmund Ellsworth's Pioneer Handcart company passed the Banks train. After leaving the Sweetwater, Banks' company passed the Sandy, the Green, the Black's Fork and Ham's Fork rivers, Fort Bridger, the Bear River, Yellow Creek, Echo Canyon, the Weber River, Big Mountain, and Little Mountain. The night before reaching Salt Lake City the company camped in Emigration Canyon. They then entered the Salt Lake Valley on October 3, 1856. At her first sight of the city, one young woman was reminded of Jerusalem, the "holy city where the people of God dwelt."

#### [Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel 1847-1856](#)