

Edwin Lycurgus Westover
1845-1877
Compiled by Mary Westover Carroll

Edwin Lycurgus Westover was the son of Edwin Ruthven and Sarah Sophia Darrow Westover and was born at Mechanicburg, Champaign County, Ohio 2 April 1845. When he was three months old, his mother died and was buried in Goshen Township, Champaign County. His father's mother took care of him for some time.

His father married again; this time to Sarah Jane Burwell, a young girl of a neighboring county. He father and wife, and his grandmother, Electa Westover all joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Eventually with several other converts from Ohio, they joined a pioneer company in Winter Quarters and traveled to the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1848 when Lycurgus was about five years old. He and his grandmother continued to live with his father and his stepmother. They lived first in Salt Lake City, in the Ninth Ward, where Lycurgus was baptized. They moved to Cottonwood where they lived until 1860 when they moved to Grantsville. Here his grandmother's sister Hanna Brown lived. Within three years, his father received a call to settle in St. George County. So when he was fifteen years old and for the next few years he grew in St. George, Hebron and Hamblin helping his father with the sheep and cattle that he owned and that of the Southern Mission. Here, Lycurgus was ordained a teacher by Charles Pulsipher. The Saints here felt as most groups of members felt, that it was a good policy to be organized militarily as well as church wise. Those in Hebron and Mountain Meadows were organized with John Pulsipher as captain, Thomas Terry as company adjutant. They had four platoons, commanded by Dudley Leavitt, Levi H. Calloway, Jacob Truman and E. L. Westover. This was 5 May 1867 when Lycurgus would be twenty-two years old. The men had regular military training and were maintained for protection against any interference, especially the Indians raids that persisted for some years.

In 1869, Lycurgus went to Grantsville and took care of the farm of Aaron Sceva while Brother Sceva went on a mission; and Lycurgus stayed there for a few years. Here he met Joanna Matilda Erickson who had come from Sweden with her parents and family when she was a child. She had a beautiful voice and he knew she was the one he wanted to marry. They were married 27 April 1874 in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. They lived in her father's carpenter shop for a while Kurg continued to work for Aaron Sceva some of the time. Their first child, Laura Matilda, was born 9 February 1875.

President Brigham Young came to Grantsville to choose couples to help settle Arizona on the Little Colorado River. In October of the year before he had sent a scouting party to explore the valleys of that river, and it had returned giving a favorable report. Colonies had already been sent to Utah, Idaho and now Arizona. Once again the Saints were called on to leave their comfortable homes and settle elsewhere. Young families were wanted and Joanna felt impressed that they would be among those called to Arizona. They prepared to leave on their second pioneering trip. They left Salt Lake City on the day Laura was one year old, 9 February 1876 and traveled with John McLaws a family of

Toole. There were four companies formed at this time with approximately fifty in each company. William C. Allen was the leader of the group the Westovers were in. They took their journey down through Utah to Kanab, then followed trails over the Buckskin or Kiabab Mountain and made their descent into House Rock Valley. They crossed the Colorado River at Lee's Ferry and proceeded southeast to the Little Colorado River. They arrived there 13 April and began pioneer settling with the rest of the company. The Westovers went quite well prepared but turned everything into the United Order. They lived in a wagon box until the fort was built. Captain Allen's Camp consisted of 45 men, 13 women, 4 boys, and 11 children at this time. In August many men went to Utah to get their wives and families. Some of them never returned.

During the summer, irrigation ditches were formed along with a dam in the river to direct the water. The stone wall stockade was made where each family had their quarters. The 5th of August, a group of men started for a valley in the mountains between Allen's Camp and Prescott. The group expected to locate claims for those of the Company. The party consisted of E. Westover, H. P Petersen, Alma Iverson, Joseph McMurrin and John A. Blythe. This valley was about six miles long and five wide extending from north to south. There they saw antelope, wild turkey and bear. There were at least five springs in the valley that fed the lake and it was all surrounded by good pine timber and some oak. The men began to cut logs and formed foundations for some houses. Some claims had been made in the area but were about to run out. The fellows were getting ready to take over the claims if the claimants didn't come and reestablish them. While there, the men built five houses and eleven foundations, the fourth one of these being E. L. Westovers. This began the establishment of a dairy, tannery and other things at Mormon Lake. The dairy supplied butter, cheese, etc. for the settlements and the tannery took care of their leather needs. Then they returned to Camp on the Colorado arriving home late on the 22nd of August 1876.

On the 12th of September the Westovers house at the fort had the ribs put on it and was soon finished.

Near the end of the first year at the settlement, Joanna and Lycurgus made a trip to southern Utah where some of his people lived. Here at Hamblin their son Edwin Swen was born 20 January 1877. While there Lycurgus did ordinance work for several of his dead ancestors. When Edwin Swen was three weeks old, the family started back to Arizona. They were joined this time by several families; Lycurgus' father Edwin and wife and their three youngest children; John Hunt and most of his large family; John Bushman and his wife Mary and his little daughter Lois; Henry and Eliza Tanner; and Joanna's father Swen Erickson (who had been at St. George filling a call to work on the temple there); two young fellows, Manassa Blackburn and Isadore Wilson; and maybe others. This time they traveled due south from St. George to cross the Colorado River at Pearce's Ferry. This led them through some Indian country by San Francisco Mountains, Flagstaff, and east to the Little Colorado River, and back to their settlement.

Arriving at the Ferry, they found the river was extra high because of snow melting on the watershed of the Colorado River. The captain called for a volunteer to ride in head of the

horses and cattle which they wanted to swim over. Lycurgus volunteered mounting a large blue mare. When they reached the main current of the stream, his horse reared over and they both went under water. When he came to the surface, he grabbed the horse's tail and they returned to the starting place. John Hunt then put a cinch around the horse and his knees and thus the horses and cattle were led over. They arrived at St. Joseph 30 April 1877.

Lycurgus had a chronic case of asthma and was not a strong man. He was assigned hauling freight supplies from Albuquerque, caring for the cattle, etc. He met the Arkansas Company on its way through. He was a good marksman with his gun and lived to hunt. One day while hunting with his old friend from South Cottonwood, Henry Despain, he told him of his concern for his family and told him that he felt he wouldn't live long. At this time he also asked his friend if he would assume the leadership of his family and raise more children for him. 2 November 1877, he died and was buried in the new cemetery, the second grave there. The inscription on his tombstone reads:

Gone before us oh our brother, to the promised land.
Vainly look we for another in thy place to stand.

Joanna spent the winter in the fort next to John and Sophia McLaws where they looked after her and her babies. In the spring when she found someone to travel with, she went to Utah and lived at Grantsville with her parents.

Joanna knew nothing of the pact between her husband and Henry Waters Despain; but he later wrote her about it. Joanna worried and prayed about it, but didn't feel she could do as her husband had desired. After having a dream showing her the way she must go, she agreed to marry Henry. They were married 27 May 1879, in Salt Lake City. With Henry she had three sons and four daughters.

Compiled by Mary Westover Carroll from: Edwin Ruthven records; Journals of Charles Westover, James W. Bay, John Blythe, Ida Hunt and earlier compilations of family members. Also 9th Cottonwood, Grantsville, Hebron and St. Joseph Ward Records.