

Pioneer Heritage Society

January 2004 Member Presentation

Amos Pease Stone

By Maury Schooff

Amos Pease Stone was the son of Amos Sheldon Stone and Rachel Pease. He was born March 18, 1815 at Canaan, Columbia County, New York, USA. He worked at gunsmithing and blacksmithing until his marriage, March 30, 1838, to Amelia Bishop. They moved to Connecticut where he worked at the machining business. Their first child Emily Amelia was born January 4, 1839. In December 1844, they were baptized into the Mormon Church, having to cut a hole through ice for the baptism. Another daughter, Merah was born September 26, 1845, and a few months after giving birth, Amelia died.

On February 1, 1846, Amos married again, this time to Minerva L. Jones. The new family made arrangements to move west with the Saints, leaving baby Merah with her aunt Merah Bradley in New Haven. The family arrived at Council Bluffs, Iowa on July 15, 1846. They got there just as the last company of volunteers was getting ready to go to the Mexican War.

Amos' daughter Emily said, "When they first arrived at Kanessville at a place called Geo. A's Hollow and everybody in the hollow was sick except one person a woman. Father and mother in the wagon and I in a tent. Father had 3 kegs of gun powder under my bed. The prairie grass was so high that a man on horseback could not be seen. One day Father raised his head up and looked out of the front of the wagon (for this was all he could do) and he saw that the prairie was on fire; he lay back and said: 'We'll soon be gone now Minerva.' He could see that the fire was coming directly towards them. It would seem death would certainly overtake them, but fortunately just before the fire reached their camp the wind suddenly changed and blew the flames in another direction thus saving all from the perilous positions."

After building a Cabin at Kanessville, he took a few household articles that he could spare and went down to Missouri and exchanged them for buckwheat flour and cornmeal. While he was gone Minerva and Emily dug turf and built a fireplace in one end of the cabin. The cabin was not chinked that winter. During the winter of 1847, they only had the flour from one bushel of wheat living chiefly on buckwheat and cornmeal. Olive A. was born here April 8, 1847.

In the spring of 1847, they moved two miles out on Mosquito Creek where Amos bought several acres of land and built a two room log cabin. Here he raised some buckwheat and corn. They also made some maple syrup. While here he concluded to go back and bring out his wife's folks and his daughter Merah. On April 30, 1848 he left his family at Council Bluffs and returned east to Connecticut and arrived at the residence of Merlin Jones at Hamden, Connecticut on May 25, 1848.

During his absence his wife Minerva, assisted by a boy (Glasby Walden) and their daughter Emily, put in the crops and garden consisting of wheat, corn, potatoes, peas, beans, etc. Minerva was sick a great deal of the time during his absence. On the June 1st, she let Joseph Young take a yoke of black oxen to move west with and they were returned October 19th, having traveled within the 200 miles of Salt Lake Valley and returned to Winter Quarters during that time. Minerva says in her journal of this date "Brother Joseph Young returned my oxen to me which were very poor in flesh and the wagon an interesting monument of the hardships it has endured in this enterprising cause."

She says on October 11th that they were all counseled to keep a gun in the house constantly as they feared an attack from the Omaha's and on October 12th she says, "Bro Lee starts for the valley in company with 3 others; he takes with him my Rifle, Six Shooter and spy glass and their fixtures."

Mr. Stone on arriving in Connecticut commenced a series of visits among his relatives and friends and his daughter, Merah, whom he had left with Merah Bradley at the time of his first moving west. Merah Bradley said when he came there that he had come in time to see her die as she was very sick and she did die while he was there on September 5, 1848 at North Haven, Connecticut.

On September 30, 1848 he started for the west again together with Merlin Jones and family. They arrived at Council Bluffs, on November 12, 1848 where they lived until the spring of 1850 when they started west for the valley of the "Great Salt Lake."

Mr. Stone had a set of blacksmith tools with him and did general blacksmithing and oxen shoeing for the company which usually kept him busy mornings and evenings. He also had a supply of medicine with him and having studied medicine some in the east he put his medical skill to practice as the cholera which was quite prevalent that season with the various companies of immigrants. Cholera broke out in their train and it took all his time and skill to attend to the sick with whom he was successful as nearly every person in the train were taken down with it. He lost none that he attended there being but two death's in their train with that disease. One of those was that of a young man that was taken down with it at the same time that Mr. Stone was and his not being able to attend to him, he died. The other was a Dr. Braily who boasted that he was not afraid of the cholera and that he could cure the worst cases of it.

Once in Utah they eventually settled Ogden.

During their wagon train west and after their arrival in the valley, Minerva Stone wrote letters to her parents who were still in Kanessville, Pottawatamie County, Iowa. The letters have been preserved.