

## James Mitchell Family



My great grandparents (James Mitchell and Anne Hull Mitchell) had 14 children. Five of those children died as infants and two children were twins (Margaret May and Adam). I was unable to find any written histories on the other children. I contacted several descendants and some descendants I was unable to locate. I am also enclosing the Family Group Sheets on each of James and Ann's living children. Also, any pictures I have are also being enclosed. I feel honored to be a descendant of such hard-working pioneers. They have made me what I am and I am so grateful for that heritage.

Written by Mavane M. Mitchell



James Mitchell born 4 Feb 1841, Anne Hull born 28 May 1849 (holding pie), children not known.

1 May 2010

The following is written by Mavane M. Mitchell about her great grandparents James and Anne Hull Mitchell and their children. Where possible I tried to find original histories of these children} but was only able to obtain 3 histories so the rest of the information I have gleaned from other records and from information given to me by relatives.

James and Anne Hull Mitchell came to Shelley} Idaho in the late 1800}s. They settled in Shelley} Idaho after settling in many different cities such as Salt Lake City} Hooper} San Bernardino} California} Franklin} Idaho and finally coming to stay in an underdeveloped part of Idaho as Pioneers} clearing the land and building a log cabin close to the Snake River. They took up residence and took advantage of the pre-exemption homestead rights and took up 360 acres of land 2 miles north of what is now Shelley, Idaho. At first the residents wanted the town to be named "Shelko" and wrote to the railroad office. But the Northern-Utah Railroad, who had built a spud track through the area, had already named the town Shelley.

There were many months of hard work ahead for this family. As soon as possible a large two-room cabin was built of logs. Also barns and corrals for the stock. Sagebrush had to be dug out with a 'grubbing hoe' before the ground could be plowed. Grandma (Anne Hull Mitchell) insisted on a place for a large garden.

Water for drinking and home use was hauled from the Snake River until a well could be dug a few years later. The James Mitchell family was growing and they now needed a larger house. The home was built and there were many improvements added. They planted a variety of trees such as apples, pears, plums and other small fruits. People came from all around to buy the apples and pears. Even the Indians would come up from Blackfoot, Idaho with wagons to get the windfall apples.

The Indians used to roam at will and always stopped at the farm to ask for loaves of bread. Grandma Mitchell always gave them what she had baked even though that meant she had to give her family baking powder biscuits for supper.

Grandfather Mitchell and sons, James, Thomas, Will, John Henry (Jack) and Richard worked very hard to secure irrigation rights and to build ditches and canals. They also helped build the Cedar Point Canal. Most of their efforts were donated but some of the boys were given cemetery plots in a piece of land

south of Shelley designated for a cemetery as part of payment for their work.

Each winter the cellar was filled with many bushels of apples, pears, cabbage, carrots, onions, potatoes and squash. Many of these were sold so the family could pay their debts and bills and get clothing for the winter and also get clothing so the children to go to school. Pigs and beef were butchered and some were cured to furnish meat for winter.

The only means of transportation was by bob sleigh or horseback. In the long, cold winters the farmers took turns taking their children to school in the sleigh, but most of the time the children had to walk the 2 miles to and from school, five days a week.

They burned wood brought from the lava rocks as there was no coal available. The men would leave early in the morning with a team and sleigh or wagon if the weather was good and there was no snow, taking a lunch and returning late in the evening, hopefully with a big load of the beautiful red cedar wood which burned so clean and put out lots of heat against the bitter cold of winter. This had to be repeated many times before there would be enough to last.

As the children grew up and got married they were given 40 acres of land by James and Ann. After Grandfather James passed away, several of the sons had sold out and moved to various parts of the country.

As of now, the property my great grandfather James Mitchell owned has been sold to different people and just recently (May 2010) the Shelley School District has purchased the land and built a new elementary school. The school has been named Riverview. I submitted the name of "James Mitchell Elementary" or "Mitchell Elementary", but they decided to name the new school "Riverview Elementary."

One of the original pieces of property that my grandfather John Henry Mitchell was given when he married my grandmother, Elizabeth Ann Hull, is still in the hands of family and the house they built is still

standing. These 40 acres of land is 2 miles north of Shelley.

These pioneers left a great legacy. They worked very hard and it is a tribute to them that they could carve out an existence in the sagebrush and become such great people to be admired.

### **James Mitchell Family**

The elegant James Mitchell house, built so many years ago, two miles north of Shelley, has long since been torn down. The property where the Mitchell family homesteaded early in 1892 was sold over 20 years ago to the LDS First Ward Church for its welfare farm.

All that was left on the place was the house basement, a storage cellar; a few corrals and outside farm buildings. All these were torn down, the land bull-dozed and leveled, along with the well, so that land would be better suited for profitable crops.

The fruit trees were uprooted, sawed up and hauled away for firewood.

James Mitchell was born in Clackmannan, Scotland, on 4 February 1841. He was the son of James and Jeanette Fife Mitchell. When he was nine years old the family crossed the Atlantic and located in St. Louis in 1850.

Two years later they came with a pioneer caravan of Latter Day Saint people in search of a new land free from religious persecution.

In Utah the family settled first at Salt Lake City, living in a "dugout" that first winter. The winter was a very cold one, and they suffered privation as there were few jobs and food was scarce. In the Spring, they moved to Provo, Utah, where they lived until 1853. They then moved to Cedar City. They were not satisfied there and, still searching for the right place to settle, they headed south, crossed the desert to San Bernardino County, California. On this long trek they lost one small child, all their cattle, and most of their possessions along the way.

They lived here for six years working hard to establish a home and wrestle a living from the soil, but they were not satisfied and longed to return to Utah or the Idaho Territory. They eventually returned to Utah, and in 1859 the family home was permanently located at Riverdale, Weber County, Utah, where the father who had been a coal miner in his native land worked in the mines and had a freightline for the many industries that were fast coming into operation.

But this was not a desirable occupation for the Mitchells. They were tillers of the soil, so again they pulled up roots and settled at Franklin, Oneida County, Idaho, built a home and cleared the rocks and sagebrush from the land.

James Mitchell (Senior) was a Seventy in the LDS Church. His death occurred on 11 March 1890 and his wife, Jeanette Fife, died] 2 April 1899. They both await the Resurrection in the pleasant cemetery at Ogden, Utah.

Their four children were James, John, Andrew and Jeanette. Of the four, only two grew to adulthood: James and John.

James Mitchell was the eldest son, and from the very conditions of his early life, acquired a vigorous constitution and a great fund of physical endurance. He also inherited those virtues and characteristics of the Scotch people: self-reliance, courage and moral principles.

For many years-the life he led was in remote regions, but with the hardships he endured, he never sacrificed his principles or never missed a chance to help those in need. If he were alive today, he could tell us of his adventures among the rugged surroundings, with the wild Indians, ferocious animals and daring desperadoes of those early times. But he faced them all with courage and good judgment

At Salt Lake City, Utah, on February 16, 1865, James was united in marriage to Miss Ann Hull, a native of In-the-Den, Scotland, born 28 May 1848, a daughter of Thomas Hull and *Mary* Benson, who

were natives of the northeast part of Ireland, then coming to Scotland where they resided for many years before emigrating to the United States in the early 1850's. Thereafter, in 1859 they crossed the plains to Utah, then moved to Franklin, Oneida County, Idaho.

Grandmother often told of the skirmishes with the Indians and how, at one time, her brother, Robert Hull and a nephew, William Hull, had left on their horses to get provisions and were killed by Indians. The book, "Progressive Men of Idaho", reported that the Indians who had been drinking accosted the two young men and killed them.

James Mitchell with a growing family still longed to settle where he could acquire more land. Up north, in the Upper Snake River Valley, the virgin soil was bringing forth bounteous crops. This land could be had almost for the asking; so James took advantage of the preemption rights of the Homestead Act and secured 360 acres of virgin soil just two miles north of Shelley. The Mitchell family arrived here one day before the Shelley family came from Iona. Quite a lot of farm land had been taken up and people were settling all through the area.

James and Ann were the parents of 14 children. They buried four in infancy and a pair of twins when they were a few years old. They also raised two Indian girls who had been left behind by the tribe after a severe battle.

James developed a beautiful home, and outbuildings, many acres of fruit trees and berry bushes of all varieties that grow in this locality. He worked long and hard to secure irrigation rights and to build ditches and canals; becoming one of the builders of the Cedar Point Canal, with much help from his sons, Richard, John (Jack as he was sometimes called), and Will. Like all old timers, life gave him a benevolent spirit. He was quick to respond to any call for aid, and to encourage those who really tried. In his business dealings, he was scrupulously honest and fair, always putting his

family first and his church, of which he was a consistent member.

James passed away September 1, 1918 at Shelley, Bingham County, Idaho. His wife, Ann, died April 16, 1923 at Preston, Franklin County, Idaho. They are both buried in Shelley, Idaho.

All that remains to remind his ancestors of the Mitchell homestead is the "Mitchell" siding sign just north of Shelley.

Honoring these first pioneers of Shelley, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers erected a monument of various-colored stones gathered near Ririe, with the white stone at the bottom center from the Nauvoo Temple. The inscription reads as follows:

"Before the close of 1885, the families of James Mitchell, A. T. Lawrence, Darius Allen, Joshua Adams, Felix, Heber, Frank and Ann Huband, *Albert* Christensen and N. C. Mickelson settled here. Soon others followed. These settlers were organized into a branch of the LOS Church in 1893 and a log room built by George Steele served as first school with Miss Wood as teacher. In February 1895, in the home of William Crandall, the ward of Shelley was organized with John F. Shelley as Bishop. Early pioneers made irrigation possible in this section."

No greater tribute could be paid the pioneers of Shelley than to carve in bronze the story of its beginnings. People interested in history will pause, read the inscription, and marvel at the wisdom it took to layout this town in pioneer Idaho.



A monument in Shelley Idaho describing the arrival of the James Mitchell Family.

### THE LIFE STORY OF JAMES MITCHELL COPIED FROM THE BOOK 'PROGRESSIVE MEN OF IDAHO' PAGE II

(LDS CHURCH LIBRARY SHELLEY, IDAHO)

Even at the present time, so rapid has been the improvement and development of this country, since the Pioneers came, there are few who can really comprehend or understand the vicissitudes which were common to the early frontier residents in The Great West, or can even understand the numerous peculiar experiences of the Pioneer of that day. Enough is known, however, by the people that they owe in veneration and esteem the survivors of that primitive period, and extend a cordial hand of friendship to anyone who can demonstrate his right to be justly called an "Old-timer," in the land. Conspicuously identified with his early life, is the subject of this review; James Mitchell, who from early childhood has been a prominent factor, in the stirring events, which culminated in the wresting from savage possession, the lands of the Great West and placing them in civilized occupancy.

Mr. James Mitchell was born in Clackmannan, Scotland, on February 4, 1841. He was the son of James and Janette (Fife) Mitchell, representatives of some of the oldest and proudest families, of that stern land of independence, his paternal

grandparents being James and Christiana (Ewing) Mitchell.

When James Mitchell was nine years of age, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean with his parents and located with them at St. Louis in 1850. Two years later accompanying the family migration to Utah, with a Pioneer Caravan of LDS people in search of good farming land.

In Utah the family settled first at Salt Lake City, shortly thereafter moving to Provo, Utah, where they spent the winter of 1852-53 which was very cold, the work scarce and the snow very deep. Then they moved on to Cedar City. Then in the fall of 1853 they cross the desert to San Bernardino County, California, losing one small child, all their cattle and most of their possessions along the way.

They lived here for six years working hard to make a home for the family in this primitive section of the country, eventually returning to Utah, and in 1859 the family home was permanently located at Riverdale, Weber County, Utah, where the father who had been a coal miner in his native land engaged in agriculture, being also dignified with the position of a Seventy in the LDS Church.

His death occurred on II March 1890 at an advanced age, and that of the Mother in 1899. Both await the Resurrection in the pleasant little cemetery at Ogden, Utah.

Their four children were: James, John, Andrew and Jeanette.

James Mitchell was the eldest son, and from the very conditions of his early life, acquired a vigorous constitution, and a great fund of physical endurance and also inherited those cardinal virtues and characteristics of the Scotch people: self-reliance, indomitable courage and correct moral principles.

For many years the life he lead was in regions remote but in all of these deprivations and hardships he endured, he never sacrificed his

principles or never missed a chance to help those in need.

Did space permit, we would gladly remit some typical instances of his adventures among the rugged surroundings, with the wild Indians, ferocious animals and daring desperadoes of those early times. But he faced them all with courage and good judgment.

In 1885 he came to Idaho and in Bingham County availed himself of the Homestead pre-exemption rights, taking up the land where he now resides and where he has developed a beautiful home and estate of 320 acres, with a commodious and valuable residence and suitable outbuildings and many acres of fruit trees and berry bushes of most all varieties which will grow in this locality, all of which manifest the taste and thrift of their owner. He worked long and hard to secure irrigation rights and to build ditches and canals; becoming one of the builders of the Cedar Point Canal, with much help from his sons, Richard, Jack (John Henry) and Will.

Like all old-timers, life has given him a benevolent spirit. He is quick to respond to any call for aid and to encourage those who are really trying. Indolence and idleness have no part in his nature. In business dealings he is scrupulously honest and fair, always putting his family first and his church of which he is a consistent member.

At Salt Lake City, Utah on February 16, 1865, Mr. Mitchell was united in marriage to Miss Ann Hull, a native of Scotland, born May 28, 1849 a daughter of Thomas and Mary (Benson) Hull, who were natives of the northeast part of Ireland, then coming to Scotland where they resided for many years, before emigrating to 'the United States in the early fifties.

Thereafter, in 1859, they crossed the plains to Utah then moved to Franklin, Idaho, where they were among the first settlers of that area. Later moving back to Hooper, Utah, where the mother died in 1860. The father later returned to western Idaho where his death occurred in 1877.

The records of the children of this typical pioneer couple, with the date of their respective births, fittingly close this sketch:

Mary Ann	2 Jan 1866
James Andrew	03 Jan 1867
Thomas	28 October 1868
John Henry	01 February 1870
William David	05 October 1871
Joseph	24 May 1873
Jeanette	16 April 1874
Walter Scott	03 February 1876
Richard Charles	16 December 1877
Margaret (twin)	6 October 1879
Adam (twin)	6 October 1879
Helen Margaret	21 May 1882
Anne Catherine	11 March 1884
Nettie Belle	22 December 1887