

SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 24, 1927

BELNAP WRITES HOOPER HISTORY

Pony
Furni

Marker to Be Unveiled
Today At Site of
First House

Peter Skene Ogden, James Bridger, John C. Fremont and many other famous western frontiersmen are mentioned by John M. Belnap of Hooper in his brief history of Hooper, recently written. He tells of the old Hooper herd house, built about 1854. The spot where it stood will be marked today at 2 o'clock by the Daughters of the Pioneers in dedicatory services.

Ogden and Bridger went over the country about Hooper in 1825. The latter sent four men out on the Great Salt lake in skin boats to gain knowledge of its boundaries. It is known that they paddled up the Bear river and possibly went up the Weber river, which flowed through the northern half of Hooper at that time, the history says.

Fremont camped near the mouth of the Weber river one September night in 1843, along with Kit Carson, and others. The next day they canoed down to the mouth of the river and named the point "Disappointment Island."

Districts outlying from what is today Ogden city were known as the Weber herd range in the '50s. William H. Hooper had control of the range from Clearfield to the Weber river, and in 1854 he built an adobe house as shelter for his herdsmen. The house consisted of four rooms on the ground floor, two gable rooms and two rooms were later added on the north side. The house faced south. This was Hooper's first building.

Hooper married Mary Ann Knowlton in 1852. They had nine children, some of them said to be living in Salt Lake today. Hooper was born in Maryland, went into business at a youthful age, failed, and turned to steamboating on the Mississippi river. He came to Utah in 1850 and was a member of the state convention elected in 1855 to frame a constitution for the state of Deseret. In 1859 he was elected delegate from Utah to the Thirty-sixth United States congress.

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William Garner, Sr., and many others instituted the building of a canal to Hooper in 1867-68. The intake from the Weber river was at a point north of the present Amalgamated Sugar company's plant in Wilson. The south branch to Syracuse was completed in 1875. Total cost to that year was \$75,432. It now waters between 8000 and 9000 acres.

In 1867 Jesse W. Fox surveyed the town of Hooper and laid out the farming land in one-half mile blocks, with streets four rods wide running parallel. Charles Hardy divided the blocks into 20 acre plots in 1868. Then a townsite was surveyed on a quarter section of land owned by Franklin D. Richards and lots sold at \$5 each.

First religious services of the community were held in the old herd house. Later they were conducted in the home of Charles Parker. In 1869 a board of trustees was appointed to further education and a schoolhouse was built in 1869 on the southeast corner of the townsite. This building stands today on the property of Lorinda E. Parker and is known as the Pioneer cottage. Gilbert Belnap, Levi Hammond and James Hale composed the board.

During the first years of the settlement the people experienced many of the hardships of the settlers of '47 and '48. In 1869 failure of the crops seemed likely, but water in the hills proved plentiful. Grasshoppers attacked their crops in 1870 and everything seemed lost when the seagulls came over from the Great Salt lake. Before that the settlers dug trenches in the insect infested fields and burned many of the pests.

Henry W. Naisbitt built a steam grist mill on a co-operative farm about 1873. Little grain was raised and the mill was operated only a portion of the time. He raised the first alfalfa and owned the first pink-eyed rabbits brought to Utah. They sold as high as \$50 per pair.