

Myrtillo Shaw, Jr and Anna Hermina Cardon Shaw

Life Sketches from the Mormon Diaries Project

Introductory Notes

I, Michael Brown Shaw, compiled this 7 page document in June 2006. It consists of brief life sketches of my Great Great Grandfather Myrtillo Shaw, Jr, and his wife, my Great Great Grandmother, Anna Hermina Cardon Shaw. Each sketch begins with a third-person introduction of the individual and the bulk of each sketch consists of first-person accounts of life events.

My source for these life sketches comes from the Utah State University Special Collections Library. The library has a collection of documents which make up the “Mormon Diaries project.” The USU Special Collections staff printed copies of the pertinent documents and mailed them to me. The documents were typewritten and I transcribed them into modern computer format for improved searching and distribution. In so doing, I have preserved all spelling, punctuation, and grammar exactly as they appear in the source documents, including any errors. I have made no editorial attempt.

Finally, I am in no way an expert on the Mormon Diaries project. The background information contained herein is taken from descriptions obtained from the USU Special Collections Internet website with minor editing for length.

Table of Contents

Background on the Mormon Diaries Project	2
Life Sketch of Myrtillo Shaw, Jr	3
Life Sketch of Anna Hermina Cardon Shaw	5

Background on the Mormon Diaries Project

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the federal government of the United States established the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in an effort to provide employment opportunities. Among the undertakings of the WPA was the Mormon Diaries project.

With assistance from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Historical Records Survey, as well as the WPA, Juanita Brooks supervised a project to collect and transcribe the diaries, journals, and biographical sketches for over 400 Latter-day Saint pioneers. The project ran from 1934 until 1942.

In 1942 the WPA was disbanded and the original transcriptions were turned over to the Library of Congress. Other complete or partial copies were deposited with the Utah State Historical Society, Brigham Young University, the University of Utah, and Utah State University. In 1950 the Library of Congress microfilmed the entire collection.

This collection contains three types of material: first person accounts (diaries, journals, and autobiographies); second person accounts (biographies, life sketches, and local histories); and transcripts of interviews with pioneer Utahns. For those pioneers who had kept written histories, WPA workers copied their diaries (over 400) by hand and then typed them out. For those pioneers who had kept no diary or other record of their lives, WPA workers interviewed them using a standard set of questions.

FEDERAL WRITERS PROJECT

Elvera Manful
Ogden, Utah
Weber County
October 17, 1939

Pioneer Personal History
Myrtillo Shaw
UTAH HRS 314
Revised 3-9-37

Mr. Myrtillo Shaw of 559 Washington Avenue, was born in Ogden, Weber County, Utah, on March 29, 1858. His father was Myrtillo Shaw Sr. and his mother was Orilla Austin Shaw and they were born and raised in New York. They joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. When the Saints were driven from Nauvoo they moved to different places and finally came to Utah in Lorenzo Snow's Company in 1848. They lived in Salt Lake City for two years and then moved to Ogden where they lived at first on 22nd and Jefferson Avenue and later moved out on 17th and Washington in the Mound Fort District.

"The first school I attended was a little rock schoolhouse that stood where the Mound Fort School is today. William Barker was the first teacher I ever had. We used McGuffey's readers and also had a blue back speller. I went to school until I was in the 5th reader and then quit. We had short school terms so that we could work late in the year and start working early in the spring. My parents paid tuition but not in cash but in produce. The benches were just slab benches with no backs and there were two legs at each end. The building had no running water like we have today in our homes and public buildings and in one end of the room was a water bucket with a tin dipper from which we all drank.

My father was a farmer and I helped him on the farm all I could and also took odd jobs wherever I could get any work. I worked for a while in Higginbotham's Store which was located about where the Hylton Flour Mill was. D.H. Peery built the store and Frank Higginbotham ran it.

I remember when the railroad first came to Ogden, we heard it whistle and a few other boys and myself climbed on top of a straw stack to watch it. This was the first train that came in and it didn't come clear into Ogden but stopped out at Taylor's mill in Riverdale which was as far as the tracks went. I had four uncles who didn't come with the Saints to Salt Lake City but stayed in the east and they came in on that first train as a surprise to their family. My grandparents and father never knew they were coming at all. It was towards evening when the train came in and therefore quite late by the time that my uncles walked into Ogden. They went to a little hotel and rented one room and all stayed there until morning when it was light enough and they could get out and hunt up their relatives. I will never forget that reunion. My Grandfather Shaw cried for joy and Grandmother didn't know he was crying because he was so happy and she said to him, 'Hush up, for my part, I'm glad they came.'

In those early days quite a bit of responsibility fell on the shoulders of us boys. My parents had 12 children, nine boys and three girls. We boys had to go up to Monte Cristo to get our supply of wood for winter use. My brother and I usually went together but once in a while I

would drive our team and wagon alone and some other boy would drive the team up for his family's supply of wood. At nights we would wrap up in quilts and sleep under the wagon. There was a toll gate at the mouth of Ogden Canyon where we had to pay 50¢ toll. In some places the canyon was so narrow that it was impossible to pass anyone and before we got to those places we would have to holler every little ways, 'Yoo hoo.' This was so that any other team or wagon would wait where the road was wide enough to let us pass. We also often hauled our wheat to the mills to be ground into flour. Still another job we had during the summer was to take our little herd of sheep, nearly every family had several sheep of their own, up to the foot hills east of Ogden to graze. We would take a sego digger, a long sharp pointed stick along with us so that we could dig sego's and eat. That was usually all the lunch we had for our dinner.

One year the grasshoppers were so bad, they came from the south and settled on the farms. They were so thick they darkened the sun. We got out and took sticks and brooms or anything that we could get hold of to shoo them away. We finally had to drive them into ditches and cover them with straw and set fire to the straw and try to burn them out.

We had many good times though along with all our hard work. Cardons had a molasses mill on 5th and Washington avenue and they very often invited a group of us young people over and had a molasses candy pull. We would sing and dance and play games. Jesse Brown played the fiddle for us to dance by. We would go to different peoples houses every week or two and dance.

On September 25, 1879, I was married to Annie H. Cardon. The day after we were married we got in our wagon with a team of horses to pull it and we took our wedding trip to Franklin, Idaho where we made our home. It took us two days to make the trip and now days we could go the same distance in just a few hours.

We lived in a one room log house with a dirt roof, but my wife never complained about it ever. She made a real home of it. She would take straw and make frames for little mottos that she made and she also framed chromos. We had a rag carpet on the floor. One day a salesman remarked how homelike it was and said he had a lovely home in Salt Lake City but his wife was a society woman and their place was never really a home like our one room log cabin.

I farmed and also worked in a grocery store for a while. My wife would churn butter and then sell it and eggs at the store.

I was called on a mission on January 26, 1886 to the Southern States. I traveled through Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee and in those days it wasn't like it is now. There were no headquarters and often we never had a place to sleep but would lay down under trees. While I was gone my wife moved back to Ogden, taking our two little boys with her so when I returned we made out home in Ogden and have lived here ever since. I purchased a wholesale produce business and stayed with it two years, then sold it and started the Ogden Cracker and Biscuit company in connection with two others. After a year of this I sold out and established the Shaw Mercantile Store at Five points with my two sons and a nephew. I was elected city councilman from the Third ward in 1898 and 1899.

My wife and I celebrated our sixtieth wedding anniversary on September 25, 1939. It has been sixty years of happiness for us and we have many things to be thankful for. We have had seven children, five now living. These are: David M. Shaw, Austin H. Shaw, Mrs. Nettie Hermine Drumiler, Mrs. Bertha Mary Lee, and Mrs. Lillian Orilla Underwood. We also have 21 grandchildren. It is indeed a family to be proud of and they all live in Ogden some of them right next to us. Yes, we have been well blessed."

FEDERAL WRITERS PROJECT

Elvera Manful
Ogden, Utah
Weber County
October 17, 1939

Pioneer Personal History
Mrs. Annie Hermine Cardon Shaw
UTAH HRS 314
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Mrs. Annie Hermine Cardon Shaw was born in Marriott, Weber County, Utah on January 23, 1861. Her father was John Cardon who came to America in 1854 from Piedmont, Italy, and with Lorenzo Snow's company of Saints to Utah the same year. He lived in Salt Lake City for a while and then moved to Little Cottonwood and was living there when he met Anna Furrer who came to Utah from Switzerland in 1856. She crossed the ocean on the sailing vessel 'Enoch Train,' under the direction of James Ferguson. She was a graduate of a medical college in Switzerland and had a doctor's diploma. Both her parents were dead. She was converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and baptized by John Smith and came to Utah because of the church. Captain Leonard was captain of the 'Enoch Train.' They landed in Boston on May 1, 1856 and went from Boston by rail to New York City and then to Iowa City, Iowa. When she reached America, she had money enough to purchase a wagon and a yoke of oxen to cross the plains in but she met some people who were very poor and they were anxious to get to Utah so she gave them her wagon and oxen and she pulled a hand cart across the plains.

After she met and married John Cardon they made their home in Cottonwood for about a year and then moved to Marriott where they lived for several years and it was in Marriott that several of their children were born, one being Annie Hermine.

"My first recollection of Ogden was when my father would bring me with him while he was clearing the ground on 5th and Washington so he could build his carding mill. It must have been about 1864 as I was only three years old. He would ride to town on horseback and I rode up in front of him. While he worked clearing the sage brush from his property he would lay me on a blanket near by so he could watch me. After he built the carding mill he built our home in Ogden near by. He was a mechanic and builder by trade and used to make tubs, wooden buckets, barrels, pans and such articles for our own use and for many of the early settlers. He made all our furniture, making the chair bottoms of rushes. The hoops for the buckets and barrels he made of cottonwood. He built the slab benches they used in the bowery that they built on 2nd street about where the railroad tracks are now.

One day when mother was out in the field helping father plow, she had left us children in the house and the baby had started to cry so my sister older than I would stick willows in the fireplace and get them lit and then wave them in the air to amuse the baby, letting it watch the light. She caught her dress on fire and ran screaming out to father and mother. When they turned around they could see her all aflame in the rushes and even the rushes around her were on fire from her clothes. They didn't think for eighteen days that she could possibly live. She was burned so very bad. The elders came very nearly every night and sat with her for a while and

blessed her. Mother and father took her to Salt Lake City to Brigham Young who blessed her and said that she should live to raise a family. She did recover and when she grew up married and raised a family of eight children. She is now 82 years old and lives in Logan, Utah.

The Indians used to pass our home a lot as it was on the main highway to Montana. They often camped right near our place and had their wigwams there and when they had gone my sister and I used to go and pick up beads they had left behind. Mother and father were good to the Indians and used to give them flour and supplies. One time some Indians were going by our place and they had a sick papoose and they left it with my mother as she was a doctor and they thought she could make it better. She kept it about a year but it died and is buried in our lot in the City Cemetery. I guess the Indians didn't know what to do for their sick and they often left a sick papoose with white people. I remember the Barker family had an Indian girl they raised to be quite a young girl before she died and Chase's also had one they raised.

Besides the carding mill, father had a store and a molasses mill. Many freighters would stop at our store and get groceries and soda water.

When I was still a small child I went to Corinne to live with Kupfer's some friends of my mother and father. They had a small boy and wanted me to live with them and help look after him as he was sickly. I stayed with them three or four years and it was in Corinne that I first went to school. It was a Methodist school held in the Methodist church there and they had a lady teacher. It was when I was in Corinne that the Golden Spike connecting the two railroads together was driven. I remember I went with Kupfers to the celebration in Promontory and we made the trip on a hand car. They held me between them while they pumped the hand car.

When I returned from Corinne and stayed at home I attended school in the Lynne Ward and then later I went to the Mound Fort School. Mr. Goff was the first teacher I had in Ogden.

I used to help father in the store and also in the carding mill once in a while. People brought their wool from up around Cache Valley and nearly every where it seemed. I was about sixteen and was taking the rolls out of the carding mill when the belt slipped off. When I went to put it back on I got my finger caught in the cog wheels of the roller and it ground my finger. I suffered terribly with it as I got blood poison and it was thought they would have to amputate the finger but I was keeping company with Myrtillo Shaw, whom I later married, and he wouldn't let them cut it off. They kept doctoring it and it finally healed although it is crooked.

My mother was one of the first doctors in Ogden, even before Dr. Anderson and Dr. Canfield were here. She used to even go up into Cache Valley doctoring. Brigham Young blessed her and told her that was to be her life's mission to doctor people and not charge for it so she gave her services free wherever she went. She was the doctor during the smallpox epidemics of 1870 and also 1876. She had three of us children down and she still went doctoring others. When she would come home father would have her clothes outside and she would change them by a tree before she came into the house. They also burned sulphur to fumigate. No matter what hour of the night anyone came for her she was always willing and ready to go.

One time Ben Chadwick was thrown from his horse and cut his head tearing his scalp nearly off. Dr. Anderson couldn't sew it on and I helped mother by holding the candle for light for her to see to sew it on. She did a good job and he lived. We never had lights in those days and made our own candles. I still have my candle mold around someplace.

Another experience mother had was when the railroad was being built into Ogden. There was an Irishman working on the tracks and he got drunk and went down to Butlers and took an axe and brutally murdered three children and also struck and cut Mrs. Butler in the head. The

children couldn't be helped at all but mother took Mrs. Butler home to our place and doctored her and cared for her and she lived. It was sure terrible though the way the three children had been whacked up and mother gathered the three little bodies together, having to pick up brains here and everything, scattered all over the house.

Mother used to ride horseback to get around to the ones she attended and one winter she was riding down second street when the horse slipped and she fell cutting her head open. She was near the home of the woman she was to attend and she doctored her head as well as she could and bound it up and the woman's husband came out and helped her into the house and she delivered the baby and went on home. She cared for her own head and it was such a terrible cut that it never did heal real well and she later had to have a silver plate put in it.

Still another time she gave birth to a baby herself and cared for herself all through it and someone came for her to assist them. They got a covered wagon and put her feather bed inside it and lifted her in it and took her to the bedside of the other woman and she delivered her baby for her. I tell you she had many experiences in her years of doctoring and without the modern conveniences the doctors have today.

We had many good times though during all the building of the community. We had our Mutual and held debates and spelling bees. Every week or two we had our dances. Father planted twenty acres of peaches and in the fall of the year we would dry them and sell many thousands of pounds of the dried fruit to Abe Kuhn who shipped them to Montana. When we had our peach cuttings we often followed them by a molasses candy pull. Children often brought little buckets to father's molasses mill to get skimmings of the molasses to make candy.

There was a family of colored folks by the name of Able who went around from ward to ward and put on performances for the public. They were converts to the Mormon Church and I think there were the older couple and they had two or three daughters. I guess they traveled all around in Utah putting on minstrel shows.

At Christmas time we hung up our stockings and were tickled to get a few pieces of candy and a few nuts. On Christmas morning the children would get together and go from house to house and knock on the door and holler 'Christmas Gift, Christmas Gift,' and the people were supposed to give them a treat of some kind, either candy or a cookie. I have seen mother tear off a yard or so of calico from a bolt in the store and give to a little girl for an apron or a dress.

One year the grasshoppers were so bad they came in such swarms they darkened the sun and made it seem like evening outside. Father had two rows of beans that we tried so hard to save. Mother ran into the store and got a bolt of jeans cloth and she went ahead and unrolled it and my sister and I went along and covered the beans with it. When we went out the grasshoppers had eaten right through the cloth to get at the beans.

My uncle Paul Cardon told me how at one time he walked clear to Logan with a \$20 gold piece in his pocket with which he bought a bushel of wheat for seed. He carried the wheat on his back all the way home to Ogden.

On September 25, 1879, I was married to Myrtillo Shaw. We were married in Ogden by Lester J. Herrick and later went through the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. On September 25, 1879 we got a horse team and a wagon and moved to Franklin, Idaho. We moved onto a little farm there with a one room log house with a dirt roof. We moved back to Ogden about ten years after and have lived here ever since. We had seven children, five that are now living. These five are: David M. Shaw, Austin H. Shaw, Mrs. Nettie Hermine Drumiler, Mrs. Bertha Mary Lee, Mrs. Lillian Orilla Underwood, all of Ogden. I have 21 grandchildren.