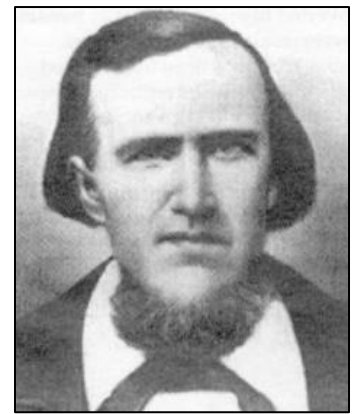




Jacob Hamblin

Born April 6, 1819 in Salem, Ohio to parents who were farmers, Jacob Hamblin learned farming in his youth. In the fall of 1839, he married Lucinda Taylor (They separated in February 1849). He joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in March 1842 after hearing the preaching of a few missionaries. Hamblin became a missionary himself almost immediately and soon moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, church headquarters at the time.



Hamblin became one of the first pioneers to cross the plains to Utah in 1847. He first settled in Tooele, a small ranching community west of Salt Lake City. He married Rachel Judd on September 30, 1849. In 1853, when Hamblin's gun would not fire during a skirmish with Native Americans, it inspired him to stop fighting the Indians, and instead to live among them and work with them. While in Tooele, Hamblin built an excellent relationship with the local Indians, learning to speak the Paiute and Ute languages. This led to his eventual call as a missionary to the Native Americans of Southern Utah in 1854.

Upon arrival in southwestern Utah, Hamblin helped build a fort in the small community of Santa Clara, located just upriver from St. George. This desolate area was difficult to settle because of its harsh desert environment, which included less than 10 inches of annual rainfall and summer temperatures that regularly climbed to 110° F. Early settlers also had to deal with floods, one of which washed away three of the Santa Clara fort's walls in 1862.

Hamblin and his family dismantled the remaining wall and used its materials to build a two-story adobe, sandstone and ponderosa pine home just down river from the former fort. Completed in 1863, the Jacob Hamblin home is one of the few pioneer-era homes still standing in the area. Early residents utilized its large upstairs room as a school and community center.

Hamblin held great stature in the community, serving as a father figure to many. Today, Hamblin's home in Santa Clara is open daily for tours conducted by Latter-Day Saint missionaries.

Just as he did in Tooele, Hamblin became a friend to the local Indians and help ease relations between them and Mormon settlers. He gained the Native Americans' trust and confidence. The Indians always honored their agreements with Hamblin. One of his most notable accomplishments in making peace with the Indians was the negotiation of the Treaty of Fort Defiance, New Mexico in November 1870. Hamblin also frequently visited Hopi villages in northern Arizona, which led to the reopening of "Crossing of the Fathers," a key passage on the Colorado River.

Jacob Hamblin married two other women, Sarah Priscilla Leavitt (September 1857) and Louisa Boneli (November 1865), and fathered 24 children, taking in several others through adoption. After passage of the Edmunds Act of 1882, which outlawed polygamy, Hamblin became a fugitive in the eyes of the U.S. government. He went into hiding to avoid capture, staying with families in Arizona, New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico to evade federal agents. Hamblin died in Pleasanton, New Mexico on August 31, 1886. He is buried in Alpine, Arizona.