

History of Elizabeth Lucina MECHAM (1836-1903)

Elizabeth Lucina Mecham was the third child and first daughter of Joshua Mecham and Lucina Harmon. She was born at Delaware, Mercer, Pennsylvania. Her brothers were Daniel Mecham and Lorenzo Dow Mecham. The brothers were born at Springfield, Erie, PA. There may have been other children whose names are not known at this time. Joshua and Lucina Mecham followed the Latter-day Saints from Springfield, Pennsylvania to Kirtland, Ohio in the early 1830s. They probably left Kirtland with the group called Kirtland Camp about 1838 and stayed over at Springfield, Illinois with the sick and inform. Joshua's parents (the Mechams) and several of Lucina's brothers (the Harmon's) also stopped at Springfield, Illinois to recover from illness and find work in order to earn money to join the Saints at a later date. Joshua was one of those who were sick and he passed away on 8 Mar 1840. Elizabeth Lucina was just four years old when her father died. The Harmon family was a very close-knit family as were the Mechams. They saw to it that Lucina and her children were able to travel to Nauvoo, Hancock, Illinois with them. They were in Nauvoo by 1842. In 1844, Elizabeth Lucina's mother married her father's uncle, Joseph Mecham. However, on 5 Oct 1845, Lucina died leaving her little daughter an orphan at the age of 9 years. Her step-father/uncle, Joseph Mecham, passed away in 1845 also. It is unknown who cared for this motherless little girl. Life was difficult for Elizabeth Lucina Mecham, as she was orphaned at the age of nine. She was married in polygamy at the age of 17--to a man nearly twice her age; and this marriage lasted less than two years. Her second marriage was also into a polygamous family at the age of 18 and this second husband was 24 years older than Elizabeth. Again, she was unhappy in this situation and divorced her husband. He took their child, a son, and moved to Ferron, UT. Elizabeth married a third time--again in polygamy.to a man 23 years her senior. Together they had four children--at a time when there was incredible persecution of the polygamous families. Probably to escape some of the persecution and to keep as much of his family together as possible, George moved to Arizona. Elizabeth divorced him and remained in Utah with relatives helping her with her young family. When she married again, it was to a younger man. There is much discrepancy as to the age of Levi Bectel. Some records say he was born in 1856, but census records show that it was between 1847 and 1836. So, he was either about 10 years younger or just a year younger than Elizabeth. Together, they had four children. About 12 years after Elizabeth and Levi's youngest child was born, Levi married Elizabeth's daughter, Hannah Gardner! Hannah was about 15 or 16 years old at the time of this marriage. This did not cause a rift in the family as Elizabeth continued living with them and is listed on the census records as Levi's mother-in-law.

DUP History excerpts: [DUP has a photo that accompanies this history -- see DUPinternational.org]
Elizabeth was born in Delaware, Mercer, Pennsylvania. She was the third child of Joshua Mecham and Lucina Harmon. She had two older brothers. Daniel Mecham was born abt 1823 in Erie County, PA; Lorenzo Dow Mecham was born 11 Dec 1827 in Springfield, Erie, PA. We know that both Lorenzo and Elizabeth were with their parents in Springfield, Illinois at the time of the death of their father, Joshua. He died 8 Mar 1840. The family is believed to have been members [of the Mormon Church] at this time, following their grandparents, Joshua and Permelia Chapman Mecham, who joined the church 10 Dec 1837. Lorenzo, Elizabeth, and Lucina moved on with the family to Montrose, Iowa. It was while in Iowa

that Lucina died 5 Oct 1845. This left 18 year old Lorenzo in charge of his 9-year old sister. Several of Elizabeth's mother's family had moved to Nauvoo. Her father's family, and sons went to Nauvoo also. They were to act as body guards to the prophet Joseph Smith at various times. Two of the Uncles were sent as missionaries to the Indians. Their names were Moses and Lewis. [After leaving Nauvoo,] they arrived in Utah and Lorenzo was sent to settle in Tooele. Elizabeth may have lived with some of the Harmon side of the family who settled in St. George. She married William Ford on 20 Mar 1853. She was later divorced. Her second marriage was to Lyman Stevens took place in Salt Lake City, Utah on 21 Jan 1855. One child, Nathan Henry Stevens was born to this couple. Elizabeth divorced Lyman and he took his son and moved to Ferron, Utah. Elizabeth married a third time to George Bryant Gardner and had four children. Sometime after 1868, Elizabeth divorced again and had the care of three small children. Two of the boys, Albert and George were sent to St. George with the Harmon side of the family. The boys would herd cows during the day for their grandparents. The sand would be so hot because they had no shoes they would run from brush to brush to shade their feet before they blistered. Elizabeth married Levi Bectell and had four children. Levi worked on a ranch in Skull valley; sometimes they lived in Grouse Creek and sometimes in Grantsville and moved sheep back and forth from Grantsville and Canada. After 15 years, Elizabeth divorced Levi. Levi married Elizabeth's daughter, Hannah, in polygamy. Hannah cared for her mother until her death. She died on 17 Nov 1903 in Grantsville and is buried in the Grantsville Cemetery. Hannah wrote the following poem at the time of her mother's death: In loving remembrance of Elizabeth L. Mecham; Born 27 Feb 1836 ; Died 17 Nov 1903 Aged 67 years, 8 months, 20 days Farewell, dear mother, sweet thy rest, Weary with years and worn with pain Farewell, till in some happy place We shall behold thy face again. Tis ours to miss thee, all our years, And tender memories of thee keep, Thine in the Lord to rest, for so, He giveth his beloved sleep.