

Castos and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons)

William W. Casto (1816-1894) [*son of Abel Casto & Mary Galland, son of Azariah Casto and Hannah Golden, son of William Casto and Perthenia Purple*]. At age 16, he was sent by his father to Illinois to purchase a farm. In Illinois, he met members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. On January 22, 1839, he was baptized into the Church at Commerce, Illinois, by Joseph Rose. He is believed to have been the first person baptized in Commerce.

When Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were incarcerated in Carthage Jail, William was one of twenty-five men who volunteered to rescue them from prison. On September 27, 1845, he was given his patriarchal blessing. He was endowed February 7, 1846, in the Nauvoo temple. He fled from Nauvoo to avoid an unjust writ and barely escaped with his life. He was forced to sell his house and lot worth \$500 for \$25. He never received a cent for the valuable 10 acre lot he owned a short distance east of Nauvoo. William was in Council Bluffs, Iowa when the call was made to raise the Mormon Battalion. He and his brother James B. Casto enlisted on July 16, 1846. At the time of his enlistment William was 5'11" having black hair and black eyes. He was a gardener and a farmer by trade. He marched with the battalion to Santa Fe, where he was detached with the sick to winter at Fort Pueblo. In the spring of 1847, William started for the Salt Lake Valley. He was one of twelve battalion men who discovered Brigham Young's Company at Green River. He entered the valley as one of Orson Pratt's advance company. Shortly after his arrival, he returned to Council Bluffs and found his family well. He journeyed to Salt Lake Valley the following year, arriving on November 16, 1848. He ventured east once more in 1849, and in 1851 he brought his family west with him. William and his family settled in Herriman, Salt Lake, Utah, until he was called on a mission to the Muddy River in Nevada. The family later removed to Holladay, Salt Lake County, where he was among the first to have a beautiful flower garden. He specialized in a flowering vine called Guarana, whose nectar was used as nerve medicine. He also introduced old-fashioned peonies to Holladay.

William served as one of the presidents of the Sixty-first Quorum of the Seventy until his health disabled him. By age 77, he was unable to perform manual labor because of 'dumb palsy', partial deafness, and being blind. His financial position deteriorated due to his physical infirmities. He lived on the \$8 per month pension he received from his military pension fund. At age 78, William owned 3 acres in Big Cottonwood and a four-room, one story frame house valued at \$500. By 1894, he owed \$300 at 7% interest on this home. His estimated income each year was \$31, not including his pension fund.

From the notes of Ina Tuft

Sources listed: S.Black & L.Porter, BYU, Biographies, Mormon Battalion; Jenson, LDS BIO 4:738; Nauvoo Temple Register; Pension file; Carter, 2:484; Jenson 4:738; Carter, Our 3:3