

## Isaac and David Fordonski

Isaac Fordonski was born about 1844 in Poland.<sup>1</sup> He immigrated to American and married Mary Jane<sup>2</sup> about 1882 in Utah Territory. They had two daughters.<sup>3</sup> Isaac moved to Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory, by 1879, when he was on the fire committee, probably after his Exchange Saloon on Main Street burned down.<sup>4</sup>

On the 1880 census, Isaac was a saloon keeper in Silver Reef.<sup>5</sup> His wife lived in Springville, Utah, Utah Territory, where their daughter Rosa died in December 1880.<sup>6</sup> Adolphus Whitehead recorded in his journal that he wrote to Isaac and others and offered to pay their taxes at a discount of 10% for cash. Isaac must have agreed, because Whitehead sent him a receipt a month later.<sup>7</sup>

By 1884, Isaac had moved to Springville, Utah, Utah Territory, where he owned a saloon and billiard hall.<sup>8</sup> In 1888, Mary Jane is listed with the saloon business,<sup>9</sup> perhaps because Isaac was repeatedly brought to court for selling liquor without a license. Each time he appealed and then paid the \$75 fine, stating that it was more profitable than an expensive liquor license.<sup>10</sup> He was also charged for selling liquor to a minor.<sup>11</sup>

Mary Jane died of pneumonia at the Cullen Hotel in Salt Lake City in October 1888. She was buried in the Mount Olivet Cemetery in Salt Lake City.<sup>12</sup> Isaac discontinued his saloon business until the next term of court.<sup>13</sup> He served as guardian to their eight-year old daughter Lydia, selling real estate, furniture, and two billiard tables to provide her room and board at St Mary's Academy in Salt Lake City.<sup>14</sup> Isaac petitioned the court and they approved a change in Lydia's name, to Mary Jane (presumably in honor of her mother).<sup>15</sup>

Isaac was involved in several court cases in Provo<sup>16</sup>, then sold his saloon business and agreed to accept a position in the Salvation Army as a corporal, to commence when Utah became a state.<sup>17</sup> He was a mason and involved in the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons lodge.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> Utah, Wills and Probate Records, 1800-1985.

<sup>3</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 April 1896, p. 7; *Familysearch.org*

<sup>4</sup> *Silver Reef Miner*, 1 October 1879.

<sup>5</sup> United States Census, 1880.

<sup>6</sup> Utah County Utah Cemetery Index; Utah Cemetery Inventory, 1847-2000.

<sup>7</sup> Adolphus Renne Whitehead Journal, 1878-1881.

<sup>8</sup> Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming and Arizona Gazetteer, 1884, pp. 464, 634.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995.

<sup>10</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 11 February 1888; p. 6; 15 February 1888, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 9 February 1888, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 April 1896, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 8 December 1888, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Utah, Wills and Probate Records, 1800-1985.

<sup>15</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 17 February 1891, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 21 March 1889, p. 8; 18 April 1889, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 27 January 1889, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1 December 1890, p. 8; *Salt Lake Herald*, 30 April 1896, p. 7.

In 1890, Isaac suffered a long attack of bronchitis in Springville, so he spent some time in the sunshine in Salt Lake City.<sup>19</sup> He owned a pedigreed Holstein cow named Rosalia Kay in Springville.<sup>20</sup> In 1891, he purchased a half-interest in the Garden City bathing resort held by the late John M Drake.<sup>21</sup> The failing company was incorporated into the Provo Lake Resort. Isaac owned 450 shares of stock and was the superintendent of the resort. The Provo Street railroad went right to the resort, and it was open summer and winter for bathing, boating, skating, dancing, shooting and other activities. It was scheduled to open in May 1891.<sup>22</sup>

Electric lighting complemented the 100 bathhouses, ice house with 500 tons of ice, saloons, a restaurant, boat piers, bandstand, and pavilion. The West End Rifle Club and the Provo Boat Club met there and used the facilities.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, a drought lowered the water level and the resort ceased operations in the early 1900s.<sup>24</sup>

In August 1891, Isaac resigned as superintendent due to poor health.<sup>25</sup> He was granted a liquor license in 1892<sup>26</sup>, but his consumptive illness soon required him to spend a winter in Moab, Utah Territory. He returned in 1894 much improved, but only weighed 102 pounds.<sup>27</sup> At the end, he could barely sit up. He died 28 April 1896 in Springville, Utah, Utah.<sup>28</sup> His funeral was held at the masonic hall, and he was buried next to his wife in the Mount Olivet Cemetery.<sup>29</sup>

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David Fordonski was born about 1853 in Poland and was the brother of Isaac. He immigrated to America; he never married. David was a barber, living in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory<sup>30</sup> in 1880. By 1883, he was a "tonsorial artist" (barber), living in Frisco, Beaver, Utah.<sup>31</sup> His testimonial letter about the effects of *Salvator Magnus* on his consumption was published repeatedly in the *Salt Lake Herald* newspaper in 1889. *Salvator Magnus* was a lung and throat remedy from a Canadian company that was often suggested by druggists.<sup>32</sup>

By 1894, David was fatally ill with lung troubles in Springville.<sup>33</sup> He died 12 October 1894 in Springville and was buried in Salt Lake City.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 19 September 1890, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Holstein-Friesian Herd-Book, 1891, p. 459.

<sup>21</sup> *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 21 January 1891, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 6 May 1891, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 6 May 1891, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Register of the Records of the Provo Lake Resort Company, 1890-1900; *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 18 March 1891, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 5 August 1891, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 May 1892, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> *The Evening Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 20 April 1894, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*; *Provo Daily Enquirer*, 29 April 1896, p. 4; Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946; Utah Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849-1949.

<sup>29</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 April 1896, p. 8; *Salt Lake Herald*, 30 April 1896, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> United States Census, 1880.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995, 1883-4, p. 248.

<sup>32</sup> *Salt Lake Herald*, 25 December 1889, p. 46; 5 January 1890, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 September 1894, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Salt Lake County Utah Death Records, 1908-1949; Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946.

**EXCHANGE SALOON,**  
MAIN STREET.

—The best of—  
Wines, Liquors and Cigars.

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**SUMMER DRINKS**  
MILK PUNCH SHERRY COBBLER  
Egg Lemonade, Claret Punch, Etc.  
All kinds of Fancy Drinks.

—  
**First Class Lunch Stand.**  
BILLIARD TABLE  
Private Club Rooms,  
BVL, ETC.  
**Open Day and Night.**  
I. FORDONSKI.

(Image from the Silver Reef Miner, 1 October 1879)



Signature of Isaac Fordonski in his wife's probate papers (image from *Ancestry.com*)

**Provo Lake Resort!**

Opened for the Season.

Every accommodation necessary for

BATHING,  
BOATING, FISHING,  
DANCING, ETC.

Refreshments on the Grounds.

One hundred nicely furnished bath-rooms. Grounds lighted by electricity. Ample bowery.

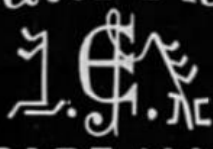
Transportation to and from the Lake every hour from the Bank corner. A pleasant ride of fifteen minutes.

Arrangements can be made for the entertainment of Excursion Parties by addressing

IKE FORDONSKI, Supt.

(Image from *The Dispatch* [Provo, Utah], 15 July 1891, p. 4)

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**Salvator Magnus**  
  
**TRADE MARK.**

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Respectfully yours,  
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(Image from the *Salt Lake Herald*, 5 January 1890, p. 46)