

Scipio Africanus Kenner

Scipio Africanus Kenner was born 14 May 1846 in Saint Francisville, Clark, Missouri. He was the oldest of four children of Foster Ray Kenner and Sarah Catherine Kirkwood. He was named after the Roman general who defeated Hannibal in the Second Punic War¹ (he had no negro blood in his heritage).

His mother died when he was nine years old. His father remarried and lost his wife within two years (probably to childbirth). His father was intent on raising a regiment for the Confederate Army, but was dissuaded from this purpose by the pleadings of his mother a devout and zealous Mormon.² He moved to Keokuk, Iowa, where he was station agent.³ The little family of father and four children immigrated in 1860, departing from Florence, Nebraska 30 May 1860. They traveled with the Warren Walling Company and arrived 9 August 1860.⁴ Scipio's father remarried again and had six more children.⁵

He engaged as an apprentice in the Deseret News office at the rate of \$16 a month. Three years later he was a full-fledged printer.⁶ He worked in most of the other positions in the editorial and mechanical departments there.⁷ In 1863, twelve families built homes in a new town site in Millard County. During an annual visit of President Young and company, the question of a town name came up. Mr Carman suggested the name of "Scipio" from a member of the party standing near the town square. President Young said, Yes, Scipio, we will name it after you."⁸

Scipio fought with the men to defend Salt Lake City from Johnson's Army in 1863. He was armed with an old 1812 Jaeger rifle. The prearranged signal was the raising of a white flag over the Deseret News building. All work ceased on the temple block and all flocked within the stone walls surrounding the President Young and Heber C Kimball houses, the Tithing Office and the Deseret News office. Scaffolding had been erected inside the south wall and was filled with armed men and boys.⁹

In 1865, Scipio joined the Mormon Church. He enlisted in the First Utah Militia Cavalry and served in Edward Dalton's Company A during the Utah Indian Wars.¹⁰ He learned telegraphy¹¹ and in 1866 he became the telegraph operator in Beaver, Beaver, Utah Territory.¹² He was one of the first to acquire the art¹³ and was present for the first telegraph message in Utah: "At the first transmission from Utah Brigham sent a message to the Pacific telegraph company, which concluded with the assuring words that Utah had not seceded but was firm for the Constitution and laws of the land, adding that the Territory was warmly interested in such enterprises as the one then completed." The next message was sent to President Abraham Lincoln, which received a reply: "the completion of the telegraph is

¹ *Wikipedia*: Scipio Africanus.

² History of Utah, by Orson F Whitney, Vol 4.

³ History of Foster Kenner, by Lenora Evershad, *Familysearch.org*

⁴ Utah Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database, 1847-1868.

⁵ *Familysearch.org*

⁶ Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 631.

⁷ *Deseret News*, 17 March, 1913.

⁸ Millard Milestones: A Century of History of Millard County, 1851-1951, p. 388.

⁹ Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 84.

¹⁰ US Index to Indian Wars Pension Files, 1892-1926; US Civil War and Later Pension Index, 1861-1917.

¹¹ *Deseret News*, 15 June 1950.

¹² Our Pioneer Heritage, compiled by Kate B. Carter, 1959.

¹³ *Deseret News*, 15 March, 1913; 17 March, 1913.

auspicious of the stability and union of the Republic. The Government reciprocates your congratulations. Abraham Lincoln".¹⁴

He resigned as telegraph operator in Beaver in 1868 and headed south to Dixie, where he had an aunt and uncle living.¹⁵ He worked as the printer of *Our Dixie Times*¹⁶ but "deserted" them two months later.¹⁷ He also printed the *Mineral Cactus*, one of the three newspapers in St George, Utah.¹⁸ He was nominated for the Utah legislature as a Democrat, but was defeated.¹⁹ He was one of the organizers for Salt Lake Typographical Union No 115 and a member most of his life.²⁰

Along the way, he played on the theatrical stage, hauled wood, herded sheep, drove stock, handled teams, conducted a gymnasium, prospected the mountains, worked at mining, and "started and stopped several papers and worked on many more."²¹ He resembled Mark in personage, both were born in Missouri, and as a humorist. wrote several books.²²

On the 1870 census, he was a printer, living in home of his grandparents in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory.²³ He was part of the trio that established the *Daily Herald* newspaper as competition to the *Deseret News*. Scipio was the mechanical department.²⁴ Later that year, he married Isabella Gray Park in 1870 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah Territory. They had twelve children.²⁵ They moved to Pioche, Nevada, in 1872, where Scipio was in charge of the telegraph office.²⁶ He was named by the Democrats for the Nevada legislature but had to withdraw because he had not met the residence requirement.²⁷ In 1873, he bought an interest in and managed the *Beaver Enterprise* newspaper with Joseph Field.²⁸

In 1877, Scipio was admitted to the bar of the Utah Supreme Court. He was an attorney and counselor at law, as well as the editor of a newspaper at Leeds, Utah.²⁹ The family moved to Ogden, Weber, Utah Territory, where he served as the editor of the *Ogden Junction*³⁰ and *Ogden Standard* newspapers.³¹ On the 1880 census, he was a social editor, living with his wife and five children in Ogden.³² In 1882, he was admitted to the bar of the Second District and moved south³³, where he

¹⁴ Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 213.

¹⁵ S A Kenner Writings: Personal Story of Indian Episode, *Familysearch.org*

¹⁶ *Our Dixie Times*, 12 February 1868.

¹⁷ *Our Dixie Times*, 15 April 1868.

¹⁸ Southern Utah Memories: Newspapers of Washington County, Utah, 1864-1994.

¹⁹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 January 1897, p. 18.

²⁰ *Salt Lake Herald*, 28 April 1895, p. 29.

²¹ Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 632.

²² *Deseret News*, 15 June 1950.

²³ United States census, 1870.

²⁴ Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 156.

²⁵ *Familysearch.org*

²⁶ *Ogden Junction*, 20 March 1872; Our Pioneer Heritage, compiled by Kate B. Carter, 1959.

²⁷ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 January 1897, p. 18.

²⁸ Our Pioneer Heritage, compiled by Kate B. Carter, 1959, p. 48; *Deseret News*, 29 June 1875; Utah As It Is, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904.

²⁹ *Provo Enquirer*, 17 March 1877.

³⁰ Utah Gazetteer, 1879-1880; *Salt Lake Herald*, 2 May 1880, p. 3.

³¹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 16 March 1913, p. 29.

³² United States Census, 1880.

³³ *Deseret News*, 22 September 1882.

was the editor of the *Silver Reef Miner* for two years.³⁴ He was a family friend and former employee of Joseph Ellis Johnson, which is probably how he came to be involved with the *Miner*.³⁵

In 1888, a Democratic Territorial convention was held in Ogden to elect two delegates to the national convention at St Louis. Only a few Mormon delegates were elected, and Scipio was one of them, representing Salt Lake and Sanpete Counties.³⁶ By 1890, Scipio and his family were living in Logan, Cache, Utah Territory.³⁷ He was engaged in prospecting and mining³⁸, but also served as a Salt Lake City attorney, a county attorney, and assistant US attorney.³⁹ He wrote several books⁴⁰, including *The Practical Politician* (1892) and *Utah As It Is* (1904)

Scipio's famous "Great Campaign" in 1895 was issued as the "only exclusively political publication in the State" for ten weeks in Salt Lake City, bringing in \$3,000. He was the editor, proprietor, manager, director, publisher, supervisor, architect and everything else. The paper presented portraits and sketches of the candidates for office.⁴¹ He was a representative in the legislature for Salt Lake County in 1896-1897⁴² and very involved with politics and the Democratic Party.⁴³

In 1900, he was an editor, living with his wife and seven children in Salt Lake City Ward 2, Salt Lake, Utah.⁴⁴ These were the heydays of his writing essays and public speaking.⁴⁵ He often wrote under the pseudonym Essay Caigh (pronounced "calf").⁴⁶ In 1897, he was a representative for the Eighth District of the Second Legislature.⁴⁷ On the 1910 census, he was a lawyer, living with his wife and two children in Salt Lake City Ward 1, Salt Lake, Utah.⁴⁸

In poor health for several months, he was seriously ill from cancer of the stomach for two weeks before his death.⁴⁹ He died 15 March 1913 in Salt Lake City and was buried there.⁵⁰ After his death, Isabella lived with her son and daughter in Salt Lake City.⁵¹ She died 1932 in Salt Lake City and was buried there.⁵²

³⁴ *Deseret News*, 27 June 1882; Southern Utah Memories: Newspapers of Washington County, Utah, 1864-1994.

³⁵ Joseph Ellis Johnson, Pioneer, p. 308.

³⁶ *Utah As It Is*, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 144.

³⁷ *Salt Lake Herald*, 25 February 1890, p. 5; 26 April 1890, p. 3.

³⁸ *Salt Lake Herald*, 31 October 1893, p. 8.

³⁹ History of Utah, by Orson F Whitney, Vol 4.).

⁴⁰ *Deseret News*, 15 June 1950.

⁴¹ *Utah As It Is*, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 165.

⁴² *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 October 1896, p. 1; 14 January 1897, p. 8.

⁴³ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 October 1898, p. 1.

⁴⁴ United States Census, 1900.

⁴⁵ *Utah As It Is*, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 632.

⁴⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 October 1907, p. 7.

⁴⁷ *Utah As It Is*, by Scipio Africanus Kenner, 1904, p. 110.

⁴⁸ United States Census, 1910.

⁴⁹ *Salt Lake Herald*, 16 March 1913, p. 29.

⁵⁰ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964; Utah Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849-1949; Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946.

⁵¹ United States Census, 1920, 1930.

⁵² Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964; Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946; Utah Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849-1949.



Scipio A. Kenner about 20



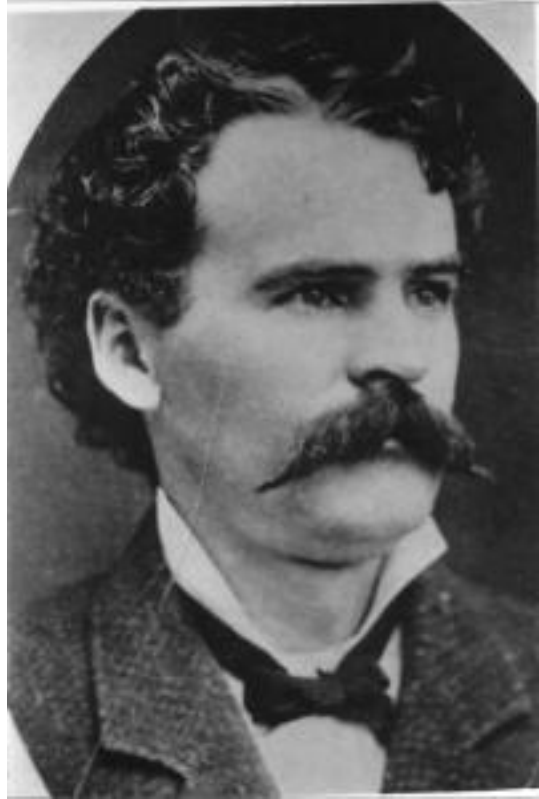
(Images from *Familysearch.org*)



Jaeger rifle like the one Scipio used against Johnson's Army (image from *ambroseantiques.com*)

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—
Practices in all the Courts of the Territory.
—
"Miner" office, Silver Reef.

(Image from the *Silver Reef Miner*, 9 September 1882)



(Images from *Familysearch.org*)



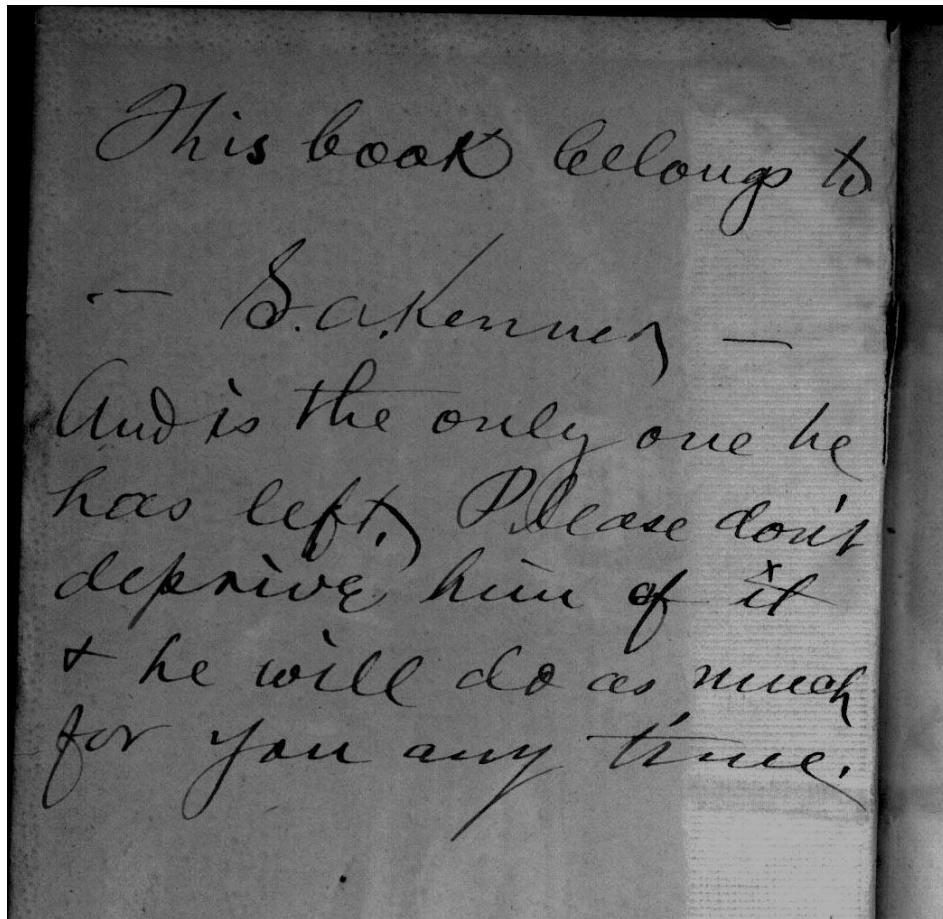
Scipio Africanus Kenner
(image from *Findagrave.com*)



(Home of Scipio A Kenner, 1910 (Scipio is on left; image from *Familysearch.org*)



Home of Scipio and Isabella Kenner in Salt Lake City (image from *Familysearch.org*)



Handwritten inscription in his book "The Practical Politician"
(image from Familysearch.org)



(Image from Findagrave.com)