

William Leatham

William Leatham was born 31 January 1844 in Garthamlock, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was the tenth of twelve children on Robert Letham and Janet Urquhart. Each child was required to help with the chores, to obtain a good education and to learn a trade. William probably attended the Ruchazie School with schoolmaster William Whyte. It was one of the best schools of the nineteenth century in Lanarkshire. He and his brothers played the fiddle and harmonica as well as danced. They loved dogs and had many a prize English bull dog.¹ William eventually worked as a manager of a colliery (a coal mine and associated buildings and equipment.)²

William's oldest brother, Robert, was the first in the family to be baptized into the Mormon Church in 1843. Six brothers and one sister immigrated to America and crossed the plains to the Great Salt Lake Valley during the 1860s and 1870s.³ William was baptized in 1861 and immigrated in July 1871.⁴ He first lived in Wellsville, Cache, Utah Territory (where his brother Robert was living). He married Margaret Buchanan, another Scottish immigrant, in Salt Lake City in 1871. Together they had thirteen children.⁵ In 1878, the little family moved to Leeds, Washington, Utah Territory.⁶

On the 1880 census, William was a blacksmith, living with his wife Margaret and three children in Wellsville, Cache, Utah Territory.⁷ By 1881, they were back to living in Washington County, where William was a blacksmith for the Stormont Mining Company.⁸ Interestingly, daughter Agnes was born at "Stormont" in 1884, most likely meaning the town of Silver Reef. In 1885, William took a second wife in polygamy, Martha Ann Salisbury. They were married in Logan, Cache, Utah Territory (she was from Wellsville and maybe William met her while visiting family?). They had eight children together.⁹

In 1886, William was called as a counselor to Bishop Brigham Y McMullin in the Leeds Ward. At some point in time, the family lived in the stone house originally built by Alma Angell.¹⁰ After the Stormont Mine & Mill burned down, William operated a store in Leeds for Orson Adams. That store burned down in 1893. Adams rebuilt at the extreme south end of town, but this is when William returned to Salt Lake City and made a home in the Sixteenth Ward.¹¹ Three years later, his wife Margaret died giving birth to their twelfth child; the baby also died, and they were buried in the same casket in the Salt Lake City Cemetery.¹² At the time of her death, Margaret still owned a house and lot in Leeds which William sold for \$700.¹³

William's oldest daughter Margaret then took the six youngest children into her own home with her husband and baby son.¹⁴ William was working in Ophir, Tooele, Utah, but he rented a house each year so the children to spend the summers with him. His daughter Lillie wrote, "How we did enjoy

¹ The Letham or Leatham Family Book of Remembrance: The Story of Robert Letham and his wife Janet Urquhart with Historical- Genealogical and Biographical Data on Their Ancestry and Descendants, by Louis Leatham, 1955, pp. 729–736 [hereafter listed as the Letham Family Book of Remembrance].

² *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 19 December 1929, p. 5.

³ Mormon Overland Trail Records.

⁴ United States Census, 1900; *Familysearch.org*

⁵ *Familysearch.org*

⁶ The Letham Family Book of Remembrance, by Louis Leatham, 1955, p. 9.

⁷ United States Census, 1880.

⁸ *Saga of Three Towns*, by Marietta M. Mariger, 1951, p. 25.

⁹ *Familysearch.org*

¹⁰ *Saga of Three Towns*, by Marietta M. Mariger, 1951, pp. 22-25.

¹¹ The Letham Family Book of Remembrance, by Louis Leatham, 1955, pp. 863-866.

¹² Utah Death Registers, 1847-1966; Salt Lake City Death Records, 1908-1949; Utah Cemetery Inventory.

¹³ *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, 5 October 1909, p. 11; 12 November 1909, p. 13.

¹⁴ United States Census, 1900.

those vacations in the hills of the mining town of Ophir".¹⁵ William served as master mechanic of mines in Ophir, Mercur, Lion Hill (also in Ophir), and at Sunshine (now a ghost town in Tooele County).¹⁶

On the 1880 census, the family is split apart. Daughter Margaret had the six younger children with her family in Salt Lake City; William (a blacksmith) had three of the children with him in Ophir, and wife Martha had four children with her in Salt Lake City.¹⁷ In 1903, William is recommended by the committee on school buildings and grounds to be a school janitor. He begins working at the Fremont School with a salary of \$65 per month.¹⁸

By 1910, William and Martha and seven children are living together in Salt Lake.¹⁹ Lillie, the youngest, is taken in and raised by her maternal aunt.²⁰ Serving as custodian for several schools over the next several decades²¹, William also consulted with several mining ventures.²² They are living in a one-and-one-half story, ten-room, brick home with porches at 71 North Seventh West Street in Salt Lake City.²³ William, who is now a night watchman for the board of education, is struck by a car driven by Hugo Ebmeyer. The driver did not see the aged man until he couldn't avoid the accident; the automobile stopped with one wheel resting on William's body. He died from complications of a dislocated hip and other injuries the next day, 18 December 1929, in Salt Lake City. He was buried in the city cemetery.²⁴

Margaret and her son lived in Salt Lake City²⁵ until her death in 1938. She was also buried in the city cemetery.²⁶

¹⁵ The Leatham Family Book of Remembrance, by Louis Leatham, 1955, pp. 863-866.

¹⁶ *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 19 December 1929, p. 5.

¹⁷ United States Census, 1900.

¹⁸ *Salt Lake Telegram*, 2 September 1903, p. 8; 11 July 1906, p. 4.

¹⁹ United States Census, 1910.

²⁰ The Leatham Family Book of Remembrance, by Louis Leatham, 1955, pp. 863-866.

²¹ United States Census, 1920.

²² *Salt Lake Tribune*, 19 June 1904, p. 22.

²³ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 31 December 1899, p. 9.

²⁴ *Salt Lake Telegram*, 19 December 1929, p. 2; Daily Herald, 22 December 1929, p. 15; Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964; Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946; Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849-1949.

²⁵ United States Census, 1930.

²⁶ Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849-1949; Utah Death and Burials, 1888-1946.



William Leatham home at Stormont, about 1895²⁷
(Image from *Saga of Three Towns*, by Marietta M. Mariger, 1951, p. 116)

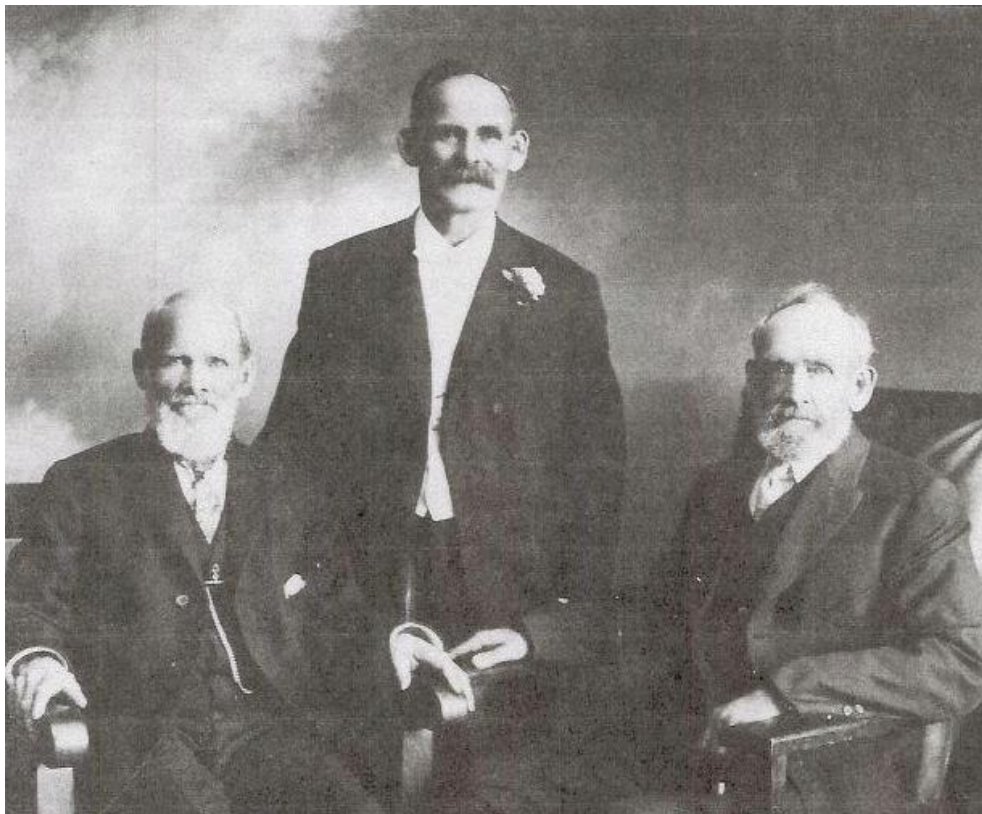


Angell/Sullivan home in Leeds where the Leathams lived
(image from *Leeds Historical Events in Bits & Pieces*, by Wilma Cox Beal, 1996, p. 49)

²⁷ Kami Dixon, great great granddaughter.



Standing from left: William Leatham, Martha Ann Salisbury Leatham (2nd wife), William Leatham Jr.
Seated from left: Margaret Buchanan Leatham (1st wife), Lillian Leatham, Elizabeth Hoskins
Salisbury (mother-in-law), Walter Thatcher Leatham, Hyrum Hoskin Salisbury
(brother-in-law). (Image from Silver Reef Museum)



Alexander, William and John Leatham (Image from The Letham Family
Book of Remembrance, by Louis Leatham, 1955, p. 8)



(Image from *Billiongraves.com*)

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