

The Deseret News of Nov. 22, 1868, reported;

"The Old Tabernacle, where meetings are at present held, has been altered a little, since yesterday week, by the windows at the north end, back of the stand, being built up, and the south door on the east side being enlarged with a glass top to it, a large window having been put in the west side opposite to it. This improvement will add considerable to the comfort of those who occupy the stand and the north end of the building during the winter months."

But in spite of the improvements, a large meeting place to serve in all types of weather was clearly needed.

THE GREAT TABERNACLE

Brigham Young desired a building with unobstructed space. It was his intention to present the matter of constructing such a building for the vote of the people, but weather prevented a public meeting, and apparently it was taken to the people through the bishops. The structure was to be erected by donation in order to continue other public works; most of the tithing money was needed for the Temple. The Saints were to be invited to donate liberally of their substance. Jewelry, building materials, bread and labor, inasmuch as cash was scarce.

Superintendent of Public Works, Daniel H. Wells, was chosen to announce that the Old Tabernacle and Bowery were to be replaced by a new tabernacle. His remarks, spoken in the Bowery April 6, 1863, are quoted from Vol. 10, Journal of Discourses:

Right here we want to build a tabernacle to accommodate the Saints at our general conference and religious worship, that will comfortably seat some ten thousand people; and over there we want to build a temple. These two items I wish to call your attention to today....

We will build a new tabernacle of sufficient dimensions to accommodate the people much better than they can be at present, and the time is not far distant when we may commence to administer for our dead. But the duties of today, and all the work and labor we are called upon to perform is preparatory to something else; if we perform this work faithfully it will tell in its place in the due season and time of the Lord. Then let us be faithful and never neglect the opportunity of doing good when presented to us, be it ever so small in our estimation. There is nothing so small but what is necessary when we are told to do it by those who preside over us. Small

things reach to great tilings. We cannot baptize for the dead without a font, and we cannot get the stone to build it of without going to the stone quarries to get it. It looks a small thing to quarry rock and to pick up the pebbles and cobble rock and to take the spade and go and labor a single day's work, but those small matters form together a grand whole in bringing to pass the great purposes we are anticipating will come to pass in the Lord's due time. Then let us listen to, and respond to the calls made upon us by our Bishops, by our Presidents, by those who are appointed to direct and govern and control and shape our labor. It is the business of this people to build up this kingdom in any channel and direction in which they are called to labor. Let us abide these teachings and calls, for in this we can attain an exaltation in the presence of our Father in heaven. Let us seek to be exalted therein and enjoy eternal lives in the mansions of the blessed.

I wish to say a word in regard to the teamsters. Send men to drive the teams and not boys; men who will have some interest in the work they are sent to do; men who will not sell the grain sent to feed the teams to buy whiskey with; men who will not take their teams to haul wood instead of rock for the Temple. Let the teamsters be fitted out with at least one spare shirt that they may not be placed under the necessity of wearing one shirt five or six weeks, and then leave the work to go home if they are not supplied with more; this same remark will apply to shoes also. Either send men who do not use tobacco, or send them with a supply, that they may not come to me and tell me they will have to leave the work if they are not supplied with tobacco. Some of the Bishops sent word if I would find the men from the Wards some tobacco, they would pay for it, which they have not done, and you may expect that in the future we shall not find them this article. We expect these things to be found for them and men sent who will take care of their teams and wagons. It is a heavy tax upon us to repair unavoidable breakages; this we expect to do. We have a pretty good road to the rock, and if men will be careful in the management of their teams they need not break wagons as much as they have

A great mass of the people do not do any labor of this kind. Let the Bishops in each Ward look to it and find out who in their Wards do not pay labor tithing in sending teams to the States. We want the common labor on the block, this season, to excavate, to attend masons and do a variety of work that is necessary to be

accomplished for the building of our contemplated Tabernacle. Let there be an organization of the people in order to bring a portion of that labor on this block.

The labor tithing of mechanics cannot be settled by sending a person to work at a dollar and a-half a day if the Bishop understands his business. All our tradesmen make more than a dollar and a-half a day; they should pay what their tenth day's labor is worth. The shoemakers can furnish boots and shoes, which can be used to a good advantage. If there is an objection raised to paying the material on labor tithing, it can be credited on their property tithing. We would not wish our tradesmen to leave their shops to work out their labor tithing in common labor with the shovel, the pick, &c., for they would not earn as much as a common laborer would who daily follows this kind of labor. We want them to pay their tithing in the kind of labor they are constantly employed at, and the products of this we can place to an excellent use. Common labor is more plentiful than mechanical labor.

Elder Orson Hyde in the Bowery, Tuesday, April 7, 1863;

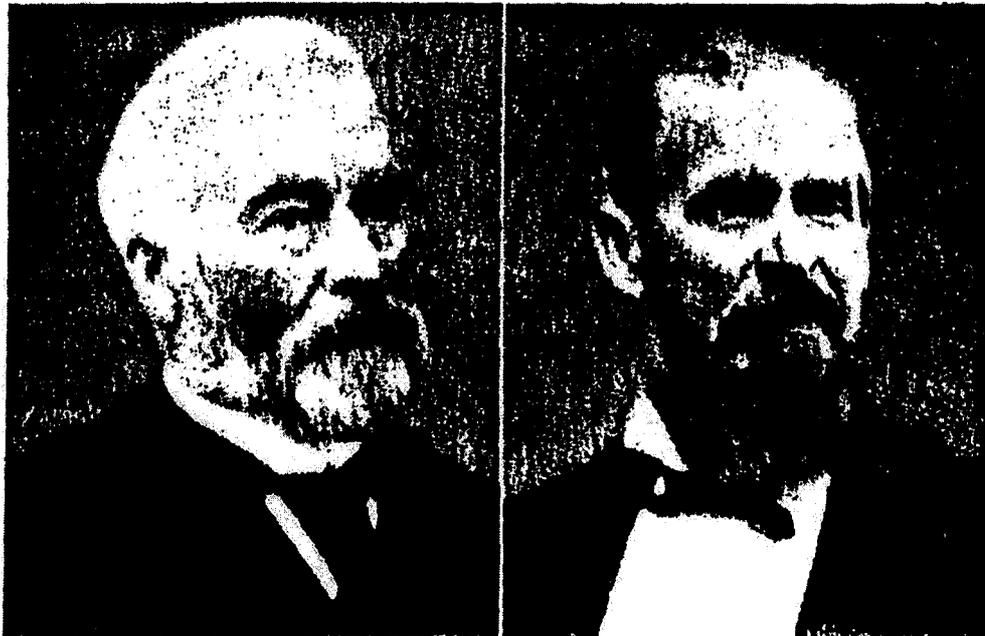
. . . Now here is a tabernacle to be built, and what argument shall I need to urge in its favor. Here are today I do not know how many thousands of people exposed to the wind and dust under this Bowery, and at this early season of the year we are very liable to have rain or snow. Not only so, but the winter, although only just passed, may be said to be again approaching, and in that season of the year we have representatives coming from all parts of the Territory to legislate for the good of the community, and to have their feelings cemented together by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be instructed themselves in the important duties of their callings, then to return to their several and respective localities, and labor to edify the Saints and to keep them posted up with regard to the things required of them.

It is important that we have a comfortable place to meet in, and I hope the brethren will bear in mind the necessity there is for having this building erected. Now, here with us, there is everything to be considered that is requisite to make life comfortable

Brethren and Sisters, let us build a Temple, let us build a Tabernacle and then we shall feel as comfortable as I anticipated we should when I heard George A. Smith speaking of it

Charles C. Rich, April 7, 1863:

. . . What shall I say in regard to the Tabernacle? We can see at once that we can enjoy the blessings of such a house at the present time. If we put it off, when will it be built? When that house is built we can then enjoy the blessings and benefits which it will afford. The same principle may be applied to everything we take in hand, and with which we have to do, whether it be to build a Temple, build a tabernacle, to send teams to the frontiers to gather the poor, or to do any other work that is required of us. Nothing that is required will be performed until we go to work and do something ourselves. We have no other people to lean upon, therefore it remains for us to go to work and perform well our part....



William H. Folsom

Henry Grow

FOLSOM AND GROW

Although through the years some dissension has existed as to which individual played the greater part in bringing into existence the magnificent Tabernacle on Temple Square, conscientious examination of the great mass of available information has led us to believe that four men should share equally in the laurels; Brigham Young for his foresight in realizing the need for such a building, and his genius in planning it; William H. Folsom for his masterful handling of the exterior; Henry Grow who directed the building of the unique and distinguished roof;

and Truman. O. Angell, who with great finesse completed the interior.

No architectural drawings are in existence today, so just what detailed plans were drawn is not known, nor is it known how the unique shape of the building was decided upon. Hand-me-down stories tell of several ideas that were supposed to have influenced the design, such as: the shell of Brigham Young's breakfast egg impressed him with its strength; the ribs of his umbrella suggested the arched ceiling; the roof of his mouth struck him as nature's perfect sounding board. Proof for these stories is not available.

The first indication of definite planning is found in a letter from George Albert Smith to Hosea Stout dated March 20, 1863, in which it was indicated that a circular-ended building was being considered, to be 250 feet long and 150 feet wide, and that 500,000 feet of lumber would be required.

It was a tremendous undertaking for a people who only sixteen years before had arrived in the undeveloped wilderness. But by now they had built homes, stored food from a sufficient number of good growing seasons, overcome several invasions of crickets and were ready when called by inspiration of their leader to sacrifice their time and means for the construction of this much needed facility.

William H. Folsom was sustained as Church Architect at the semi-annual conference held in Salt Lake City in October of 1861. The plan of the new Tabernacle was suggested by President Brigham Young, and William Folsom and Henry Grow were chosen to direct the building of it. Mr. Grow, who presented an unusual scheme for the roof, had built a bridge over the Jordan River, constructing it after the Remington patent of lattice bridges in which planking and pegs were used. A bridge builder in his native state, Pennsylvania, Mr. Grow had built many bridges of the Remington type. On coming west he obtained permission from the inventor to use the idea in Utah and it was accepted by President Young as the one practical theory for the construction of the roof of the new house of worship.

William Harrison Folsom was born at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, March 25, 1815. As a child he showed a tendency towards building which had ample opportunity to develop in the employ of his father who was a contractor on the docks around Lake Erie. At the age of 16 the boy had shown such capability that his father made him superintendent of the works, and with sometimes as many as 500 men under him, the young man conducted the business with credit to himself and profit to

the firm. Later on, his father moved to Buffalo, New York, where he established a building business. It was here that William met Zervial Eliza Clark, their marriage taking place August 21, 1837. Through the efforts of Enoch Reese, a Mormon stone mason who was working on the same building as William, he became a convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On February 17, 1842, he, his wife, and Hannah Reese were baptized in the Niagara River.

The following spring Folsom went to Nauvoo where he became acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith and worked as carpenter and joiner on the Nauvoo Temple. In 1854 he outfitted three wagons, two yoke of cattle on each one, and started for Salt Lake City, arriving at Council Bluffs ten days too late to join the last company. He remained in Council Bluffs six years carrying on a contracting and building business. While here he was engaged to build the pillars of the Nebraska Slate Capitol which was then located at Omaha, the work being shipped from Council Bluffs. This was further recognition of his ability as a master workman.

In 1860 he outfitted himself with four teams — one horse team and three ox teams — and set out for Salt Lake once more, arriving October 3rd. Shortly afterward he opened a carpenter shop on Main Street between First and Second South. He then went to work for President Brigham Young.

From a sketch of the life of William H. Folsom, written by Louisa Folsom Brown, a daughter, we quote;

It was the genius of the great pioneer, President Brigham Young, that conceived the idea of the wonderful tabernacle, and as William H. Folsom was the Architect of the Church and had just finished the construction of the Salt Lake Theatre, he was consulted. Andrew Jenson states in the Encyclopedic History of the Church that Wm. H. Folsom was the architect and Henry Grow the master mechanic. In the Bancroft manuscript Collection at Berkeley, California, is a statement made by Folsom to the effect that he was architect for the Tabernacle and drew the plans for it. It appears logical that Folsom drew the plans for the building and that Henry Crow designed the roof.

At the semi-annual conference in October 1862, William H. Folsom was ordained and sustained a member of the High Council in the Salt Lake Stake of Zion. This position he occupied until May 9, 1874, when he was chosen first counselor to George B. Wallace, president of Salt Lake Stake, which position he filled for a number of years.

In 1864 William H. Folsom joined in a partnership under the name of Latimer, Taylor and Company, in the lumber and planing mill business. He was also a member of the firm known as Folsom and Romney, Builders and Contractors. During the ten years of its existence the latter company erected many of the prominent buildings of Salt Lake City. William Folsom drew the plans for the Provo Theatre, Moroni Tabernacle, Salt Lake Council Hall and many other public buildings. In 1877 he was called to draw plans for the Manti Temple and superintend the work. He temporarily moved part of his family to Manti where he remained until the Temple was finished and dedicated in 1888. He then returned to Salt Lake City and served two years as building inspector during the tenure of Mayor John Clark.

A few years before his death he was ordained a patriarch in the Salt Lake Stake of Zion. He passed away March 20, 1901, at the age of 86 years.

Henry Grow, seventh son of Henry and Mary Riter Grow, was born October 1, 1817, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His grandfather, Frederick Grow, and his grandmother came from Germany before the War of the Revolution and took up a large tract of land which they divided into five farms of sixty acres each for their children. As a young man, Henry was an apprentice to a carpenter and joiner, and at the completion of his training superintended the construction of bridges, culverts, etc. on the Norristown and Germantown railroads, serving under George G. Whitmore, president of the roads and ex-mayor of Philadelphia.

A convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Henry was baptized in the Delaware River, Philadelphia, in May of 1842 by William Morton. He emigrated to Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843 where he worked on the Nauvoo Temple until it was finished. He and his family journeyed across the plains in the James Cummings Company, arriving in the Valley on his birthday in 1851.

Settling north of Ogden, Mr. Grow was called to Salt Lake City by President Brigham Young in 1852 to supervise the building of bridges and mills. In 1853 he constructed the first suspension bridge in Utah over the Weber River. In 1854 he helped build the sugar mill under Bishop Fred Kesler, and in 1855 assisted in building the two sawmills in Big Cottonwood Canyon known as A and B. In 1856 he moved a sawmill from Cottonwood to the forks of City Creek, seven miles above Salt Lake City, for President Young, and the same fall he framed and put up Mill D in Big Cottonwood Canyon. In 1857 he helped erect Mill E at the head of Big Cottonwood

Canyon, while 1858 found him building a suspension bridge over the Provo River. In 1859 he tore the works out of the old gristmill at the mouth of Canyon Creek and placed the cotton and woolen machinery in the mill for President Brigham Young. This machinery, the first of its kind used in Utah, was afterwards taken to St. George. A suspension bridge was built by him across the Jordan River in 1861.

When President Young called on .Mr. Grow concerning the roof of the new Tabernacle, he asked him how large a roof he could construct by the application of the lattice bridge principle. Grow replied "100 feet wide and as long as it is wanted."

During the years 1876-77 Henry Grow fulfilled a mission in the United States, laboring principally in Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland where he visited his relatives and the old family homestead. On his return he was engaged in tearing down the Old Tabernacle and erecting the Assembly Hall, superintending the practical work under Architect Obed Taylor. It was completed in 1879. Later, Elder Grow built two brick houses for President John Taylor and acted as superintendent of carpentry work for the Church. One of his most important projects was the construction of the Deseret Paper Mill at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. It was completed in 1883 after Mr. Grow had traveled East to inspect New England paper mills to gain new and improved ideas on such buildings.

Henry Grow married Mary Moyer, who bore him six children, and Ann Elliott, mother of seven. After arriving in Utah he married Julia Veach, who became the mother of fourteen children. Active in his Church, he was one of the presidents of the 30th Quorum of Seventy for many years. Mr. Grow passed away November 4, 1891, in Salt Lake City, a highly respected citizen and a faithful member of the Church. — Files of D.U.P.

THE YEARS 1863-1866

By April 18, 1863, Jesse W. Fox was surveying for the foundation, and ground was being cleared. Following the survey, the foundation was excavated.

April 20th, 1863, Brigham Young wrote; "I start this morning on a visit to our southern settlements, accompanied by President Kimball, some of the quorum, and other brethren, and expect to be absent some six weeks. President Wells tarries at home to oversee business in general, and to expedite the erection of a large and commodious Tabernacle, west of the Temple foundation."

The Deseret News of June 3, 1863, presented the original plan of the New

Tabernacle. The article was signed by William H. Folsom:

Dimensions on ground 150 feet wide, 250 feet long, with semi-circle ends, making one hundred feet of straight work on sides of building. The roof will be supported by 44 piers, 3 by 9 feet and 20 Feet high, from which an elliptic arch will be sprung of 44 feet rise. From floor to ceiling, 64 feet; width in clear, 132 feet; length 232 feet in clear. There will be an elevation in the floor of 16 feet, starting from the west radius of circular end, making 66 feet of floor on the level. The stand will be in the west end, with an elevation of 8 feet, which will give every person in the house good opportunity of seeing the speaker, which is always very desirable. Between the piers will be openings of doors and windows, which can be thrown open at pleasure.