

An excerpt taken from "The Family of Daniel Jeddiah Hammon"
Levi Hammon & Polly Chapman Bybee – Early Utah Pioneers, pgs.360-361.

“The fall of 1897 father was called on a mission for the LDS Church in the Northern States. He left for the mission home in Salt Lake City, Utah, on 8 December 1897. In father’s missionary diary, he wrote that he left his baby girl in the cradle and his young wife lying on the bed crying. Mother was more than willing for father to go, though. She said that the Lord had blessed them and they had truly prospered. At that time, father estimated he had assets worth \$75,000 to \$100,000 and he felt that he could well afford to serve his God. He also knew that he was leaving mother and the children plenty to live on.

When father left on his mission, he thought he had left his affairs and his sheep with two trustworthy men, which later proved to be wrong. When mother found out that all was not going well with the sheep, she did not write and tell father because she did not want to worry him and she was certain that something could be worked out. At about this time father wrote in his missionary diary that he had just had a letter from the man in charge of his sheep and that everything was going fine and he wrote to mother, “The Lord has surely been good to me.” The Stake President came to mother and wanted to send for father, but she said, “I would rather lose everything we own rather than have Jed come home from his mission before it is finished.” Little did mother know that they had already lost everything they owned.

When father came home he immediately went out to his sheep and in a letter to mother dated November, 1899, he wrote that conditions were worse than had been reported. The men left in charge of the sheep had been very poor managers. The sheep had been put on poor feeding grounds with very little water; they were also craving salt. The herders went into Grantsville and brought back some salt and fed it to the hungry sheep. That night it snowed and the thirsty sheep ate it ravenously. The next morning, better than 3,000 sheep lay dead.

This was a terrible loss to father and mother. It was the accumulation of 35 years of hard work, of long days, and nights and now father had lost everything. The men in charge of the sheep had charged big feed bills that had to be paid, along with back wages for the herders, plus numerous other bills. Father did not know which way to turn. Later he found out they had used his money to gamble with.

He returned to mother and his little family in Preston, Idaho, a very discouraged man. Here they tried to figure out some way to get some kind of refinancing so they could save their home. But the whole country was in a depression and it was impossible to raise any cash. They stayed in Preston until August 1900.

By now they had lost everything, including their home, and as they were moving father told mother not to cry --- someday he would build her another nice home to live in.”