

THE PEOPLE "BLIND JONES" THE POSTMAN

One of the first recollections Clem had of the settlement was when the folks took him into town for a visit from their place in Three Mile Creek. He was young enough to get lost. so he must have been only five or six years old at the time.

"Father drove us in the old Co-op peddler's wagon and I rode in the back with the pots and pans and produce. He put me down to play while they visited at a house and I soon wandered off. I was unable to find way way back and went from corner to corner. house to house. I had started to cry when the postman came along and asked me what the matter was. He said he new Where I belonged. and he'd take me there. I noticed that be didn't seem to look at where he was going, but he got there alright anyway. My folks thanked him for bringing me back and he went on his way again. I remember father saying, "Of all people to help him find his way, it would be "Blind Jones."

Yes, they had a blind postman in Brigham City for years. Owen Jones immigrated from Wales when he was about thirty-four years of age. Mormon missionaries had converted him in his native land, and he had answered the call to "come to Zion" in spite of his blindness. He had been blinded in one eye while yet a boy. Later, as a young adult he followed. the occupation of a quarryman in a Welsh rock mine. His handicap was compounded and he lost the sight of the other eye, suffering total blindness as the result of an accident while cleaving slate in the quarry.

At first despondent and despairing of ever again finding any meaning in life, he later rallied under the cheering influence and message of hope brought by the missionaries. With renewed faith and a determination to make the best of his condition, he learned to adjust. He developed and trained his remaining faculties to a high degree of sensitivity, especially his hearing and sense of direction. He trained his memory along with the power of association and thus compensated in many ways for his tragic loss.

Although he had never seen the settlement, when he arrived, with the help of others he walked every street and pathway and memorized the layout of the whole town, remembering the location of every house and place of business.

At first Postmaster Eli Harvey Pierce and in later years Oliver G. Snow sorted the mail for him in proper order so that each piece could be memorized, associated with its owner and delivered to its destination along the route. Before he died in the early 1890's, he had been Brigham's postman for nearly twenty-five years.

Over those years the community expanded and grew consistent with the changes taking place in the cultural and economic development of America in general and of Mormon Utah in particular. Still somewhat unsophisticated, it remained essentially rural and small town by the dawn of the twentieth century preserving albeit a wholesomeness and community pride derived from a great pioneer heritage.