

*A life sketch of*

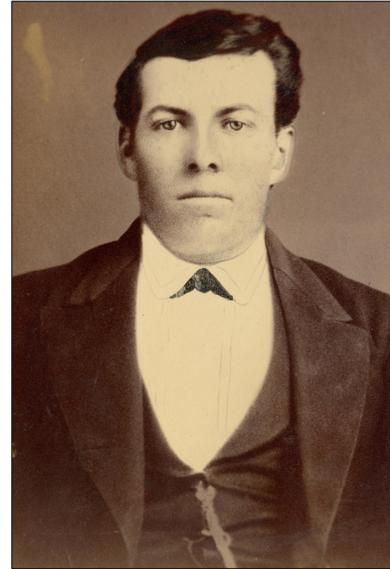
# Justin Abraham Knapp

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1857 – 1918

Justin Abraham Knapp was born at Farmington, Davis County, Utah on August 4, 1857. His father, Albert, was a descendant of William Knapp who came to America in 1630 from Suffolk County, England. Albert and his wife, Rozina Shepard, were the parents of six children. Justin was the fifth child and second son.

Justin suffered from scarlet fever when he was five years of age. As a result of the fever, the cords in his left foot tightened and turned his foot over leaving him crippled for the remainder of his life. Special shoes had to be made to fit his foot. He often said that as a child he longed to run and play like other children.



At the age of thirteen, Justin worked in a grocery store. Justin and his family lived in Farmington for a time and then moved to Richmond, Utah where he learned to hunt. He spent many hours tramping along the banks of Bear River. The geese and ducks were plentiful and Justin became skilled at bird hunting. He often told of the time when he brought down three geese with one shot. Justin enjoyed hunting throughout his life. In later years, Justin was often seen with his shotgun hung over his shoulder hunting ducks and wild chickens along the banks of the Teton River, which ran through his farm, and the nearby sage country of Hibbard, Idaho.

Justin was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1865. This was an important event in this young man's life. It was the beginning of a lifelong commitment to a way of life he strived to live daily and desired to share with others.

In his young manhood, Justin worked for a Mr. Brown in Park City, Utah. He learned the trade of stone cutting. After his days work was finished, he would stay late into the night and experiment on scraps of stone. H would polish and decorate them with letters and designs.

He carefully stored his creations not knowing what he would ever do with them. One day Mr. Brown found Justin's stone art and was surprised and pleased with his work. He encouraged him to enter the stones in an exhibition at the State Fair in Logan, Utah. Justin did so and won several prizes. This was the beginning of his career as a stone mason.

As a stone mason Justin helped build many prominent buildings in the communities where he lived. One of these buildings was the Logan Temple. Each mason who worked on the temple had his own chisel, ax and a four-pound hammer. The mason's working on the temple would enter the stone quarry and select enough stones to last for a few days. The stones would be cut out of the quarry, hoisted to a wagon bed and transported to the temple site. Each stone was marked for the mason who selected them. Once the stones arrived at the site, the mason would further prepare them for the corners or wall stones. Justin's initials were carved into one of the stones laid in the temple walls. He also prepared the cornerstone, which formed the box where the records were placed at the dedication of the temple.

While working on the Logan Temple Justin met Anna Eliza Lemmon. This beautiful young lady was attending college in Logan at the time. Many hours of their courtship were spent around the unfinished temple walls. Justin and Eliza were married in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 9, 1879. He was often teased about being a 'Lemmon Squeezer' after that.

Justin and Eliza made their first home in a brick house, which Justin built at Richmond, Utah. Four children were born to this couple while living there:

Anna Rozina	July 26, 1880
Mabel	December 23, 1882
Jennie	October 12, 1884
Justin Willis	October 5, 1886

While working at his trade as a stone mason, Justin played in the local brass band and served one term as town marshal. He had crafted a violin, which he played at parties and

dances. Justin was blessed with a talent for music, which he often shared. He could play the accordion, the mouth organ and the harp.

In 1888, Justin bought a relinquishment of 160 acres in the Snake River Valley at Hibbard, Idaho. This farm was located two and one-half miles west of Rexburg. Justin hired a man to help him move their furniture and livestock. Eliza and their four children traveled by train to Market Lake, Idaho (now Roberts). Justin met them at the train station with a wagon and a team of horses. They anxiously continued their journey to their new home. No bridge spanned the Snake River at this time and so they crossed the water on a ferryboat. The operator of the ferry was George Hibbard, Eliza's brother in law and the Knapp Family's first bishop.

Not long after their arrival, a daughter was born. Over the next fifteen years, seven more children were born to this family.

Lydia Malinda	November 16, 1888
Clara Leone	December 26, 1889
Elsie May	February 17, 1893
Warren	April 14, 1895
Esther Jane	June 9, 1897
Alice Eveline	December 24, 1899
Edwin Raymond	August 9, 1903
Adrian Leroy	August 9, 1903

The Knapp Family lived in a log house at Rexburg while their house was being built on the farm. Justin had found a hunter's paradise with deer, antelope, wild chickens, ducks, and plenty of fish. There were coyotes, badgers and porcupines too.

The winters on the farm proved to be long and hard. The land had to be cleared of sagebrush, which was pulled out, piled high and then burned. There were ditches and dikes to be formed, fences and out buildings to make, along with the other everyday chores. There was plenty for all to do. Long days of plowing kept Justin busy and tired. Once in a while, the

turned soil would produce a rusty gun barrel, arrowheads or a smooth stone once used to grind meal by the Indians. Justin's imagination ran wild with the history that had taken place on his property.

With the help of his children, he fenced his farm with green posts and poles. This was hard work lifting the green timber all day. Some nights after a hard day's work, sagebrush fires were built and potatoes roasted. This new, cleared land grew fine crops, as well as good pastureland covered with tall grass. Water for irrigation was plentiful. A grove of trees met their building needs and provided fuel for their winter's heat.

In addition to farming, Justin continued his work as a stone mason and did some brick laying and plastering. Justin made many pioneer headstones, some of which are found in the Rexburg City Cemetery. They carried his familiar trademark of a rose crafted into the sandstone markers. He helped build the large rock store made out of native stone owned by Henry Flamm. As the walls were raised, horse teams lifted the huge stones and tons of mortar using pulleys. Justin helped build the Sugar Factory in Sugar City, the Harris Store in Salem, and several other rock buildings in the Rexburg area.

Justin loved horses and gained a wide spread reputation for having very fine teams. He raised black, bay and bailey-faced horses. He was proud of the matched teams he raised, trained and sold. Many farmers in the area had a team of Justin's horses. One year a sickness got into his horses and he found thirteen colts dead in his field. This was especially upsetting for him and reflected the love he had for these animals.

Justin formed a partnership with 24 other men in the Hibbard area and each man contributed \$100 to buy a horse. This horse was from Belgium and was a special registered horse. When the horse arrived, Justin was designated to care for the horse. He called him Mathun. He weighed 1800 pounds. A quart of water could be poured on his back and sit there, he was so broad. Eventually, Justin bought each partner's share and became full owner of the horse. He took great pride in Mathun and raised many good horses from him. When the horse died, Justin took his hide and had it tanned. He then kept it over his bed.

In 1899, Justin and his brother Morgan built a sawmill on Moody and Canyon Creeks. Along with their other work, they operated this mill for about two years. The work of both the mill and the farm became too much and eventually he decided to return to the farm.

Justin enjoyed wrestling and other activities, which demonstrated physical strength. Because of his trade as a stone mason, Justin developed very strong arms. One day he went to the old gristmill east of Rexburg. Several boys from Ricks College were there lifting weights and trying to out do each other. One boy held out a sack of flour on his wrist. Justin asked him, "Why don't you put it on your hand?"

"You can't do it," the boy retorted.

"What do you have to say I can't?" Justin jokingly asked.

The boys collected \$4.50 for a bet. Justin held out his hand and they put a fifty-pound sack of flour on it. Then he held out his other hand and said, "Put another on this hand." The boys did and he raised them both upward. The boys offered him the money, but he just laughed and told them he didn't want their money.

The first school in Hibbard was held in the Knapp grainary. It was built of logs and neatly whitewashed. It was furnished with desks and seats, and was kept clean and comfortable.

Justin was constable around the Hibbard area for several years. He served as the first superintendent of the Religion Class organized in Hibbard by Karl G. Maeser. He also served as a counselor in the bishopric to Joseph F. Rigby. In January of 1914, Justin went to Southern California and served a short-term mission.

After his mission, he returned to his family and farm in the late spring. He started to experience trouble with his health. It became a struggle to keep the work around the farm going. For years he had suffered from hay fever and asthma. In November of 1918, Justin suffered a stroke and lapsed into a coma. On November 21, 1918, Justin awoke to the sounds of bells and alarms. He lived long enough to learn that it was Armistice Day and that World War I

was over. He passed away later that day. At this time an influenza epidemic was raging through the valley and no public gatherings were allowed. Justin was buried after a short graveside service at the Rexburg City Cemetery.

Justin was 5'8", stocky built and had dark brown hair. He was a hard worker, not only at his trade as a stone mason and on his farm, but also in church and community activities. His children remember him as being a lot of fun, always making people laugh and looking on the bright side. It was very hard for him to be strict with them because of his happy and kind nature. He was also remembered as enjoying a good laugh and always having good advice.

The Knapp Family had Family Home Evening almost every night. Justin would get out his violin and other instruments and the children would sing and dance to the music he would play. Eliza had a beautiful singing voice. Between her singing, his playing and the contributions of their learning children, they had many evenings of lively entertainment. They loved these times together and many of the children learned to play instruments under the instruction of their father.

The family shared the hard work and chores just as they shared the happy and good times...they put their whole heart into what they were doing. A combination of hard work and an abundance of genuine love produced a close family of friends, determined to be together forever. Justin's love for his family, the church, horses, music, hunting and the outdoors were vital elements in his impressive life.

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*The author of this Life Sketch of Justin Abraham Knapp is unknown. The original account has been revised and additions made to make it more complete from stories, documents and other records collected and kept in the Family History Library of K. Oswald.*

*Names, places, and dates have been verified with family genealogy information and records in possession of K. Oswald, and family history records in possession of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.*