



STEPHEN ANDREW AGREN 1877–1964

Stephen Andrew Agren was born 10 September 1877, to Pehr Akasson Agren and Bertha (Berta) Olsen Faldt. He was named Staffan Andrew Agren but he took the Americanized spelling Stephen. In his hometown of Harrisville he was known as S. Andrew Agren or his nickname “Pat.”

Andrew’s mother, Bertha, was born in Sweden and came to America by the generosity of her brother-in-law Pehr Agren who paid her way. Bertha lived in Salt Lake City with LDS families caring for their children, doing housework, and any other type of work she could find. Learning the English language was a challenge for her. Carl John Anderson, a missionary who knew her family in Sweden, wrote and asked her to come to Harrisville to marry him. His wife had died, leaving him with two small girls. She consented and they were married on 12 June 1874. Carl Anderson became very ill soon after they were married. He asked his good friend Pehr Agren, who was married to Bertha’s sister, Johanna, to move to the farm in Harrisville to help with the farming and take care of the cattle.

The next September 1875, Carl and Bertha had a baby boy they named John. Six months later, 6 March 1876, Carl Anderson died. Three weeks later, on 26 March 1876, the baby John died leaving Bertha broken hearted with two little girls to raise from Carl’s previous marriage. Bertha proved to be a real mother to Carl’s girls, Annie Josephine and Marry Ann.

Before Carl died, he asked Pehr to take care of Bertha. Pehr married her in June following Carl’s death. They had other children, but only Stephen Andrew, born 10 September 1877, lived. The children that died included Ellen (1880), who lived five days, and twins Nils & Hanna (1883), who died at birth.

Not much is known about Andrew’s early life. His father Pehr bought land in the northwest part of Harrisville, west of the intersection of 750 West and Highway 89. When the Edmunds Bill against polygamy was passed, Pehr left Utah with Bertha and their son Andrew. They went to Alma, Wyoming, where he worked for two years as a carpenter in the mines. He was tired of living away from his other family, returned to Harrisville, and gave himself up to authorities for cohabiting. Authorities did nothing, and the case was later dismissed. Pehr ran both farms with the help of his son Andrew and his other children. The children grew up and moved away. Pehr died of pneumonia 1905. Carl Anderson’s farm was divided between Andrew and his two stepsisters, Annie Josephine and Marry Ann.

Andrew enjoyed the activities of the ward and courting Samantha (Mattie) Cornelia Shurtleff. He especially liked to dance. He and Samantha were married on 12 November 1903, in the Salt Lake Temple. They set up in a small home in the south end of Harrisville where their first daughter Ruth was born in September 1904. They built a large two-story brick home on his property from the Anderson estate located at 408 North Harrisville Road. The home had a screened porch and included an apartment on the north end for his mother, Bertha.

Andrew and Samantha had the following children: Ruth, Eileen (1906), Bertha (1908), Fern (1911), Grant (1914), Karl (1916), June (1919) and Phyllis. Two of the children died while still young, Fern died in 1913 and Karl in 1922.

Andrew was a hard worker, a good farmer and a good neighbor. He helped others by loaning his farm machinery to them. He also cared for the widows they were acquainted with.

He raised cash crops of sugar beets, peas, hay, and grain. He raised corn for their chickens and other animals on the farm. He built large chicken coops and a large barn for his horses and dairy cows. He also sold milk and eggs. He had a large garden and raised vegetables, fruit trees, raspberries, and currants.

He was interested in civic affairs. He was on the board of the Farm Bureau and owned stock in Weber Central Dairy. He also served as financial clerk in the LDS Harrisville Ward for many years.

Andrew bought more land near 800 North Larsen Lane as tax sales were made available. He gradually increased the size of his farm.

Andrew liked attending the state fair in Salt Lake City, and each year he would take a different daughter with him. One year he entered some potatoes he had raised and won first prize. The girls helped on the farm, and Grant also helped when he was old enough. They gathered eggs, thinned beets, hoed weeds, cleaned stables, and worked in the harvest.

In the winter, Andrew would hook up his horses, "Old Topsy" and "Queen," to the bob sleigh and take the children for sleigh rides on the unplowed, icy roads through Harrisville. Children would hook on the back with sleds for a fun ride. Once in a while the family made trips to Idaho to visit relatives, but there were not many vacations as farm work took most of their time.

Samantha and Andrew were able to enjoy a few trips in their later life to visit church and national historical sites. In their older years, they sold the house and farm to their son Grant and his wife Louisa, and Andrew and Mattie lived for years in an apartment in the home. Andrew died from emphysema 4 February 1964, and was buried in the Ogden Cemetery.

SOURCE:

Brown, June Agren. *Biography of Stephen Andrew Agren*. Unpublished manuscript.

Agren, Staffan Andrew	Agren, Pehr Akasson
Agren, Bertha	Agren, Phyllis
Agren, Bertha (Berta) Olsen Feldt	Agren, Ruth
Agren, Eileen	Agren, S. Andrew or "Pat"
Agren, Ellen	Agren, Samantha (Mattie) Cornelia
Agren, Fern	Agren, Stephen Andrew
Agren, Grant	Anderson, Annie Josephine
Agren, Hanna	Anderson, Carl
Agren, Johanna Faldt	Anderson, John
Agren, June	Anderson, Marry Ann
Agren, Karl	Farm Bureau
Agren, Nils	Feldt, Bertha (Berta) Olsen
Agren, Pehr	Shurtleff, Samantha (Mattie) Cornelia
	Weber Central Dairy