



# Phineas Wolcott Cook Newsletter

Phineas W. Cook Family Organization

September 2022

## *Val J. Christensen To Speak At Cook O Rama*

This year's Cook O Rama will feature Val J. Christensen, currently a counselor in the Bountiful Temple Presidency and formerly the Area Legal Counselor for the Europe East Area Headquartered in Russia.

The annual pot-luck dinner and fireside will be held on Thursday, Sept 29 at 1298 North 400 West in Centerville, Ut. The dinner will begin at 6 p.m. followed by the fireside at 7 p.m. There are current plans to broadcast the fireside over zoom. Look for the link in a later email and also on the [cookfamily.org](http://cookfamily.org) website.

Brother Christensen, who was also a mission president in Russia, will speak of his experiences in Russia, particularly about the approval of FamilySearch in Russia.



Val J. Christensen, counselor in the Bountiful Utah Temple Presidency and his wife LauraLee

## *Phineas Wolcott Cook: A Legacy of Faith, Now For Sale*

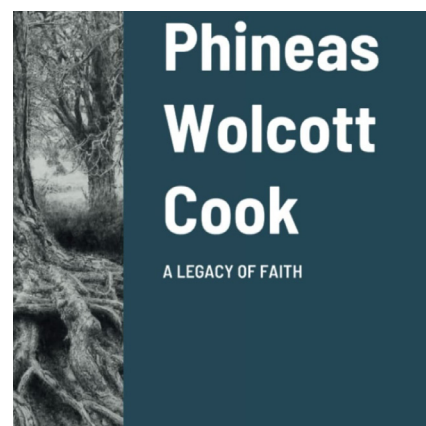
Culminating years of research and preparation, the 2022 edition of Phineas Wolcott Cook's Journal is now available for purchase.

In honor of his 203rd birthday, the sale of the the new book *Phineas Wolcott Cook: A Legacy of Faith*, was announced on Facebook.

Complete with historical context material, full color pictures, and letters and biographies to fill out his life, this edition is being offered in hardcover heirloom edition through Amazon for \$55.72. You can order as many copies as you would like and have them delivered to any address you desire.

Order your copy of the book from Amazon.com. A search for "Phineas Wolcott Cook" will bring up the book ordering information.

For those attending this year's Cook O Rama on Sept 29 in Centerville, the book will be available at a discounted rate of \$35 per book.



These books would need to be picked up in Centerville that night in order get the book at the discounted price.

Payment for the discounted books can be made by cash or check that night at the Cook O Rama. Questions can be emailed to [marciamarshall@outlook.com](mailto:marciamarshall@outlook.com) by Sept 3.

Also watch the website at [Cookfamily.org](http://Cookfamily.org) for the future PDF version of the book.

### **In This Issue**

President's Message.....	2
Goshen Journal.....	2
FamilySearch family group.....	4
Janet Porter Interview.....	5
Bookstore.....	7

# Becoming Unified in Goshen

By Janet Porter  
Goshen Journal, Part 16

It was the summer of 1859 and the Goshen Saints were moving their town again.

It should be remembered, only a year earlier, in the spring of 1858, water had seeped into their houses and dugouts, and they had to move out after their first winter in Goshen Valley. Finding a ridge of land which seemed high and dry, they again started their town, building houses and planting gardens that summer. But after a year in that location they realized it was not the right place either. There seemed to be no soil—only sand. After spending the winter of 1858-59 in Sandtown, they knew they would have to move again.

Everyone was frustrated and tension mounted. Phineas had done everything he knew to solve the contention in Goshen. Members, certain their bishop had failed them, complained about him to the church authorities, and on two different occasions Priesthood brethren came to Goshen to speak to the ward members. Their talks were recorded in his handwriting and are masterpieces of conciliation and retrenchment, urging the Goshen people to have patience and sustain their bishop.

Church Patriarch John Young, Brigham Young's older brother, had married Catherine McCleve's sister Sarah, and was the main speaker on both occasions. His talk on April 27, 1859 was an effort to help the Goshen saints recognize the absolute necessity of maintaining unity among the saints if they were to make progress:

*"Uncle John Young asked what it was that designates*

*the priesthood(.) Joseph Smith understood the system of government by which people can be governed and held together. It is order, my brethren. They knew no more about the principle of unity than your animals. As bad as you have been making yourselves appear you are the best men on the earth outside this Kingdom...*

*"The hardest task a man has to do is to govern himself(.) If you are in a situation that you can (not) be governed, you have got to get up out of this place(.) You cannot go it in this way(.) I want you to make it up in your minds how you are to be governed... Where there is all kinds of iniquity among the saits (saints) the way is hedged up(.) The apos<sup>le</sup> (apostle) said that there are many spirits gone abroad in the earth(.) I will say that a good many have come here to Goshen(.)"*<sup>1</sup>

When the contention continued, Phineas warned and begged, and finally stopped holding meetings to stop the bickering. By the time meetings were held again, the town was newly settled. They called it Lower Goshen because it was two miles north and closer to the lake, but on high ground. Everyone was hopeful this was the ideal location for the town of Goshen. The town was laid out again, and each family was given enough land for a garden and fruit trees.

How did the new townsite turn  
1 GWM Minutes April 27, 1859, Document Folder Item 31, Sides 3-4.

*Continued on page 6*

## Dan Ditto, President

We are so excited for this year's Cook O Rama on Sept. 29 at 7 pm. The Cook O Rama will be held at 1298 N. 400 W. Centerville, UT. HOWEV-



ER, it will also be available ONLINE for anyone who would like to join us via Zoom. DON'T MISS THIS!! We will be sending out a Zoom link as we get closer to the meeting.

Our speaker this year is Val J. Christensen who is currently serving as a counselor in the Bountiful Temple Presidency. Prior to that, he served as Area Legal Counsel for Russia for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He has also served as a mission president in Russia. Brother Christensen will be sharing with us the remarkable set of experiences that led to the legal approval of the Church's FamilySearch – Family Tree programs in Russia. This will truly be worth your while to attend or to watch. Be sure and invite your entire family.

We are also announcing the publication of a marvelous groundbreaking history of Phineas Wolcott Cook called "A Legacy of Faith."

This is a beautiful hardbound book with a greatly expanded history of the remarkable life of Phineas Wolcott Cook, including his later years in Goshen, Bear Lake and Wyoming; time periods that prior publications have not covered. We are greatly indebted to Janet Porter, Yvonne Peterson, Catharine Rasband, Marcia Marshall, and many others for their extraordinary efforts. This book will be available at a discount for those who purchase it at the Cook O Rama but it will also be available on demand on Amazon.com. This is a timeless book about your heritage that will bless your families for many years to come.

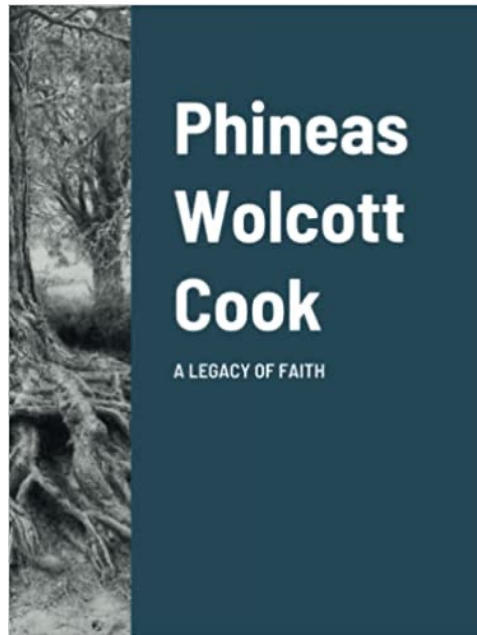
We are grateful to be related to you and we are excited to be with you on September 29.

# Comparison of Two Cook Biographies, Both 2022 *Legacy* and 2002 *Triumph*

*Phineas Wolcott Cook: Legacy of Faith* is the newest effort to make our ancestor's journal readable and his life understandable. Whereas the journal ended previously in 1856, it has now been extended by the lost portion of his journal found in the Church History Library and by numerous accounts of family life written by his children. He wrote letters in his later years, many to the President of the United States, which have been quoted in the book. Nothing of value to the story of the Cook Family has been left out.

The book is a fresh look at a man and the women and children in his life who helped to bring the Church and the Mountain West out of obscurity. Pertinent information along his life journey has been provided to help the reader understand the significance of events, places, and current circumstances, assuring a new understanding of what happened. The influence of this family cannot be overestimated as generations of their descendants continue to live their own Legacy of Faith.

*Triumph of Testimony*, also written by Janet Porter and published in 2002 was written in narrative format for those who enjoy a biography in a story format. It covers the childhood and youth of Phineas W. Cook, his migration to Michigan, his conversion to the church and journey to join the saints crossing Iowa in 1846. The events in the book are an engaging look at a young man dealing with the harsh circumstances of early 19th Century Connecticut and a new frontier in Michigan. Hopefully there will be a few smiles as the reader encounters his dealings with dishonest employers and demanding parents. And undoubtedly there will be hints of personal recognition as he encounters frontier religion and finds



**Cover of new 2022 Edition**  
himself settled in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is a readable and entertaining way to learn the events which brought Phineas W. Cook to join with the Church at Winter Quarters. Nothing is wasted as he learns from his own experience to deal with the harsh realities of life. And nothing is lost as he learns to forgive and understand a diverse people gathered on the edge of civilization as they prepare to depart for an unknown destination.

Many people young and old have enjoyed reading *Triumph of Testimony* and we hope you will find it an easy way to become acquainted with this ancestor. If any learn from Phineas' life lessons, it will be time well spent!

The following is an interview with Janet Porter, author of both *Triumph of Testimony* and the newest edition of Phineas' diaries: *Phineas Wolcott Cook: A Legacy of Faith*.

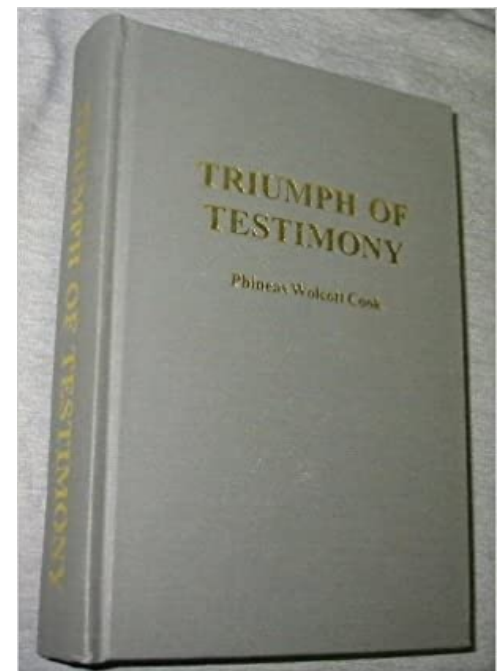
**How did you get interested in researching and writing about Phineas' life?**

Early work in family history

involved collecting stories that descendants had heard about their Cook ancestors. It was mostly a matter of copying what someone else had written with no way to verify what was true. Studying documentation written by Phineas' descendants, I found so many mistakes that I began studying original materials to document the truth. I didn't want to know what others had said -- I wanted to know what was correct.

**You wrote *Triumph of Testimony* 20 years ago. What made you want to write his story in a narrative format?**

By the time I began writing *Triumph of Testimony* I had ten grandchildren. I knew if I ever wanted them to learn about an ancestor, it would have to be fun to read. When I thought about it, I realized adults



**Cover of Triumph of Testimony**

need something fun to read too! So, I wrote *Triumph* to be accessible to all ages, and fun to read.

*Continued on page 5*



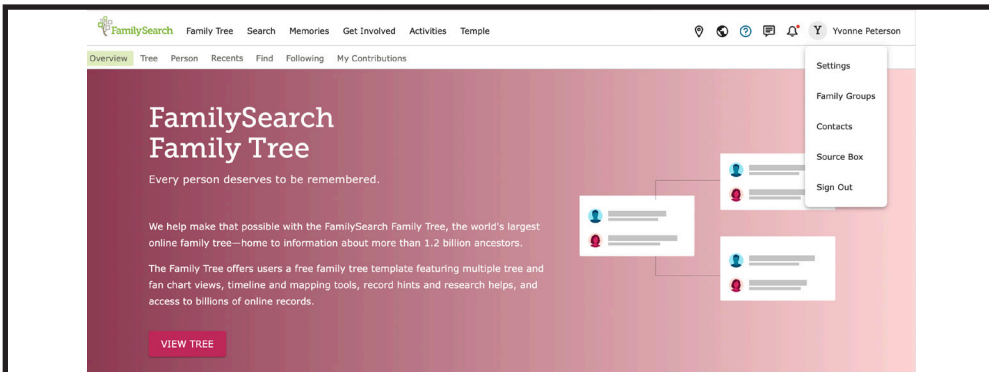
# FamilySearch Cook Family Group Holds Names Ready for Temple Work

Cook Family Members! Remember that we have a family group in FamilySearch for use by Cook family members. You may join the group, then add files of deceased Cook family members who need their temple work done. And you may print out the names of Cook family members to take to the temple with you. Please use this group! We currently have 50 names of family members who need various ordinances done in the temple.

To join the group, you must be “invited” by someone already in the group. If you know someone, ask them to “invite” you. If you don’t know anyone – you can email Marcia at ([marciamarshall@outlook.com](mailto:marciamarshall@outlook.com)) and I will invite you. Or you can click on this link:

[https://www.familysearch.org/groups/family?groupId=MMMM-N56&inviteId=MMM9-ZFM&cid=group-mgmt\\_copy](https://www.familysearch.org/groups/family?groupId=MMMM-N56&inviteId=MMM9-ZFM&cid=group-mgmt_copy)

Once you are a member of the group, to access the group, log in to your FamilySearch account and click on your name in the top right corner, then click on “Family Groups” in the dropdown box.



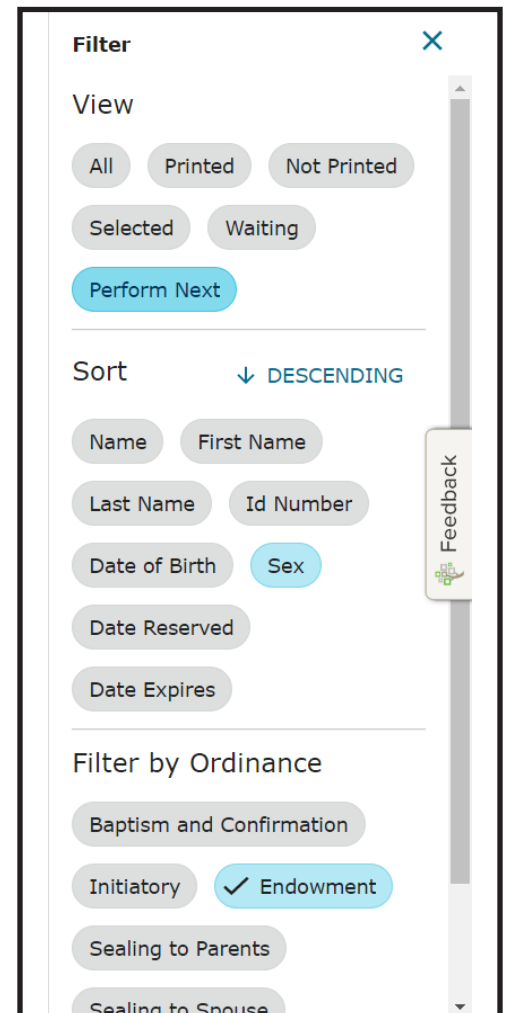
After signing up, your group appears on the drop-down menu under your name

You will then see the Cook Family Org group you are a member of:



The main page of the Cook Family Org group in FamilySearch

View the group and “Group Reservations.” You will have access to all the names of Cook relatives that other group members have shared with the group. You may sort these names by clicking on the “Filter” box. Filter names by



The filter box for preparing names for the temple

selecting the sex, type of ordinance you want to do, and “perform next” to see names of appropriate people who need the ordinance you want to do: Choose the name of someone you want to do and print their card to take to the temple. Temples can also print the card for you if needed.

Our family members are waiting for willing helpers! Please utilize this group to both add family members’ names and to retrieve family members’ names to take to the temple!

# Janet Porter Interview, Continued

*Continued from page 3*

**What challenges did you find doing this?**

My main challenge with the journal of Phineas W. Cook is the difficulty to understand what he was saying or to know the context of his experiences. Many times, I had to research more to comprehend the problems he was dealing with or what he really meant. My knowledge of history had to increase before I could present the historical perspective.

**Which part of his story did you find most inspiring to narrate?**

From beginning to end, I was astounded at the ability of Phineas W. Cook to overlook the faults of other people and to forgive some really mean things done to him. Over and over I was humbled by his statements of forgiveness and his efforts to overcome feelings of hurt and anger. We have a lot to learn from him.

**You did a great deal of research on Phineas' genealogy over the last couple of decades. What were some highlights of that research for you?**

It has actually been over three decades, and two of them included many months in which Bryson Cook and I did intensive research to discover the truth about Elizabeth Porter, the grandmother of Phineas W. Cook. So many errors had been published, we had to unravel them before we could find the truth. It was a project which allowed us in 2009 to write articles for the New England Historic Genealogical Society so the real story was in print.

**Why did you decide to work on a third edition of Phineas' diary?**

I'll have to admit I didn't have the courage to tackle that project until I was asked by the Cook Family Organization to combine all my research with the original journal and the Goshen Journal, I had found in the Church History Library. Using the letters of Phineas W. Cook and the journals of his children, I was able to

document their life story to the very end.

**Tell me about learning about Phineas' life as a polygamist? Why was that an especially challenging time for his family?**

Telling this part of their story was an especially challenging time for me. When we document the progress of this family with the historical perspective of polygamy legislation, we begin to understand the trauma they endured. His letters reflect the hurt they all experienced and bring to the story an account of conflict and mistrust which government intervention had produced. To the uninformed onlooker, selling his Swan Creek mills and land and moving from Bear Lake with Johanna and her young family was nothing more than the next step in his life. But when viewed with the perspective of the effect polygamy legislation had on the whole family, it was a traumatic, life-altering event for all of them.

**What lessons can we learn from his struggles -- and his wives' and childrens' struggles during this time?**

My takeaway from their lives was a surprising gift of peace. An intense personal struggle was experienced by every single member of this family when they had to separate. They had devoted everything to making each member of the family loved and wanted, and Phineas had received personal revelation that polygamy was part of God's plan of love and inclusion. When political pressure bore down on them, they felt persecuted and disheartened. They found fault with each other and could easily have lost faith. But by staying faithful to their covenants, they found their faith had increased. I believe that is a lesson we will need to learn.

**What are the differences between your *Triumph of Testimony* and *Legacy of Faith* books?**

*Triumph of Testimony* is written as

a story and is a more accessible look at the early years of Phineas W. Cook. It ends as he is preparing to take his family to the West.

*Legacy of Faith* is his journal with grammar and punctuation changes made to help it be more readable and understandable. It includes his Goshen journal and relies heavily on his letters and the journals of his family members to finish the story. Alongside the journals are pictures and historical sidebars to explain the background of what is happening. Really, it's a wide-lens view of their lives from beginning to end. It also includes a history of each of the 32 children who grew up in the Cook household.

**How can Phineas' descendants use these books in their families?**

If the parents learn about Phineas and his family, they will have stories to tell the children. Then, hopefully the children will want to read it themselves someday. They can repeat stories such as the famine of 1856 when everyone in Utah was hungry and desperate and then the starving handcart companies began to come in. There was suffering everywhere.

That happened to be the year Brigham Young dismissed Phineas from his job at the Lion House, and the Cook family suffered terribly. Occasionally Phineas would get a job working for someone, and after one of those jobs he let it be known he wanted to buy a cow so his seven children would have milk.

A neighbor sold him his cow with a promise it would be worth the high price, but the cow was dry. No amount of bartering could inspire the neighbor to take back the cow. A few years later the neighbor met Phineas in Southern Utah with a big problem. He needed help in the worst way. Did Phineas help his neighbor? It's a story you won't want to miss telling your children!

# Goshen Journal, Continued

*Continued from page 2*

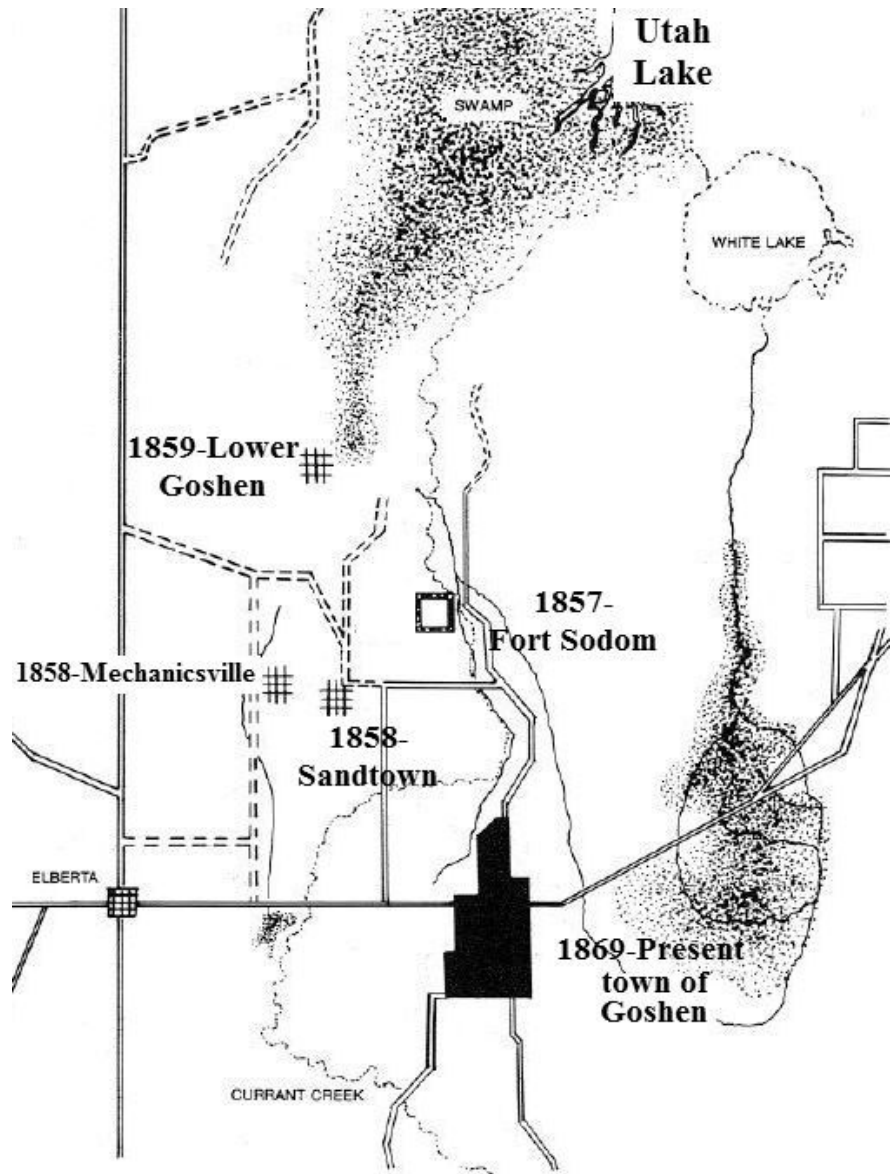
out? Alonzo Howland Cook gives us a clue in his journal when he complained about the “alkali flats of Goshen.” It took another year to discover nothing would grow in the new town site of Lower Goshen because of saleratus (salty potassium bicarbonate) left from hundreds of years of water deposits. Even worse, Lower Goshen was composed of Lake Bonneville clay, hard and dry and barren. As much as they hated the new town site, it took the Goshen saints nine years and a firm nudge from Brigham Young to find their final location.

A later Goshen resident, Raymond Duane Steele, commented on his ancestors' experience:

*“Significantly, in the immediate area of [their new location] Lower Goshen, there are no trees, only wild grasses and sagebrush. The combination of clay and saleratus, the latter causing the plants to turn yellow and dry up, deterred the pioneer families from growing gardens and shade trees near their homes, though they did cultivate the same fields and grazed their livestock in the same open areas throughout all the relocations of their townsites. Their primary crops were wheat, potatoes, and corn while domestic livestock included cattle, sheep, and horses” (Raymond Duane Steele, Goshen Valley History, privately published, 1960,] 13-16, 18; Huff, Memories that Live, 485).*

The Goshen Ward History in the Stake Manuscript History sums up the Goshen experience:

*“It is true that Goshen has*



**Pioneer Settlements in early Goshen, Utah**

*had its “ups and downs,” and what place has not. It is also a remarkable fact that Goshen has been singularly ill-fated in the selection of a suitable building site, having selected, built up and improved consecutively three several locations which in their turn have been abandoned, and subsequently all improvements demolished”*

*(Goshen Ward, Santaquin-Tintic Stake, Manuscript History and Historical Reports 1857-1984, Church History Library LR 3259 2).*

The Goshen families would try one last time to find a place for their town. But Phineas W. Cook had his own plan to stop the complaining. It was something no one else had tried before.

# Bookstore

Date			
Suggested Annual Donation - \$10 per family - Tax Deductible (You may contribute more)			
Item (10% discount on all items if dues are current or accompany this order)	Price	Quantity	Total
Now Available <b>PWCA Legacy of Faith</b> 3rd Ed., Color Illustrated, 375 pages	\$55.72	Order from Amazon	
<b>NEW!</b> Samuel Bryson's Journey book	\$15.00		
The Posterity of Phineas Wolcott Cook CD	\$6.00		
Amanda P. Savage Descending Pedigree Book	\$10.00		
Amanda P. Savage Descending Pedigree CD	\$5.00		
Triumph of Testimony, 462 page history of PWC to Utah	\$37.50		
P.W. Cook Diary Paperback 1980 2nd Edition	\$4.00		
DVD (42 minutes) on the Life of P.W. Cook	\$8.00		
Cook Ancestral Tour Guides			
Goshen & Litchfield Co., Connecticut	\$4.00		
Wallingford, Connecticut	\$4.00		
Salem, Massachusetts	\$4.00		
State of New York	\$4.00		
State of Utah	\$4.00		
Family Fireside Stories			
Book I (Illustrated Stories of PWC to Marriage)	\$9.00		
Book II (Illustrated Stories: LDS Conversion)	\$9.00		
Book III (Illustrated Stories: Winter Quarters)	\$9.00		
PAF CD with complete Cook and Porter genealogy and documentation	\$6.00		
Goshen Documents	\$6.00		
<b>Total Purchases</b>			
<b>Personal Information</b>		<b>Donations for Family Research (Tax Deductible)</b>	
Name:		Phineas Wolcott Cook Family Line	
Street Address:		Ann Eliza Howland Family Line	
City:	State: Zip:	Amanda Polly Savage Family Line	
Phone:	Email:	Catherine McCleve Family Line	
		Johanna Christine Poulson Family Line	
		Other: Web Site, equipment, etc.	
<b>Mailing Information:</b>		<b>Total Donations:</b>	
Mail this form with check to :		My Annual Dues are already paid: Yes No	
PWC		<b>Annual Organizational Dues</b>	
130 Twin Peaks Drive		Paid Dues Discount on Items Purchased (Minus 10%)	
Layton, Utah 84040		(Add Purchases, Donations, Dues and Discount) <b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	