

## **Cutler Mansion**

### **By Richard Van Wagoner**

Few Lehi men had as much impact on the town in the nineteenth century as did Englishman Thomas Cutler who emigrated here as a twenty-one year old in 1865. A merchant by trade, he served as manager of the People's Co-op from 1871-89. Financially linked with a number of leading Utah institutions, Cutler is best known as General Manager of the Utah Sugar Company from 1889-1917. His management skills and business acumen were legendary throughout Utah and much of the West.

In March 1878, Cutler moved from a small home near the original People's Co-op store and bought a seven-room house from Samuel Briggs at 150 East State. By the turn of the century, Cutler, through his interests in the Utah/Idaho Sugar Company, People's Co-op, Union Hotel, Lehi Commercial and Savings Bank, Provo Woolen Mills, Cutler Brothers, Utah State National Bank, Continental Life Insurance Company, and other wise investments, was one of Lehi's wealthiest citizens.

In 1900, Cutler began construction of a \$14,000 home on his State Street Property--a home that is near duplicate of the Jessie Knight Mansion in Provo, which was designed by architects Ware and Treganza. The July 19, 1900 "Lehi Banner" noted that Charles Orhan and Olaf Holmstead were doing the masonry work on the new fifteen-room mansion, which was later stuccoed and the plaster scored to resemble stone.

"The Cutler Mansion, " as Lehi people have usually called the Colonial Revival box style home, was the 'finest residence south of Salt Lake, " reported the January 17, 1901 "Lehi Banner" when the place was completed. The interior features hand-carved oak woodwork throughout, oak floors, a large sixteen-by-twenty-four foot dining room, a vestibule which opens into a front hall and stairway, front parlors with oak sliding doors, and handsome main stairway with stained-glass half-circle window above a regular window on the landing, and numerous fireplaces with oak mantles and tile hearths.

Three years after the mansion was completed the Cutler family moved to Salt Lake City, where Thomas could be closer to his management responsibilities with the new Utah/Idaho Sugar Company. He retired in 1917, died in California five years later, but is buried in the Lehi Cemetery.

The Cutler family retained the Lehi home until 1914 and various married children lived there periodically. Hoping to take advantage of the increased automobile traffic on State street in 1914, G. Marion Cutler remodeled the Cutler Mansion into the Reltuc Inn (Cutler spelled backwards).

The April 25, 1914 "Lehi Banner" described the place as a dream come true for weary travelers: "The expensive shady lawns, the big double decked veranda, the wide hallway and classic staircase; the big parlors with the open fireplaces, the long sunny dining room capable of seating thirty or forty people and the comfortable, luxurious bedrooms, gives the place on air of elegance and at the same time makes one feel at home when he sleeps inside."

Despite the splendor of the place and the plush new furniture, things did not go well from the beginning. The evening of April 20th, when Marion and Nellie Cutler were hosting an open house, the scene read like "Nightmare on State Street." While the Lehi Silver Band was entertaining the guests, a young man named Williamson startled the crowd by falling to the ground in an epileptic seizure.

Meanwhile young Doolph Hunger was riding his bike nearby when he struck an unseen surveyor's stake, flipped a somersault, knocked out three teeth, and "badly disfigured his countenance." Later that night the historic Kirkham store, southwest of the Reltuc Inn, was set ablaze by an arsonist and burned to the ground before firemen could bring the flames under control.

The Reltuc management's hope was the automobile trade. They purchased a large touring car and advertised "Auto Parties and Commercial trade a Specialty. Free Car Meets All Trains." East of the inn, where the Co-op Livery Stable had been, Thomas Cutler, Jr., and Marion Cutler erected a garage and machine shop in

the spring of 1914. The Cutlers were managing Saratoga at the time and they also tried to capitalize on this connection.

But the Reltuc Inn was short-lived. Just six months after it opened, the place was sold to Dr. Fred Worlton. Worlton moved his family into the lower floor and converted the upstairs into the Lehi Hospital. Ten patient rooms and an operating room were established in the facility.

The October 13, 1921 "Lehi sun" noted that for the first time x-rays were taken in the Lehi Hospital by a representative of the Victor X-Ray Corporation. "Some wonderful pictures of almost every part of the body have been secured," the paper wrote; "people should feel proud of the fact that a local institution maintains such a machine as few cities of our size can boast of a like outfit."

In 1925, the year he served as president of the Utah County Medical Society, Dr. Worlton purchased the former Lehi Commercial & Savings Bank Building (206 East State) and remodeled the upper floor into a hospital. His family retained ownership of the Cutler Mansion until 1967 when Wallace and Arlene Olsen purchased it.

Today the stately mansion, Lehi's largest home with 5,054 square feet of living space, is one of four Lehi buildings currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Note: After nearly 50 years, the Olsens still live in the home.