

## **Winn's Flower Shop and Hothouse**

### **By John K. Haws Jr.**

This Lehi business has really shocked me. I had never heard of the Winn's Flower Shop and Hothouse. It is only mentioned on a few lines in Richard Van Wagoner's "Lehi-Portrait of a Utah Town", but I could never remember reading it.<sup>1</sup> My brother is a Florist and I have helped him from time-to-time, but I never remember hearing about it from him. I was a constant customer and fan of Mel and Jessie Hartshorn at the Lehi Floral. I loved buying corsages and flowers from them. They always made them look so beautiful, but I never remember hearing about this floral shop from them. My Grandmother Haws was the daughter of Joseph S. Broadbent and she grew up around the store and their flower shop, but I never remember hearing about Winn's Floral shop from Grandma or from any of the family.

When Ronald Stine surprised me and placed a James T. Harwood painting before me. I stood in reverent awe. It was a beautiful original pastel of a building with flowers and it was called Nature's Bounty-Lehi. I did know who James T. Harwood, and of his career and story of becoming one of the most famous artists of Utah. His paintings are worth thousands. Lehi High School owns the original Harwood painting of the Fort Wall. Museums at Springville, Brigham Young University, the University of Utah and the LDS Church and all over the world display great his works of art.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Wagoner, Richard. "Lehi-Portrait of a Utah Town". Lehi City Corporation:1990. page 204

Here I was seeing an original, before my very eyes. It was so amazingly delicate. I held it in my hands. I saw an evidence of a miracle of a genius. The pastels' colors were so elegant and each piece of color simply placed to perfection. It took my breath away and I literally had to tell myself to breathe. I will forever treasure that moment and thank Ron for making it happen. He donated a copy of the painting to the Archives. I have examined it over and over. James T. Harwood was definitely a genius.

In discussing the painting with Ron, he told me it was of the Winn Floral Shop and Hot Houses. I had never heard of it before. It must have been a beautiful place for Harwood to paint its beauty. Ron informed me that the Winn Floral was at 141 West and Second South in a house now owned by Paul Comer and is rented out. I was flabbergasted. This was one of the first places that I had rented when I first had entered into marriage. I had lived in the place where John T. Winn and Lillian had operated their Floral Shop for over ten years.

I thought about the house. I recollected the high ceilings and the tall walls. When I would lay in bed, I would think about the history of those walls. I would imagine the callers in the parlor and how elegant the formal living room was in this house. I never found out its history. We only lived there for a matter of a few months and then moved to a different place.

John and Lillian had carried on the Floral Business where I had lived. They also operated a harness shop in the old Harwood and Son stand at 130 West Main Street. John Winn was born in 1869 and died in 1945, shortly before I was born. His wife Lillian was born in 1869 also but lived to 1950. Here they had sold flowers to the citizens of Lehi.

Research has shown that Floral shops of that era were similar to floral shops of today. Photographs of floral shops of the time period had them advertising for funeral flowers, cut flowers, plants and decorations. The difference from today, is they had to produce their own flowers. Floral shops today have available flowers from places all over the world. When flowers don't grow in North America, they can be purchased from countries in South America and Hawaii. Some countries' economics have been centered around cut flower sale to America

But the Winn's had to grow all of their own flowers. They grew their flowers in a hothouse that had to be heated. It was in those hothouses that they produced flowers that were used for centerpieces, funeral pieces and cut flowers for all of the fancy gatherings of the day.

It was on Christmas Day 1910, that local businessman Joseph S. Broadbent had gone to the Floral Shop to purchase a Christmas Dinner table bouquet. When he arrived, Lillian was in tears and John devastated. Their heating system had failed and all the flowers were frozen. This had happened several times previously. In the discouragement of the moment, John Winn and Joseph S. Broadbent entered into an agreement, and after a payment of \$50, the Broadbent wagon went home heaped with equipment for a new business enterprise for the Broadbents and Sons Store.<sup>2</sup>

The hot houses were installed on property north of the Lehi City Hall where the Lehi Floral was located. (235 North 100 East). Joseph Broadbent's son Alvin inherited the property. Part of it he had his home on the corner and the property

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<sup>2</sup> Van Wagoner, Richard. "Lehi-Portrait of a Utah Town". Lehi City Corporation:1990. page 204

where the floral was sold off.

I still have never seen a photograph, or a great descriptive narrative with details of the Winn Floral. What I have seen is a print of the Harwood Pastel of Winn's Floral Shop and I can imagine Lillian putting together beautiful floral creations to make Lehi happy and more beautiful. Harwood's painting brought wonderful moments for me. Lillian and John have become two people, I someday want to meet and enjoy their stories. Who knows, Lillian and John might be making heaven more beautiful, because they do not have to worry about the heating equipment failing?