

Isaac Gandy's Real Estate Holdings

Isaac Gandy owned real estate in several locations in Nevada and Utah between 1870 and 1904. The following account is based on official records of land holdings and land purchases and some other legal documents.

Land Ownership Designations

American land records are based on a standard grid system, which was used for land surveys when the United States was colonized. The basic principle is illustrated in the table below. Each plat (plot of land) is called a section and comprises 640 acres, divided into 16 plots of 40 acres in each. Every plat has a unique set of coordinates, for example

Township Twelve North (T12N) of Range Nineteen East (R19E) at a given meridian such as Mt Daiblo Meridian.

Each plat is in turn divide into four quarters of 120 acres each, denoted NE, NW, SE and SW. These are then subdivided into four plots each of 40 acres.

NW Quarter	NE Quarter
SW Quarter	SE Quarter

The position of each one of the 16 plots within the plat is denoted with references to the relative size of the plot ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$) and the points of the compass, as shown below.

Western $\frac{1}{4}$ of North West Quarter		Western $\frac{1}{2}$ of North East Quarter	
	Eastern $\frac{1}{4}$ of South West Quarter		

The original idea was that 40 acres was the size necessary – and possible - for a pioneer family to farm and support itself.

Douglas County, Nevada 1860

The following is recorded by the Carson County, Utah (ter). Recorder, Record Book A: Early maps, Genoa and Carson (page 483):

Notice

This is to certify that I have this day purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land of Isaac Gandy situated in the lower end of Upper Dutch Valley commencing at Cap Smiths east line thence running one mile down the Valley and eighty rods wide claiming for Ranching purposes.

Carson Valley

March 15/60

Recd for Record April 3/60

James F Pierce

No price is given in the record. So far I have found no record of Isaac's purchase of this land before 1860, or indication of whether this was all of Isaac's land in Douglas County. When Isaac ran a stagecoach service from Salt Lake City in the early 1870's, somebody called Pierce also ran a coach along the same route, possibly in cooperation with Isaac. Perhaps this is the same Pierce.

In the 1862 census Isaac and Harriet were recorded as living in Long Valley, with daughters Margine (3 yrs) and Mary (2 yrs).

"Long Valley lies between the east and west forks of Carson River, and is, as its name indicates, a long narrow depression extending into California. Being traversed by a limpid mountain stream its entire length, an abundant water supply can be had for irrigation when required. It has a dark, rich, productive soil, and is well adapted for dairying. An abundance of timber is close at hand upon the adjacent hills."¹

Dutch Valley is a continuation of Long Valley, running NE to SW across the border into California, Alpine County, near Woodlands. See map (TOPOZONE). Indian Creek follows the whole length of Long Valley and Dutch Valley. The southern end of Dutch Valley ends in Washoe Indian Reservation, Woodlands Community. Today Long Valley Road and Dutch Valley Road are references to the old area.

Note that the record of the land sale did not use the grid system but referred to another ranch border together with measurements in miles and rods.

Douglas County, Nevada 1870

When Isaac and Harriet lived in Carson City, where they married and had their first three daughters, they purchased land in Douglas County on the border with California. (See map). The land was purchased from the government and this was recorded in Douglas County records on June 13th 1870. The land was designated as follows in the official records of the Douglas County Recorder:

¹ From Thompson & West's history of Nevada 1881, pp. 372-383, chapter XLII, History of Douglas County

Eastern Half of the South East Quarter of Section Twenty Five in Township Twelve North of Range Nineteen East, Mt Diablo Meridian, R19E T12N, or in the grid:

Section 25

T12N

			Eastern ½ of the SE Quarter

R19E

The represents 80 acres (half of a quarter of 640 acres, $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4} \times 640 = 80$)

In the 1870 census Isaac, Harriet and the two girls were recorded in Township No 4 in Alpine County California. This is just across the California/Nevada border opposite the above plot of land. (See map). In the census Isaac was recorded as owning real estate valued at \$500 – probably referring to this plot of land recently bought.

I have found no further record of this land, for example a sale.

Gandie’s House, Baker near Garrison 1878

In the historic plat survey of 1878 (see map) for Township 13N and Range 70 E there are three houses on the site of present day Baker² - B. Lehman’s house³, Baker’s house and Gandie’s house. The plat also shows a series of roads leading to Garrison. Gandie’s house is in section 15, T13 N, R70E (Mount Diablo Meridian). It is not clear from the plat how much of section 15 Isaac and Harriet owned – probably not all of it.

The area was resurveyed in 1921 and on a map from 1976 sections 3, 4, 5, 11 and 15 were all linked together in one large section and empty of all detail.

On the 1878 map plat R69E T13N section 11 and part of section 10 – i.e. the next plat west of Gandie’s house, is designated as belonging to E. Heckethorn, who married Isaac and Harriet’s daughter Mary. Section 12 was owned in part by E. S. Lehman.

The “White” Ranch 1886-87

Ed Nevins sold the following land to Isaac Gandy for \$350:

“An undivided one half interest in that certain Ranch consisting of Forty (40) Acres situated on “Weber” Creek, Snake Valley, State of Nevada and known as the “White” Ranch, together

² The first general store in the Snake Valley was built in Baker by Thomas Darden around 1886.

³ A tourist attraction in the area is Lehman’s Caves, named after the Lehman family. The area has been designated Nevada National Forest/National Park

with an undivided one half interest in the water of said Weber Creek belonging to said Ranch, said Ranch being the North East Quarter of the North West Quarter of Section 24, Township 14 North: Range 69 East Mt Diablo Base & Meridian).”

Entitlement book 28, page 318, December 6th 1886, White Pine County, Nevada

Isaac Gandy and Edward Nevens sold the following land to Robt. C. Wilson and Edwd. D. L. Cutts for \$1100:

“All their interest in that certain Ranch consisting of Forty (40) Acres situated on “Weber” Creek, Snake Valley, State of Nevada and known as the “White” Ranch, being the “North East” Quarter of the “North West Quarter” of Section 24: Township 14 North: Range 69 East Mt Diablo Base & Meridian together with Eighty (80) inches of the water of “Weber” and “Strawberry” Creek belonging to said Ranch, said Eighty inches of water measured under a four inch pressure.)”

Entitlement book 28, page 443, June 11th 1887, White Pine County, Nevada

Section 24

T14N

	NE ¼ of NW quarter		

R69E

Isaac Gandy and Edward Nevins owned these 40 acres together, half each but “undivided”. Isaac bought out Nevins’ share for \$350 and then sold the whole ¼ to Wilson & Cutts for \$1100 dollars. A profit of \$400 if Isaac’s half was of the same value as Nevins’.

In the 1887 Land Entitlement Records of White Pine County, Nevada, Isaac is registered as owner of another 40 acres at Weaver Creek. No grid references given.

Isaac’s estate 1904

Isaac died intestate in 1904 and his estate was legally transferred to surviving wife Harriet in a process at the Fifth Judicial District Court in Millard County, Utah. According to the court records, Isaac owned two pieces of real estate at his death (both Salt Lake Meridian):

Section 7

T22S

	NE ¼ of the NW quarter	NW ¼ of the NE quarter	

R19W

This land in Garrison amounted to 80 acres in all and Isaac had a house there (which burned down accidentally during the legal process!). This was his farm. Isaac also had a stock range of 120 acres in Smithville:

Section 35

T15S

		SW ¼ of the NE quarter	
		W ½ of the SE quarter	

R19W

Isaac bought this land from the Board of Land Commissioners at a payment of \$150 per year for 10 years. On his death he had paid off four annual instalments.

The Freeman Ranch

Isaac, Harriet, Mary Heckethorn and E.H. Lake (married to Stella Gandy) were the defendants in a legal dispute about land ownership brought by plaintiff William Burbank regarding land called the Freeman Ranch near Lake Creek and named after former owner Francis H. Freeman, who passed away in 1885. The case was heard in 1904 and Isaac died while it was in progress. Harriet won the case. In the legal documents of the case, there are interesting details of land ownership and land transfer.

The land in question was part of the land owned by Isaac on his death, i.e. 80 acres in Garrison (see above):

W½ of NE quarter and E½ of NW quarter of section 7, T22S R19W Salt Lake Meridian.

The land was sold and transferred as follows:

- Before 1884 160 acres owned by Francis Freeman
- 1884 80 acres sold to William Atkinson

- 1885 remaining 80 acres to Bridgit Atkinson on Freemans death
- 1891 Isaac Gandy purchases 160 acres from Bridgit Atkinson
- 1894 Isaac sells 40 acres to daughter Mary Heckethorn
- 1894 Isaac sells 80 acres to James H Robison, husband of daughter Emma Jean
- 1901 James H Robison sells 80 acres back to Isaac and Harriet
- 1901 Isaac sells 40 acres to Elwin W Clay (the local minister?), who then sold the land on to E. H. Lake, husband of daughter Stella Gandy.

After all these transfers, the land ownership was as follows:

Section 7

T22S

	Isaac Gandy (J H Robison)	Isaac Gandy (J H Robison)	
	E. H. Lake (Stella Gandy)	Mary Heckethorn	

R19W

Other information about Isaac Gandy and family real estate

Many references to land and ranches owned by Isaac in the Snake Valley can be found in a number of books, articles and newspaper reports. The most important ones are summarized here.

“In Isaac’s wanderings over the desert he could see steam coming from somewhere farther North. He investigated and found a large stream of warm water. Vegetation was wonderful wherever that warm stream went, so he filed a homestead claim on a large portion of land. Isaac also homesteaded about 160 acres of land in Garrison, Utah. I don’t know if he built the Heckethorn Store or not.

The little settlement where his family settled was named Gandy after my Great Grandfather Gandy.

The Gandy property was divided among his three daughters.”

*As remembered by Pearl Heckethorn Johanson, told to her by Grandma Gandy.*⁴

“Isaac Gandy first homesteaded some land in Garrison. The water from Lake Creek flowing northward ran thru a large area of very tall sagebrush, indicating fertile soil. He took up 640 acres. This land is the southern portion of what we now know as Garrison, just south of the Gonder ranch.

Later he homesteaded some land at Warm Springs, about 40 miles north of Garrison. This land too was fed by a spring and a stream of water flowing over some very fertile land. Because of the location of the two farms, one can deduce that he was the second permanent settler at Garrison and the first permanent settler at what we now call Gandy.

When he divided up his land between his three daughters, Emma got the Gandy property. Mollie got a small piece of land at Garrison and the store in Garrison, called the Heckethorn store. Stella⁵ got a large tract of land at Garrison.”

*Information supplied by Lois Christopherson Smith, a great granddaughter.*⁶

Louisa Sorenson was born in Scipio, Utah. Her parents were immigrants from Denmark. Her father was a miller by trade, ran a mill powered by a big water wheel and also ran the molasses mill. They also had a small farm.

Louisa was a teacher and ran the school at Garrison, 150 miles from Scipio. Her journey there in November 1899 to take up her first teaching position was by horse and wagon and took several days, camping outdoors. They went via Hinckley, Antelope Springs, Conger Springs, “a large ranch at that time” and so to Garrison. There she was met by J. H. Robison, one of the school trustees, and Louisa boarded with him and his family. Eventually she became engaged to son Ike Robison.

The school in Garrison was closed in March and Louisa found a new post at Smithville, eighteen miles north of Garrison. She was responsible for two schools, one in the south and one in the north of Snake Valley, spending three months at each. Ike took her to the north of the valley, where his grandparents (Isaac and Harriet Gandy) had two large ranches.

“My school house was three miles from Mr. Gandy’s ranch, a little log house built on a knoll in the centre of a meadow, a beautiful setting with a spring of cool water at the foot of the knoll and bright flowers everywhere. The students were French-Canadians. The mothers could not talk American and the fathers but slightly.”

Louisa boarded with the people but spent most of her weekends at Mr. Gandy’s house. Ike visited there nearly every week.

In her second spell at Smithville, Louisa opened school in a little log cabin in the willows east of the Meechams and Simonson ranches. She boarded first with the Meechams, then the Simonsons and then with the Bliss’s. In the meantime the Robison family had moved to Gandy, the northern part of Smithville. In July she moved again to the school in Gandy in the same school house as before. She boarded with Isaac and Harriet Gandy.

Ike and Louisa were married in Scipio in September 1901 and moved back to Gandy, travelling in a covered wagon. The journey took three and a half days.

Ike and Louisa lived with his parents the first winter, but then leased a lower ranch on Silver Creek for the spring. Then they moved back to the Robison ranch in Gandy and lived in a

⁴ Boyd E Quate, *Pioneers of Snake Valley 1865-1935 As Remembered by their Descendants*, chapter 14, p.54-5.

⁵ Stella Lake was named after Ruby Estelle (Stella) Gandy, the first white woman to see the lake.

⁶ *Ibid* p.56.

converted bunkhouse there for five years. Then Ike's parents deeded them 60 acres on the south and they build their own house there.

In 1911 they sold up and moved to Long Beach, California, for health reasons, but later moved back as the purchaser (Marble Company) defaulted on the payments.

Grandfather Robison (Iola's grandfather) had to sell his ranch and Iola's father bought it in 1930. In 1933 he traded their Gandy ranches for the Hendrie Creek Ranch⁷. The ranch was run by Rulon O'Donnell, who Iola married in 1937, and then Sid and Mary Weber. In the fall of 1935 the ranch was leased. Iola and Rulon moved first to Provo where Iola attended B.Y.U. for two years and then on to Ely.

*Information supplied by Iola Robison O'Donnell, partly as remembered by her mother Louisa Sorenson Robison.*⁸

"The beginnings of the small ranching community of Gandy were rather violent, with at least two unsolved murders arising from land disputes. Also, a man named Stevens was killed in a gunfight at Salt Marsh by Trefle Doutre. Isaac Gandy, a thirty-five-year-old Englishman, arrived in Millard County in 1870 to take up a homestead south of the Gonder Ranch at Garrison. He later purchased the Rhodes Ranch in what was then called Smithville, forty miles further north in Snake Valley. The settlement at the lower ranch was named for him and continues to be home to a number of families."⁹

Most of Gandy's water comes from a spring inside a large cavern, located at the south end of Spring Mountain or Gandy Mountain. The volume of water from the spring has been measured at 13 to 14 cubic feet per second and is very warm – over 80 degrees. People homesteaded where they could use the spring's waters. The original homesteaders were Triffly (spelt Trefle above), Alex and Alfred Doutre and Almond Rhoades (Rhodes). Almond Rhoades planted an orchard. He was the first to bring a threshing machine into the community – it was powered by ten horses. Rhoades planted a big lane of poplar trees, transporting them from Italy.¹⁰

This was the ranch at Warm Springs bought by Isaac.

"Gandy was first known as Smithville. A lot of other Utah towns were also named Smithville. To avoid confusion in the mail the name was changed. Isaac Gandy was the oldest resident so they named the town after him."¹¹

John Singleton homesteaded 160 acres of ground in the Snake Valley and filed on Warm Creek Springs at Gandy in the early 20th century. This is possibly Isaac's old ranch. "John established a large ranch caller the Bar K (-K) Ranch, Gandy Ranch or Warm Creek Ranch. It was referred to by all three names."¹² John Singleton and family sold their home in American Fork and moved to the ranch in 1921. At that time there were six families living in Gandy,

⁷ Also called the Simonson ranch

⁸ Ibid p.58-62.

⁹ Edward Leo Lyman and Linda King Newell, A History of Millard County, Utah Centennial County History Series, 1999

¹⁰ Marlene Bates, North Snake Valley, Part I., p.9

¹¹ Ibid p.9

¹² Ibid p.31

neighbours living from one to eight miles away. John Singleton bought more land – in all 1 000 acres, much range land for running sheep. “Running north and south, the road through Gandy was one of the main highways leading to California through Utah.”¹³

There are family links between the Gandys and the Singletons – Isaac’s great granddaughter June Marie Robison (Emma Jean Gandy/Robison, Isaac Peter Robison) married Emery Burnell Singleton, son of John and May Singleton.

Story about Burnell:

On July 1909 a terrible electric storm was in progress. Lightening struck the Singleton house, hitting 6-year-old Burnell who was asleep on the cot. John grabbed Burnell to run outside. May opened the door and as she did so lightening struck again, killing May. John ran across the street to his brother Dell’s place. Lightening knocked him down three times as he crossed the street. John and Burnell both survived, as did little brother Orvar, age 2½.¹⁴

John’s brother Dell bought the Baker Ranch during the late 1920’s, using it for feeding cattle for John.

John Singleton bought the Baker and Rolland Ranches at Baker, Nevada in 1939. They moved to the Baker Ranch in 1940, sold the ranch, moved to Long Beach California and then moved back to the Baker Ranch in 1946. The ranch in Gandy was sold in 1946 to the Ward Leasing Company.¹⁵

In 1870 Isaac and Harriet moved to Millard County, first to Fillmore where two more daughters were born and where one of them died. Later they moved to Snake Valley where they owned several ranches. In 1898 Isaac bought the Rhodes Ranch. In 1901 he sold this ranch to his son-in-law James Henry Robison and lived on a lower ranch.¹⁶

The Robisons/after Isaac¹⁷

Emma Jean Gandy married James Peter Robison in 1877. They lived in Hailey, Idaho for three years, where daughter Hattie died of whooping cough. They moved to a ranch on Weber Creek in Snake Valley, a few miles from Osceola. Then they moved to Silver Creek and after their last child James Stanley was born there in 1890 they moved to Garrison and lived there until 1901 when they bought the Warm Creek Ranch in Gandy (then called Smithville) from Isaac. “They had a beautiful ranch with plenty of warm water, trees, fruit trees, farm crops, and cattle. Gardens, fruit, and crops grew well with the warm water.”¹⁸

In 1911 they sold the ranch and moved to Long Beach, California, but the buyer defaulted on the payments a year later so they moved back to the ranch again. They sold the ranch to their son Isaac in 1930 and moved to Delta, Utah. Later, when son Isaac traded their ranch and moved to the Simonson Ranch on Hendrie Creek in 1933, they joined him and lived in the Meecham house. After Isaac died in 1933 while tending the garden at the Hendrie Creek Ranch, Emma Jean and James Peter moved to Fillmore, Utah.

¹³ Ibid p.32

¹⁴ Ibid p.30

¹⁵ Ibid p.37

¹⁶ Ibis p. 38-9

¹⁷ Ibis p. 40-46

¹⁸ Ibid p.41

Son Isaac worked for his parents on the ranch, living with wife Louisa Sorenson and son James Keith in a bunkhouse for five years. Father James Peter then deeded 60 acres to Isaac, who worked hauling water for the Marble Company, mining in Marble Canyon. It was this company which bought both James' and Isaac's land, and then defaulted on the payments. Isaac was the Gandy postmaster for 20 years.