

Life Story of Sarah James Second Wife of John Davis Jones

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And

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Sarah James, my grandmother who raised me, was the daughter of David James and Catherine Bowen. She was born at "Penllwirobert House" in the Parish of St. John near Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales on 18 April 1840 at 1:00 AM.¹ However, she and her family celebrated her birthday on 19 April.

When but a small child, Sarah's father died, leaving her mother with seven children. Sarah's brothers and sisters were David (probably a half-brother), who was a copper smelter,² John, William, Hannah, Ester³ and Joseph.⁴ The dates of death of Sarah's father and her brother, David, are not known. However, her sister, Ester, died 23 January 1852 when she was about 16 years of age, and her brother, Joseph, died 22 December 1838 when he was but a month old.⁵

When Sarah was quite young her brothers would take her to the seashore where they would gather shells. Small snails would peep out their heads and then back in in a flash. Sarah called them periwinkle shells. They were a sea snail with a cone-shaped shell about three-fourths of an inch long. As Grandma described them it was very fascinating to me, as I had never seen an ocean, nor had the opportunity to gather seashells. She said that many of these shells were used to decorate boxes and were also strung into beads.

One evening as Sarah's brothers, who were miners, were returning home from work, they listened to two Mormon elders who were conducting a street meeting and preaching the Gospel to a group of people. They were very interested in the missionaries' message. They talked about this with their mother, after which they invited the missionaries to their home and attended their meetings whenever possible. They compared this new message to what knowledge they had of the scriptures and with other teachings they had previously as members of the Baptist Church. They felt inspired after their investigation that the missionaries were teaching the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. They helped the missionaries in every way they could and distributed tracts to those in their vicinity.⁶

John and William were baptized in 1849, and Hannah in 1852.⁷ There are records of membership for Sarah and her mother in the Tredegar Branch, Monmouthshire, England,⁸ however there is no baptism date given for Catherine

¹ Birth certificate.

² Census of 1851, St John, Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales (GS ser no 14527, pt 35).

³ Census of 1841, St John, Swansea, Glamorganshire, Wales (GS ser no 464332).

⁴ Birth certificate.

⁵ Death certificates.

⁶ History of William James, brother of Sarah James Jones.

⁷ Temple Records Index Bureau, the Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁸ Tredegar Branch Record of Members (GS ser no 14522, pt 7).

Bowen James, only that she was baptized by David Phillips. The record states that Sarah was baptized 25 December 1852 by David Phillips, and confirmed 30 December 1852 by T. Giles (Thomas Giles). Their residence was given as Queen Square (Queen's Square). Queen's Square is a locality near the town of Tredegar.

In 1855 the question of emigration to Utah was discussed. They began to save their money so that they would be prepared to journey to Zion. It was decided that William would help his mother and sister, Sarah, financially and emigrate with his family later when they had saved for their fare.

On 19 April 1856, the day after Sarah's sixteenth birthday, they set sail from Liverpool for America on the ship "The Samuel Curling". Dan Jones, the great Welsh missionary was the director of the company of the 707 souls on board. Catherine James shared her ticket with her son, John, and Hannah; her husband, George W. Turner, and their one- year- old son, Joseph, shared their ticket with Sarah.⁹ Catherine, John and Sarah's address on the passenger list was given as 4 East Lane, Tredegar (Tredegar), Monmouthshire, Wales. Hannah, George and their son's address was given as 39 Sophia Street, Cardiff, Wales; their surname was given as Davies instead of Turner, and George's profession was book agent.

Upon leaving Wales they departed with some sadness leaving friends and relatives. Grandma said she couldn't take many of her belongings on the ship. She particularly remembered having to leave her doll and could only take wearing apparel and not much of that.

They arrived in the harbor of Boston 23 May 1856. From Boston the family traveled by rail to Iowa City, Iowa, and after waiting for three weeks for handcarts started their trek across the plains 28 June 1856 with Edward Bunker in command of their company. There were 300 persons in the company and 60 handcarts. Each handcart carried 100 pounds of flour. They had a tent for cover at night, but had to sleep on the ground. En route two men killed an old buffalo and part of the animal was boiled all night to secure a little grease for the axles of the wheels, but it was so old there was very little grease in it. They had some encounters with the Indians. The food was mostly corn meal for Johnny cake, bacon and beans. Five wagons carrying provisions accompanied the handcart company. Soon supplies were cut to half a pound of flour per person a day.

The route taken from Iowa City, then terminus of the railroad westward, was by way of Des Moines. It was near Des Moines that Sarah's mother passed away. They buried her in a crude grave along the trail. It was a sad blow to her children to lose their dear mother, most especially for Sarah, she being the youngest.

They continued their journey on to Council Bluffs, Iowa, thence to Winter Quarters (Florence), Nebraska, and on the north side of the Platte River to Scott's Bluff. The company then made their way to Fort Laramie, Wyoming, from there to Casper, Martin's Hollow, and South Pass over the Continental Divide to

⁹ L.D.S. Passenger List of "The Samuel Curling" (GS ser no 6184, pt. 2).

Fort Bridger, and then on into the Salt Lake Valley. They arrived in Salt Lake City 2 October 1856.¹⁰

Four months later Sarah was married and sealed to John Davis Jones 10 February 1857 in President Brigham Young's office in the Council House in Salt Lake City by President Young.¹¹ She was his second wife in plural marriage. John was born in Llanllwni, Carmarthenshire, Wales, and his first wife, Mary Jones, whom he married 28 January 1854, was born in Llangendeirne, Carmarthenshire. John, Mary and Sarah lived in Willard, Box Elder County, Utah a number of years, and here eight of Sarah's ten children were born. There is a record of John and Sarah and these children recorded in the Willard Ward Records.¹²

In 1869 John took Mary and their children north to homestead in Malad Valley. It is believed, contrary to tradition, that he didn't move Sarah and their children to Cherry Creek until after the birth of their daughter, Hannah, 1876 in Willard. It was in Cherry Creek that the last two of their children were born. Sarah had several years of hardship in the valley. John built her a rock house, which is still standing, and he helped build the church house which still stands with a modern addition.

Sarah's brother, John was recorded in the 1860 census of Utah residing with his sister Anna (Hannah) and brother-in-law, Geo. W. Turner and two children.¹³ He was married and sealed to Elizabeth Walker of Staffordshire, England in the Endowment House 30 March 1867.¹⁴ These newlyweds were accidentally drowned 25 December 1867 while attempting to cross a bridge over the Sand Creek, south of Plain City, Weber County, Utah.¹⁵ They were buried in the Turner family plot in the Ogden City Cemetery.¹⁶

Sarah's brother, William, married Sarah Jenkins in 1853. They were members of the Tredegar Branch also, residing at Sirhowy, near Tredegar. They departed with their infant son, David, from Liverpool on the ship "The George Washington" 28 March 1857. Their address on the passenger list was given as 4 East Lane, Tredegar. The leader of the company was J.P. Park and there were 817 persons on board. The ship arrived in Boston 20 April 1857.¹⁷ They traveled as far as Pennsylvania where Sarah had a brother, William Jenkins. William James obtained employment in the coal mines to finance the rest of their trip to Utah. It was in Ashland, Pennsylvania that a daughter was born to them. In 1860 the family traveled to Florence, Nebraska, and on 6 June departed from there with the handcart company commanded by Daniel Robinson. There were 235 persons in the company with 43 handcarts and six supply wagons. They arrived in Salt Lake Valley 27 August.¹⁸ The family first settled in Ogden, then

¹⁰ Utah immigration Card Index (GS ser no 38335, pts 10 and 11).

¹¹ Nauvoo Sealings and Adoptions, Vol A-B (GS ser no 25163, pt 4).

¹² Willard Ward Records of Members (GS ser no 6571, pt 1 and GS ser no 33553, pt 345).

¹³ Federal Census of 1860, Ogden, Weber County, Utah (GS ser no 6155).

¹⁴ Endowment House Sealings, Book E (GS ser no 25165, pt 16).

¹⁵ Deseret News, published January 1, 1868.

¹⁶ Cemetery records, Ogden City Cemetery.

¹⁷ L.D.S. Passenger List of "The George Washington" (GS ser no 6184, pt 2).

¹⁸ Utah Immigration Card Index (GS ser no 38335, pt 10).

moved to Cache Valley in 1865 where they settled in Paradise. William and Sarah were the parents of eight children. Grandma kept in close contact with her brother, William. He died 4 August 1922 in Paradise, and was buried there in the cemetery.

Sarah's sister, Hannah, and her husband, George William Turner, settled in Ogden. He first farmed¹⁹ and then either owned or worked in a bookstore.²⁰ They had ten children. Hannah died 22 May 1896 and was buried in the Ogden City Cemetery.²¹ Grandma attended her funeral.

Sarah received a patriarchal blessing 8 November 1857 at North Willow Creek Fort (Willard) given by Patriarch Charles W. Hyde.²² She received a second blessing 7 December 1881 at Cherry Creek by Patriarch John Smith.²³ Before John Davis Jones died 28 October 1900 they and their eldest daughter, Catherine Jones Richards did work for their dead in the Logan Temple.²⁴

After Grandma was left a widow she preferred living in her own home. She was postmistress for twelve years in Cherry Creek. The young children called her Grandma Post Office. She moved eventually from her rock home to a square log house, tie-type, north of her former house. She was a faithful Latter-day Saint as long as she lived, very active in church work and was Relief Society president for eight years.

Grandma's children called her Mam, which is mother in the Welsh language. Not only did she raise ten children, but about 1907 she took me, her granddaughter, Laura May, daughter of her youngest son, Hyrum, to raise.

Grandma had an apple orchard in Cherry Creek and dried much of her fruit, bottled some and made jelly. She made her own laundry soap out of grease and lye. In the early days she carded yarn. She usually raised some chickens, most of them Plymouth Rocks, and a few other odd varieties. She usually had a patch of alfalfa or lucerne growing around her home, but later leased out part of her land. In her yard was a large centrifugal pump for drinking water. It is still there. While in Cherry Creek, I remember what a great event it was when my father would flag down the passenger train for Grandma and me so that we could go into Malad to stake conference. Much of the time we stayed at Aunt Catherine (Cass) and Uncle Bill Richards where the visiting apostles and brethren would be staying also. Uncle Bill was president of the Malad Stake. Grandma's daughters were all very good cooks and Aunt Cass served delicious meals for the visiting authorities.

While living in Cherry Creek Grandma took in some of the school teachers to room and board. I remember Mr. Tom Nibert, Hazel James, Grandma's brother, William's granddaughter, and some others.

We spent many holidays with Aunt Cass and Uncle Bill, Aunt Hannah and Uncle John Peterson and Uncle Eve and Aunt Phenie in St. John, Aunt Esther

¹⁹ Federal Census of 1860, Ogden, Weber county, Utah 9GS ser no 6155.

²⁰ Federal Census of 1880, Ogden, Weber County, Utah (GS ser no 38083, pt 6).

²¹ Ogden City Board of Health records, Ogden, Utah.

²² Card Index to Patriarchal Blessings (GS ser no 50673, pt 34).

²³ Card Index to Patriarchal Blessings 9GS ser no 50673, pt 34).

²⁴ Logan Temple Archives.

and Uncle John Mifflin, Aunt Annie and Uncle Tom Stuart, and Uncle Joe and Aunt Nancy in Henderson Creek. Grandma was loved and esteemed by all who knew her and she helped each one of her children whenever they needed her.

In 1913 we moved to Malad so that she could be closer to most of her children. She had a frame house built on Bush Addition near her daughter, Catherine Richards. She was active in the Malad Second Ward and took me with her to nearly every sacrament meeting.

In Grandma's later years she would accompany Aunt Esther and her daughters, and me to Saturday night dances at LeGrande Hall. She could still dance a jig at 80. She was always active and full of fun. Uncle Will for a time played the trap drums in the orchestra at these dances. He also taught violin and tuned pianos while staying at Grandma's in Malad. Grandpa sang and played violin, and several of their children inherited this musical talent, one of them my father, Hyrum.

Grandma had blue eyes and she was only about five feet tall, as I remember. She always wore glasses and often misplaced them on her forehead. I would have to tell her that she had them on. My cousin, Kate Richards, and I would have fun as we were getting in our teens, making a chair of our arms and picking Grandma up and carrying her. We would sometimes be naughty and mock her and some of her lady friends while they were visiting in the Welsh language.

Sarah was the mother of twelve children, five sons and five daughters grew to adulthood. They were as follows:

1. Benjamin David Jones was born 15 May 1859 in Willard, Box Elder County, Utah. He married Claudia Richards 28 December 1882 in the Endowment House, Salt Lake City, Utah. They had twelve children. Benjamin died 13 August 1932 at Smithfield, Utah.
2. Catherine Ann Jones was born 15 December 1861 in Willard, Utah. She married William Henry Richards 8 October 1883 in the Endowment House. They had seven children. Catherine died 12 February 1916 at Malad City.
3. William Henry Jones was born 14 January 1863/64 in Willard, Utah. He married Sarah Maria Bush 7 May 1887 in Malad City. They had three children, and were later divorced. William died 19 April 1938 in Kentfield, Marin County, California.
4. Evan George Jones was born 12 August 1866 in Willard, Utah. He married Josephine Deschamps 9 December 1891 in the Logan Temple. They had nine children. Evan died 24 August 1921 in St. John, Oneida County, Idaho.
5. Rachel Jones was born 8 October 1868 in Willard, Utah. She married John Morgan Mifflin 6 December 1888 in the Logan Temple. They had two children. Rachel died 10 August 1903 in Butte, Silver Bow County, Montana.
6. Joseph Alonzo Jones was born 19 April 1871 in Willard, Utah. He was married to Ann (Nancy) Jones 25 October 1899 in the Salt Lake Temple. They had eight children. Joseph died 23 March 1955 in Malad City.
7. Esther Jane Jones was born 26 November 1873 in Willard, Utah. She married John Morgan Mifflin 15 September 1904 in the Salt Lake Temple.

They had five children. Esther died 23 October 1968 in Shelly, Bingham County, Idaho.

8. Hannah Jones was born 11 June 1876 in Willard, Utah. She married John H. Peterson 9 January 1896 in the Logan Temple. They had four children. She died 26 November 1926 in Malad City.
9. Annie Elizabeth Jones was born 19 January 1879 in Cherry Creek, Oneida County, Idaho. She married Thomas Stuart 28 July 1901 in Cherry Creek. They had six children. Annie died 7 July 1951 in Malad City.
10. Hyrum John Jones was born 31 May 1885 in Cherry Creek, Idaho. He married (1) Sarah Maria Parkinson 17 May 1905 in the Logan Temple. They had three children. He married (2) Clara Burkhardt 14 December 1911 in Salt Lake City. They had six children. He married (3) Ruby Elizabeth Ashliman 16 April 1925 in Ogden, Weber County, Utah. They had eight children and were later divorced. He married Mrs. Maria Miles Tams Bishop 10 December 1948 in Elko, Elko County, Nevada. Hyrum died 11 October 1958 in Ogden, Utah.

Sarah James Jones was blessed with wit, humor, keenness of mind and the rarest sense of humor until her death in Malad City 4 September 1921 after suffering a paralytic stroke. Her funeral was held in the Second Ward in Malad. She was 81 years of age. She was buried in the Cherry Creek Cemetery near her husband, John Davis Jones. I was 15 years old and felt very sad and lonely losing my dear grandmother who had mothered me during my most formative years. She was truly a wonderful woman and I appreciate all that she did for me. She gallantly suffered many hardships as a pioneer and gave her family and descendants a heritage for which they should be very proud.