

## Life Story Of Sarah Chatterton Potter

Compiled by Helen Mar Beatie



Sarah Chatterton Potter was born 27 August 1842 in Kearsley, Lancashire, England. She was the daughter of Thomas Chatterton and Rachel Hulbert. There were two children in the family, Sarah and John. However, while her brother was playing with a whip top in front of the fireplace one day, the whip passed through the flames and ignited and wrapped around his neck. While the burns were not severe enough to cause his death he was so frightened that he died from shock and Sarah was left an only child.

While she was quite young, her Mother died. In January 1860, when she was 18 years of age, she married Sampson Edgar Potter. They became the parents of twelve children, seven boys and five girls. Ten of these children were born in England and two in America. The children were namely: John, Rachel, Eliza, Elizabeth, Joseph, Sydney Edgar, Noah, Jessie, Ethel, Thomas Chatterton, Parley Smith and Edward Hulbert. However, Eliza died at the age of two and one half years of age.

Sarah was always very religious, and when the Mormon Elders came to that part of England she became very interested in their teachings and 1879 she joined the church with all the members of her own family who were old enough to be baptized at that time. They were baptized in the Manchester Baths at Manchester, England, by Oscar F. Hunter, and confirmed in the Pendlebury Branch of the Church. The day they were baptized the ice had to be broken on the baths and the children rode home to Kearsley on the top of the bus from Manchester to Kearsley and none of them caught colds.

After they joined the Church, people in their neighborhood and also their relatives would have nothing to do with them. They called them dippers and would cross the street before they would speak to them. Sarah was always good to the missionaries and always had a place for them to

sleep and good meals and their wash was done for them and she and Sampson always saw that they had money to travel to the next place.

Joseph in the meantime left England for America with an Elder by the name of Joseph Carlisle and the rest of the family prepared to follow him. Sampson left England in 1883 and on 30 August 1884, with five of her children, Sarah set sail for America, from Liverpool, England. Sydney, John and Noah had already gone ahead of Sarah and the rest of the family. They sailed on the vessel Wyoming. After 11 days on the ocean, they arrived in New York. They spent enough time there to arrange for things to take care of their needs crossing the country by train. While waiting for the train, Sarah left their hampers and baggage and two of the young children with Elizabeth while she went to make some last minute purchases. After she left them, the train pulled up quite a distance from where she had left them and when she returned she could not find them and thought they had been kidnapped. She soon saw two men hurrying up with the children and baggage thinking the children were being abandoned there.

While crossing the prairies, the train stopped one day in the middle of a cornfield and Sarah could see a woman in the farmhouse making flapjacks. Since they were all hungry for fresh food, she decided to get some of the flapjacks so got off the train to see if she could get some. While she was away the train started to move. She came running as fast as she could while the children cried and all the coach thought she would be left, but the train stopped and waited for her, and all were happily on their way again.

They arrived in Salt Lake and spent a few days in Salt Lake resting and seeing the sights which some of the missionaries that had been at their home were kind enough to show them. On 19 September 1884 they arrived in Pleasant Valley (later called Winter Quarters, Carbon County, Utah) where Sampson had prepared a home for them. Here, Parley and Edward were born and an incident that happened before they left England was brought to mind. One day the gypsies came to her home and one of them wanted to tell her fortune. This was before they had any idea of ever coming to America. Sarah did not want the fortune but finally consented and the gypsy told her she would cross the great water and after that she would rock the cradle twice.

Sampson worked in the mines in the winter and, as he had taken up homestead land in Cleveland (also called Castle Valley, Emery county), he would go to the homestead in the

Summer. Sarah went with him for a while but did not like farm life as she had always lived in the city and farm life was quite hard at that time. She finally returned to Winter Quarters where she stayed until her death.

Sarah was about 5 feet 2 inches tall, rather plump and she had dark brown hair and blue eyes. She was very kind, also very strict and firmly believed that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. She was always kind to everyone and always ready to help anyone in trouble. She was always called to take care of the sick and helped to bring a great many babies into the world. She was a very good cook and housekeeper.

During the winter of 1906 she took care of her son Edward (Ted) through a case of Typhoid fever. She contracted the fever and died from complications on 13 February 1907 at her home in Winter Quarters. She is buried in the Scofield Cemetery, Scofield, Carbon County, Utah.