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Biographical Sketch

of

Martha Selindy Smith Chipman

by Myrle McGrew

Pioneer Year 1850

Born: 9 Aug 1836, Weekley County, Tennessee

Married: Henry Chipman, Jan 1855

Died: 30 Oct 1859

From the marriage of Warren Smith and Lydia Alexander came the following children: Mark, Eldredge, Abinadi, Melissa, Martha Selindy, Carson and a boy, whose name is unknown. Carson and the last child were born in Carson Valley, West Nevada. Carson was drowned while still in his teens.

Thru hardships and exposure in those early days this family moved by ox team and wagon, from Weekley County Tennessee, to Nauvoo, where the Father labored for the support of the family.

Here it was the privilege of the family to hear and converse with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and at the age of fifteen, Melissa received her endowments in the Nauvoo Temple. The family was then driven from Nauvoo by mobs of non-believers. During the hardships and deprivations the family suffered, on this journey, the Mother, Lydia Alexander was stricken with cholera and died.

To be sure their hearts were heavy, but thru their great faith and trust in God, they were able to press on.

Melissa, being the older of the two girls, and the stalwart type she was, bravely tried to mother the bereaved little flock. And what a wonderful Mother she proved to be.

They moved on west ward by way of Council Bluffs reaching Salt Lake City in October, 1850. While they were living at Cotton Wood near Salt Lake City Melissa met and married Stephen Mott. Taking Martha, the younger sister, with them to American Fork where they lived the remainder of their lives.

Martha Selinda Smith, daughter of Warren Smith and Lydia Alexander, was born in Weekley County, Tennessee, August 9, 1836.

Her life was very short. However, at the age of 19 we find she was a very beautiful and attractive girl, crowned with lovely golden hair and was about five feet three inches in height.

She was known to have a genuine, even tempered, sunny disposition. That was saying a great deal after enduring the trials she endured. And especially during the adolescent age having slept on the damp ground while crossing the plains.

She married Henry Chipman at the age of 19 in January, 1855. Being the first and only wife until after her death.

Many people who knew her remarked how devoted she and her husband were to each other, and that she made him an excellent wife. Melissa Mott, her sister, leaves details regarding Martha's married life that will always be held as Sacred in the memories of the Children.

She also tells us it was Martha's desire and ambition to construct their home life into a haven in preparation for the Spirit of God. She was prayerful at all times.

She had very high ideals, and was constantly trying to shape her life and her newly made home life, to conform with these ideals. She depended greatly upon the Spirit of the Lord to direct her in her many undertakings, and had a wonderful testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel, which has been revealed thru our Prophet Joseph Smith.

As well as being accomplished in sewing, cooking, and knitting. She had the knack of being an efficient house keeper. In fact it was said had she not been so ambitious and particular, perhaps her life could have been prolonged.

In the year of 1856 Jan. 4th she gave birth to a baby Girl which was given the name of Melissa, named after her sister Melissa Mott.

Henry Chipman, her Husband, was so over joyed having been so greatly blessed, wrapped the little new comer in a heavy blanket and visited all the neighbors, to display their new arrival. Nevertheless little Melissa was none the worse for this 4th of January frolic.

Three years later, on March 19, 1859, another baby girl blessed their home. This Child was called Martha Ellen.

The mother still in a weakened condition, and having far more ambition than strength, did things to help her Husband in the routine of life, that caused her to experience a back set. Which resulted in her Death October 30, 1859 at the age of twenty three. Later, Melissa married Henry Davis Boley Nov. 3rd 1872 at Salt Lake City.

The second child, Martha Ellen, married Jediah Mercer about 1885 being the first wife.