

DUP AF Book 2 page 250

Biographical Sketch

of

Mary Ann Smith Steggell

by Ruby T. Brown, granddaughter

Pioneer Year 1868

Sailed on the Minnesota

Born 11 May 1848 at Liverpool, England

Married 22 Aug 1868 to Jonathan Steggell in the Endowment

House, SLC, Utah

Died 15 Jan 1933 at American Fork, Utah

Mary Ann Smith, daughter of Nancy Ann Turner and William Smith, was born the May the 11, 1848 at Liverpool, England. Her mother was born January 1, 1822 at Wilderspool, Manchester, England. She was the daughter of Martha and James Turner. Her father, William Smith, son of William Smith, was born June 3, 1818 at Bannf, Scotland. He was raised at Aberdeen, Scotland and afterwards moved to London. He married Nancy Ann Turner at Liverpool, England June 27, 1844. They were the parents of thirteen children.

Mary Ann was blessed when five years old by Elder Berrill Covington, on the same day that her father and mother were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Her father was a seafaring man. He worked on the freighting vessels of the Mersey River. While a little girl the family moved from Liverpool to Elsmere Port. While living here her mother owned a shop selling shoes and periodicals.

She remembers wading with the other children in the Mersey River when the tide was out. Also picking primroses along the hedges and going chestnut hunting. She remembers hearing her mother tell about the Black Plague in England. Wagons loaded with coffins drove about the streets picking up the dead and burying them without ceremonies. Her Aunt Jane took her dinner, one Sunday morning, to the bake house to be cooked while she went to church. She was never seen nor hear of again. Her relatives always supposed she had been taken with the plague and had been picked up from the street and buried.

Her mother was a good Bible student and after they joined the Church their home was always open to the elders. Among many they entertained were Franklin D. Richards, Charles W. Penrose and Bishop Preston of Logan. When she was about sixteen years of age they moved back to Liverpool. Her father retained his position on the boats and her mother went into business again, operating a large fish and poultry shop on 197 West Derby Road.

While living here as in Elsmere Port their home was always open to the Elders. Among them was one Jonathan Steggell. He was not very strong physically and was often entertained at the Smith

home, where he was shown every consideration and kindness. Out of this acquaintance grew a courtship between Elder Steggell and Mary Ann. When he was released she returned to America with him. They left England on the "Minnesota", the first steamship that brought Mormon Immigrants across the ocean. The voyage was made in eleven and one half days. They were both accustomed to the ocean so neither were seasick and they had a very pleasant trip.

They had a very pleasant time crossing the plains. There were two other girls, grandma's age, in the same company and they traveled together. The three of them slept in the back half of a wagon box, while an old lady and her granddaughter occupied the front half. They were so crowded it was like being locked in and when one wanted to turn over they would call out "Turn" to the others because they could not move unless they all moved at the same time.

She had two pairs of shoes, a coarse pair and a fine pair. She would start out with the coarse one and hewn her feet became tired she would put the coarse ones around her neck and wear the fine pair. She walked all the distance across the plains with the exception of twelve miles. Grandfather was very ill and she rode with him one afternoon. These were the days of their courtship and while they had their hardships to endure yet they were very happy days. The last morning of their journey their rations ran out. She shook the flour sack and made one little cake for the two of them. They started out bright and early and reached the Salt Lake City before the rest of the company.

They arrived in Salt Lake City the 20th of August 1868 and were married the 22<sup>nd</sup>, in the Endowment House.

Grandmother had left a very comfortable home where she never what it was to want for anything. She had brought with her a chest of beautiful woolen, silk, satin, and velvet dresses with shoes and gloves to match. Another was filled with linen, silver and other beautiful things. Imagine all of these beautiful things, live goose feather bed and beautiful white sheets (a pair of which are still in the family) and not even a bedstead to put them on. She improvised a bedstead by laying boards on some large rocks. Beautiful white table

linen and dainty silverware on a dry goods box and a dainty little English Miss dressed in her silk dress and fancy shoes cooking on a crude rock fireplace. She cut up one of her sheets and some of her underwear to make her first baby clothes.

Soon after she was married, while still living in Salt Lake City, hearing a noise one day she opened the door to an adjoining room and there stood four big buck Indians. When they saw her standing there, they began to laugh and say, "scared". They seated themselves around the fireplace and started to smoke and speak in their own language, while she stood speechless and almost paralyzed with fright. An old lady who was accustomed to Indians and whose room they occupied talked to them and finally they left.

Grandma was married August 22, 1868 and on May 17, 1869 grandfather took a second wife and so she lived on through the hardships and trials incident to pioneer life, blazing the trail and laying a permanent and outstanding foundation for her future posterity to enjoy, taking joy in the thought that she knew beyond a doubt that God lived and was guiding the destiny of the people with whom she had cast her lot.

On the May 18, 1869, they moved to Kaysville, Utah. They lived there for about one year and then moved to American Fork, where she has since resided. When her first baby was about a year old she was visiting with her parents at Kaysville. They were bringing her back home, but when they neared Salt Lake City her mother became ill and had to return home. She and her sister obtained a ride with Brother John P. Kelley on a hayrack. It was a beautiful evening, but just before they reached the halfway house it began to snow. Brother Kelley thought it wise for them to stay there all night; but when he went inside there was a crowd of rough, uncouth men staying all night. So they had a cup of coffee and went on. Grandma and my Aunt had a quilt to wrap in and Brother Kelley a buffalo robe. By the time they reached the Point of the Mountain the storm was so terrible and the snow so deep that the horses lost their way. Brother Kelley left the wagon to try and find the road. He was gone so long Grandma became very fearful for his safety; but he finally returned, saying it was a good thing they stopped when they did for had they

gone the length of the wagon farther they would have gone down the embankment into the deep hollow below and no one would have found them until spring. After finding the road again, they came on and reached Lehi just as it was coming daylight.

When they finally reached American Fork the snow was about three feet deep. Grandma took a very severe cold, which effected her hearing and has gradually become worse and worse. She was a good penman, good reader, and had a strong testimony of the gospel/ but being deprived of her hearing has also deprived her of the privilege of being active in the church and the community.

About the summer of 1870 the water was very scarce and they had to use it to irrigate the crops and couldn't run the mill, so many of the saints were without flour, grandma included in the number. They had two small children who were crying for bread; but there was no bread to give them. Sister Kelly had enough flour to make a few biscuits for her own children and sent one each for grandma's children. They went to Sister Annie Crooks to see if she could lend them some until the mill could run. She said she had none but she had a batch of bread in the over and they were welcome to a loaf of it when it was baked. She had a large family of her own and they didn't have the heart to accept it. They went three days without. This was just a short time before my mother and Uncle Jim were born.

The fourth morning Aunt Bell had gone out to milk the cow and grandma went in her bedroom and was again asking the Lord to open up the way and bless them with flour, when a knock came at the door. When she opened it, there stood Mary Barratt with a small brass kettle of flour. Sister Barratt had been without flour and knew also that grandma had none; and as soon as she obtained some she immediately sent them part of it. The little children were still crying for bread, and so they soon cooked them a few cakes to appease their hunger. Brother John Middleton took his team and went to Salt Lake City and brought a hundred pounds of flour for both himself and grandmother. At this time, my grandfather was working in American Fork Canyon, cooking for a group of miners. He used to send the bacon rinds home to grandma. She divided them with the neighbors

and they would cut the tiny scraps of meat off and fry them and have the grease to dip their bread in.

She has always been an expert with her needle and in her early life did a great deal of sewing for other people. She has always made Temple Aprons. She made two aprons sixty years ago, one for grandfather and one for herself. They were made from a pattern of an apron that was made in Nauvoo. Grandfather was buried in his; the other is still in the family. It is in excellent condition and different members of the family still use it when doing Temple Work. For a number of years she has made them for the Relief Society, and everyone who has seen them know how beautifully they are embroidered.

Grandfather died February 11, 1885, leaving Grandma a widow for the last forty-seven years of her life. At the age of eighty-three years she is still active, both physically and mentally, and is able to read her newspaper without the aid of glasses.

March 20, 1933

She died January 15, 1933 at American Fork, Utah. She is survived by one son Jonathan F. Steggell and one daughter, Elizabeth R. Thornton, both of American Fork, Utah. Two sons John William and Alexander H. preceded her in death. She is also survived by sixteen grandchildren, twenty-eight great grandchildren and one great great grandchild, also one sister Isabella Adams of Layton, Utah.

*By Ruby Wray Thornton Brown Clayson*