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Biographical Sketch

of

Ernestine Dourin Jacob Nicholes

by Bertha N. Sager

Pioneer Year 1853

Sailed on the Elvira Owen

Cyrus H. Wheelock Company

Born: 22 May 1828, Quinprele, Brittany, France

Married: Henry Jacob

Died: 12 May 1912

Pulsing through the pages of early church history are life stories of brave, heroic women who stood side by side with men and suffered with them for the sake of the Gospel. Among these was Grandmother Nicholes. Undoubtedly before she entered this life she was chosen for this great mission. She was a remarkable personage. A woman of serious thinking and force of character, polite but dignified in manner, and possessing more than the ordinary amount of wisdom.

She was called of God to come out of the old world, rear a large family in this promised land, and therefore all honor is due her as our Grandmother.

Ernestine Nicholes, the daughter of Eteirime Dauerin and Margarerete Marie Frigan, was born at Quinprele Brittany France, May 22, 1828. She was the night child of a family of ten children. She was the ninth child of a family of ten children. When eight years of age her father died and four years later her mother so at the tender age of twelve she was an orphan. She was placed for one year in a Catholic convent, from there she went to the city of Harve to live with her sister Perrine who was a dress maker.

She was taught the trade of hand embroidery, which she very neat and adept in. Her schooling we know very little about only she read her French bible and was extraordinarily keen in figuring and sums of Arithmetic. Her religious training was in the Catholic Church and her cross, beads and candles she brought with her to America.

It was in the city of Harve she met Henry Jacob and was wooed and wed to him when she was 19 years of age. Two children were born – Henry in 1848 and Eugene in 1851. She was very happy and comfortable and you might say proud too, for Mr. Jacobs was Captain for a trading vessel which plied its trade in foreign ports bringing such luxuries as silks, spices and teas back to France to sell to eager and anxious buyers. But alas it did not last long, for soon after her second child was born, a package with her husband's watch came to her with the news that her husband had taken a fever in a foreign port and had died and had been buried at sea.

So at the age of 23 she was a widow with two children. It was at this time she heard Elder John Taylor preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. She recognized in this man an unusual personality and his message sank deep within her bosom answering a longing, satisfying an inborn soul who knew the call of its master. And on December 20, 1852 she was baptized by Eugene Henroid, a young French boy 19 years of age who had accepted the gospel and was teaching Apostle John Taylor the French language at this time.

No sooner was she baptized than the desire to gather with the Saints possessed her. Making arrangements with her Sister Perrine to care for the baby Eugene, she would take Henry and when she was in America and settled they could come on to her. How often she lamented, "The way was so far and every thing so different than she expected." It took 19 long years to get enough to send for the little one who had grown to manhood. The letters passed on going with good news to come to Mother the other telling her son was dead, dying with typhoid fever September 5th, 1875.

In January 1853 we find her and her little boy in Liverpool in charge of Eugene Henroid ready to sail for America. It is here that the first ill luck overtakes her. She looses her trunks, which were filled with little articles of clothing for the child, silks, linens and real lace, precious letters and books, a bit of rare china and some fine clothes for herself, so that in the far away new home things of beauty and culture should not be forgotten. What will she do? Now a word of English can she speak nor understand, how is she to go on with only what she stood up in? Things look dark indeed when a fellow passenger sees her sorrows and like an answer to her prayer, Ann Rachel March speaks to her in her own language, comforts and cheers her takes her under her protecting care and shares with her from her own scanty wardrobe. One recognizing the strength, leadership and capabilities in the tall pale-faced woman and the other a dainty backward little woman needing protection and some one to learn upon.

That very day on the piers of Liverpool, Grandmother placed her trust in Ann Rachel March and never during their long lives together did Ann March ever shake that trust, always taking the

brunt of the hardship, sharing equally, teaching her helping her understanding her and doing only as a sister would.

They sailed on the Elvira Owen, a small sailing vessel, and landed at New Orleans. From here they took passage up the Mississippi River to Koekuk, Iowa then outfitting camp for the valley of the Great Lake. After a wait of six weeks for teams and wagons to arrive, they were on their way in Cyrus H. Wheelocks Co. across the Great American Plains over the Rocky Mountains and at last arriving in Salt Lake City, Oct 1853.

Grandmother and Henry were taken home by Heber C. Kimball and lived one year in his home. When Ann March who had married Josiah Nicholes the previous fall sent for her to come to American Fork to care for her during her approaching confinement she was glad to accept and came here and helped to earn her own keep and that of her son. She remained for one year and Grandfather, heeding the advice of Brigham Young to marry the woman who they were providing for, proposed marriage to her. She knew she had closed her heart and locked it as far as home and relations were concerned and was willing to go about her affairs and accept responsibilities that she might leave a prosperity in this land to reap the benefits of the hardships of the pioneering, and carry on the principles of this Latter Day Saint Gospel. So, sometime in the spring of 1856 she went to the endowment house in Salt Lake City and became the 3rd wife of Josiah Nicholes.

Her early training was so different that she was truly unprepared for the mission she was called to, but the things she could do she did well and there was no better mother for her little children. They were never neglected and her greatest joy was to cuddle them in her arms and rock them to sleep.

For 22 years they lived in town and 9 sons were born to her in the little old adobe home that stood where the Public Library now stands. Her baby, Theodore, was 15 months when Grandfather built her a comfortable two room log house down on the farm and the remainder of her life was spent contentedly and happy there.

She joined the Relief Society when it was first organized in 1868. She loved the Gospel and had a staunch testimony of its truthfulness, she deemed it a pleasure to attend her meetings where she would hear the gospel's message. Although her poor mastering of the English language prohibited her from taking an active part.

In her life she had few material comforts, but she never was so poor that she could not give the greater half if not the whole possession to one in greater needs. Giving was a joy; her only regret was that she did not have more to give.

Her last struggle was as she had always wanted it. Mother's Day May 12th, 1912 after visiting with her children and friends and spending a most beautiful Sunday she retired to rest quietly going to sleep to awaken in the great some where with those she loved and dad proceeded her.

She left 8 sons and 37 grandchildren to mourn her loss and to bless her memory, and to thank the Father the give of all good gifts that this dear woman had embraced the gospel and for the three things she contributed to this Church and to society were courage, endurance, and sacrifice. Without such women this commonwealth in the Rocky Mountains could not have been established.