

Joseph James A History of a Pioneer of 1854

Written By His Daughter:
Mary Elizabeth James Jones

Joseph James a son of Joseph Jury and Mary James was born Feb. 26, 1830 in Halse, Somerset, England. He was converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ of the Later-Day Saints and was baptized and confirmed on Feb. 15, 1852 in Cardif, Wales. He emigrated to Utah leaving his native land on Jan. 17, 1854. He sailed on a ship called Galconder. It took about nine weeks crossing the ocean. On his arrival at New Orleans they were detained there waiting for another company of Saints which had been delayed on account of having much sickness at sea, and they were thirteen weeks arriving at New Orleans. These two companies were scheduled to cress the plains together. They traveled across the plains with ox teams, the people had to walk nearly all the way. The company for which they were sailing came on the Old Ship Windemere. This company had been quarentined at St. Louis on account of an epidemic of Cholera and this further delayed him.

It seems like it was the plan for him to travel with this company, because he was alloted a place with the family of George Holyoak and traveled as one of their family and became acquainted with their daughter Sarah, the oldest surviving daughter. Upon their arrival in Salt Lake City on Oct. 3, 1854 they were married in a covered wagon by Elder Sykes. Her wedding gown was a clean callico dress. They were without anything to start life, only a meager

supply of clothing. Josepy walked to Farmington where he obtained a job. His wife got a chance to ride part of the way and joined him.

They both worked for their board with a family who were keeping a sort of boarding house which job they kept until the heaviest part of the severe winter was over. Then he set out to come North and try his luck. They made their home in Ogden, if you would call it a home. Joseph worked at whatever he could find to do. In the fall of 1855, Joseph obtained a small lot which was located on 27th Street between Lincoln and Grant. He built a sod room with willow and dirt floor. He made a bedstead of poles fastened them together and covered it with willows. He worked for straw until he had enough to fill an old tick for a bed. The chest they brought from England served for a table. They had one camp kettle in which to do their baking, one spade and one ax. These were the only tools he possessed. With some additions to this room it served as their home for 10 years until 1865. While they were living here six of their children were born. Their names were: Joseph H., William F., George Richard, Edward B., Charles Willard & Sarah Hannah.

In the year 1857 the trouble with Johnson's Army arose and he had to leave his wife and family in destitute conditions to go to Echo Canyon to assist in the defense of the people. However, instead of wiping out the Saints, Johnson's Army was a blessing to them. They obtained clothing left by the soldiers very cheaply and thus they had more to keep them warm. The year 1861 was so hard for everyone, they nearly starved to death and they suffered with the cold. Many were barefooted and their children cried for bread. The

farm he had was washed away by high water. He rented a farm and as soon as the crops were growing and ready to harvest, the grasshoppers came and everything was destroyed or eaten up.

He assisted in opening the first canyon road in Ogden Canyon. He also assisted in building irrigation canals which have been such a benefit to this part of the country. When the Ogden Tabernacle was contemplated he made five thousand adobes bricks by hand and donated them. During this time they were almost without food, only had a little bran bread. Also while working on the adobes for the Tabernacle he was so exhausted and weak that he thought he would die. He sat down under the shade of a tree not knowing whether he would ever be able to get up again. While in this condition he fell asleep, on awakening he saw a very large bird coming down towards him. It came so low he thought that it was going to rest on his shoulder, but it dropped an ear of corn. He picked it up and ate it. It seemed to him the sweetest morsel of food he had ever eaten. It was new corn. Since there had not been an ear of corn raised in Utah it was a marvelous thing! As he ate the corn a voice seemed to say: "This is a sign that you shall never lack for bread, and that promise surely came true because from that time on until his death he always had bread to eat and not bread alone. When he arrived home from work that day his wife came out to meet him and told him that he could get a little flour by walking to Taylor's Mill. He got all that he could carry home and when he returned she made some bread and they awoke the children to eat, even though it was very late at night. He nor his family have ever wanted for bread since.

His wife, Sarah, my mother was very anxious to go to Salt Lake City to the Semi-annual Conference. They had only one ox which was lame. My father thought it would be impossible, but she seemed determined and planned and worked all summer long braiding their hats, spinning yarn and knitting stockings, and working for a man who gave her cloth for pay. This allowed her to clothe her children. Joseph worked for a man and got his pay in Horn Combs. He also raised broom corn and made the first brooms by hand. These were traded for any kind of produce he could get. By the first of October they were in condition by borrowing a neighbors ox that they could make the trip. Picture in your minds one lame, one lean ox and only the running gears of a wagon with some mountain slab for a box going to conference. What pluck it must have taken. Mother took with her one dozen home made brooms, one dozen and a half of good home made horn combs. She had the idea to trade them on the way for apples and peaches by way of Farmington. They were almost sure they could get fruit which she did. The people were very glad to have both combs and brooms in exchange. Some of the combs they traded in Salt Lake City for dry goods: unbleached or factory calico, thread, needles and buttons. How thankful they felt. The seeds and pits which they saved proved a lasting blessing and benefit to them.

They acquired a six acre lot of land west of Wall Ave. between 27th and 28th Street. With the seeds and pits they had saved they started an orchard which was the first and best orchard in Weber County. From the mountains they obtained small fruits and vines: strawberries, raspberries, sand cherries, and

gooseberries, which he cultivated and grafted.

In 1869, the railroad arrived and soon afterwards they had a market to sale milk, cream, and fruits which helped in the building up of Ogden. Really hard time were over and they had plenty to share which they did to assist those in need. Joseph had a free heart and gave liberally to all. He was a strict father and a zealous worker. He was a splendid penman, and worked as secretary of all the Priesthood Organizations. He was a Ward Teacher and a High Priest at the time of his death. He died on 17 Oct. 1902 at the age of 72 in Ogden, Utah.