

James Smith II

Compiled by his granddaughter, Edith Noble, from family records, stories by her mother, Selina Smith Noble, and James' diary.



James Smith was born in Oakley, Bedford, England, May 30, 1838, to James and Elizabeth Craddock Smith. He was christened when he was 2 years old along with his baby sister, Martha, by Mr. Jukes, a minister at the John Bunyan church in Bedford. He and his sister were vaccinated shortly after that by Dr. Blauer. The vaccine was taken from a girl who was subject to bad eyes. His mother told him that the consequence was that he was afflicted with bad eyes, which deprived him of school much of the time. His father was a foreman of a farm for many years. At about 7 years of age, James began herding cows along the roadside. Sometimes he could not work for more than two days a week because of his eyes. Sometimes he could not hold his head up, and he always wore a great blue shade over his eyes. His eyes troubled him until he was 15 years old, then he apparently had no more eye problems except he was nearsighted. At 78 years of age, he could read fine print

without glasses.

He worked with his father, sometimes mowing stubble at one shilling and sixpence an acre until October 1855. When he was 17 years of age, he left to work on a railroad.

He was married to Emma Sutton on November 19, 1860. They lived in Oakley. It was here they first heard the gospel. They were both baptized on September 23, 1863, by James Goodridge and were confirmed by Thomas Paxton, both missionaries. James was ordained a teacher by Thomas Paxton in 1864; an Elder by John Nickolson, February 5, 1866; a High Priest by Joel Priest in 1893.

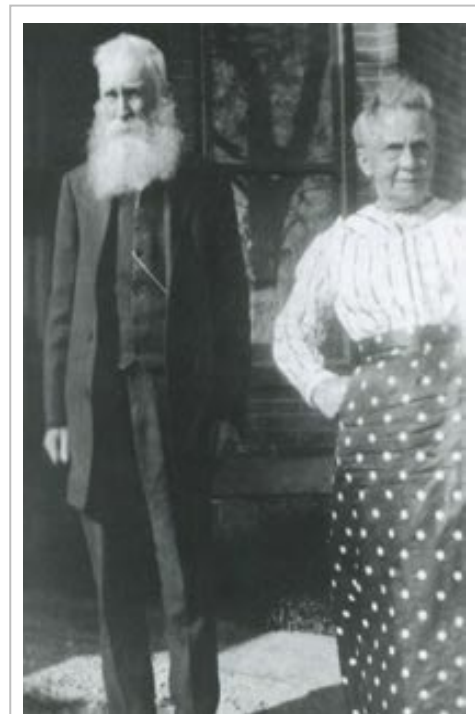
After joining the church they made plans to go to Zion. James worked in a coal mine to earn money to go to America. On April 29 or 30, 1866, he, his wife, Emma, and three children - Arthur (4), Jane (3) and Martha (1)† - sailed for America on the ship "John Bright". After a hard journey of 6 weeks, they landed in New York and went by cattle car to Wyoming, Nebraska (a small village about 7 miles north of Nebraska City on the west bank of the Missouri River). On July 6, they left there and crossed the plains with the first mule train of the Captain Thomas E. Ricks Company arriving in Salt Lake August 29, 1866.†† James became ill on the way with "mountain fever". He rode in the wagon part of the way but walked the greater part with the aid

of two walking sticks. He let the two little ones, Jane and Martha, sometimes take turns riding on his shoulders. Upon their arrival in Utah, they camped in what was known as the Tithing Yard. On November 19, 1866, they moved to Kaysville and rented a farm from Mr. Booth. Later on they purchased a farm on the east of town and eventually built a brick home. He also owned a farm in what was called the "Bottoms" west of town. He owned and operated a brickyard on part of his farm. He and his son Arthur bought the Weinel Mill and continued with milling. As one of the pioneers of Kaysville, he assisted in building the first school house and other public buildings. He helped in preparing streams of water for irrigation purposes, in building roads and the commonwealth.

In 1891, he was called on a mission to England. From his journal we learn he left Kaysville on June 4, 1891, and reached Liverpool on July 20, 1891. He visited in Oakley with his brother and family, then went to Bedford where he lived as a boy. While there he visited the cemetery. He also visited the church of John Bunyan. In the vestry of the chapel he saw the old armchair and the old iron barred door that had held John Bunyan in prison at the time he wrote "Pilgrim's Progress". There was also to be seen Bunyan's will and the warrant for his arrest. James visited friends and relatives at Stafford, Armitage, Burntwood, Whittington, Leister and Milton. On August 4, he records that he searched the records in the Oakley Church for the names of his forefathers. He mentioned that the records were to be found only on scraps of paper.

On August 17, he began his missionary labors in London in an open air street meeting. He also labored in and around Bedford and Oakley where he tried to interest his nieces and cousins in the Gospel, but without success. In December 1891, he went to Chiswick and found his cousin, Fanny, whom he had not seen for 36 years. They were very much opposed to the Latter-day Saints because of what they had read. The diary kept on his mission tells of many interesting experiences. He was released from his mission on April 29, 1892.

He had been home from his mission about 15 years when his wife died on April 19, 1907. Not many months afterwards he returned to England on a short mission. Here he renewed his acquaintance with Miss Mary (Polly) Horspool Cook. When he returned to Utah in 1908, she, with her friend Rose Cheeney, came with him. On November 11, 1908, he and Mary Cook were



James Smith II and Aunt Polly,
his second wife

married in the Salt Lake Temple.

While on this second mission, James went to Scotland to see his son-in-law's (Alexander Reid Noble) parents. Regarding this visit his diary records, "On the 8th arrived in Glasgow. Found Mrs. Noble and family all well. Visited the park with Mrs. Noble and daughters. On the 14th went down the Clyde with Mr. Noble and wife and son and daughter. Had a splendid time. Saw the docks. Boats run from Glasgow everyday carrying hundreds of people to the pleasure



James Smith II

resorts. Nettie Noble went with me one evening to the meeting of the missionaries."

James was true to the faith, was stalwart in the gospel and left a posterity of whom he could be proud. He died in Salt Lake City on January 3, 1922, and was buried in the Layton-Kaysville cemetery by the side of his wife, Emma.

Seven more children were born after James and Emma came to America: Annie Elizabeth, James Stephen, Lucy Belle, George Henry, Selina, John Edward and David Samuel. Martha died as a child. Annie Elizabeth died of burns sustained in a fire while burning yard trash. James Stephen was killed in a car accident in Brigham City while en route to his sister's funeral. John Edward died as an infant.

†The youngest child to sail was indeed Martha, although the ship list states "Matthew".

††SOURCES: *Deseret News*, 16 Aug. 1866, p. 289

"First Immigration Train," *Deseret News [Weekly]*, 30 Aug. 1866, p. 309.

Note added by his great granddaughter,
M. Jean Smith Vandiver:

I do not remember James Smith, but I remember Aunt Polly as Mary Cook was known. Several times I have been in the brick home he built for Emma. I remember the old moose head hanging in the hall. In 1994, during the Smith Cousin reunion, visited it again.



James and Emma Smith's home in Kaysville, UT
13 Crestwood Rd. formerly Cemetery St.