



SARAH ANN DUNSDON BIRD

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Sarah Ann Dunsdon was born 8 May 1835 at Steeple, Ashton, Wiltshire, England. She was a very beautiful child with large brown eyes and dark hair. She was the daughter of James and Mary Ann Rose Dunsdon, and the fourth child of a family of seven.¹ The children were: John, Hester, Jane, Sarah Ann, Annie Marie, Lucy and Thomas.² Her parents were among the first converts to join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England. Lucy died in England, but the rest of the family came to America on a sailing vessel and were six weeks on the water. When the family was on its way to St. Louis, Missouri, many of the Saints were stricken with the dreaded disease, Cholera. James Dunsdon helped dig graves for those who died. He contracted the Cholera and he, his wife, Mary Ann, their oldest son, John, and his wife, Ellen, all died with the disease and were buried in Missouri. The five remaining children were placed in separate families and came West in different companies of saints.

Sarah Ann came to Utah with the Milo Andrus Company Wagon Train.³ This was the first company of emigrating saints for the season of 1850. They left Missouri in June of 1850. The company consisted of 206 persons and 51 wagons. This was the company in which the Charles Bird family and other Birds came to Utah. Sarah was 15 years old when she crossed the plains and walked all the way to Utah. Part of the time she went barefoot to save her shoes. Her sister, Anne Marie, was 13 years old and came to Utah with the James Pace Company that arrived in Salt Lake City the 20th of September 1850. President Brigham Young had a bowery built on the spot where immigrants gathered as they arrived in Salt Lake. It was also used as a gathering place for instructions and celebrating. Sarah Ann had never found any of her family since their separation at the time of their parents death in Missouri, leaving her an orphan. At an early conference held in the bowery at Salt Lake City, Sarah Ann

¹ LIFE SKETCH OF SARAH ANN DUNSDON BIRD by Zelda Bird Heninger, a granddaughter.
http://www.mendonutah.net/history/personal_histories/bird_sarah_ann_dunsdon.htm

² According to *Daughter's of the Utah Pioneers* p. 270 she was the sixth in a family of eight children.

³ *Daughter's of the Utah Pioneers* p. 270.

attended, wearing a beautiful plaid shawl. Her mother had made plaid shawls for all of the girls before leaving England. The sisters were also at the conference wearing their shawls and it was through recognizing the shawls that the girls found each other. They later located their youngest brother, Thomas,⁴ who was with a family in a company of Saints who traveled on to Nevada.⁵

Sarah Ann's oldest sister, Hester, married John Broom in 1850 at St. Louis, Missouri. They came to Utah in 1861 in the Alfred Cardon Company and settled in Ogden, Utah. They built and operated the Broom Hotel in 1882. It was the largest and most comfortable hotel west of Denver.⁶

Sarah Ann worked in the home of Charles and Mary Ann Kennedy Bird. On 15 February 1853, Sarah Ann became the second wife of Charles Bird and was married by President Brigham Young.⁷ She was not yet 18 and he was 49 years and 7 months. She did not marry for love, but married for a home. Love and respect came for her husband as the years went by. He was so kind, so gentle, a good provider and a very good thoughtful husband and father.⁸ They had the following 11 children:

1. Mormon Dunsdon, 15 Jan 1854
2. Deloss Perley, 2 Feb 1856
3. James Dunsdon, 5 Feb 1858 (died at age 10)
4. Mary Jane, 10 Jun 1860
5. Phineas Reeves, 1 Sep 1862
6. Jeddiah M. Grant, 17 Apr 1865 (died at age 4)
7. Anna Adelia, 9 Jul 1868
8. Hester Mariah, 31 Dec 1870
9. Amanda Lucina, 19 May 1872
10. Sarah Ann, 1 May 1873 (died day of birth)
11. Heber Charles, 11 Nov 1876⁹

Charles and his two families lived at Cottonwood, where her first three children were born, until the spring of 1859, when they were called to help settle Cache Valley. Their third child, James, died as a baby. They were among the first families in Mendon, Cache County, Utah. They lived in their wagon until their house was built in the fort. The Bird home was on the south side close to the middle of the fort. Their home was a two-room log house with a lean-to and a balcony. It was the largest house in the fort, where many meetings were held.¹⁰ In the Bird home, on Dec 19, 1859, the Mendon Ward was organized by Apostles Orson Hyde and Ezra Taft Benson.¹¹

On June 10, 1860, Sarah Ann's fourth child, a girl, was born. She was the second girl and the third child born in Mendon. At the time of her birth Sarah Ann was very ill and unable to nurse her baby. She had a good friend, Margaret Forester, who had a son born the 29th of March. So she took Sarah Ann's baby and nursed it along with her own. Sister Forester always called them her twins.¹²

⁴ Heninger.

⁵The Life Story of Charles Bird, by T. Frank Nelson, p. 2.

⁶ Heninger.

⁷ *Daughter's*

⁸ *Life Mary Jane Bird Tracy* by Fern E. Slater, Devries (granddaughter of Mary Jane Bird Tracy). Biography at the Daughter's of the Utah Pioneers in Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁹ *Daughter's*

¹⁰ Heninger.

¹¹ *Daughter's*

¹² Heninger.

Food was often scarce for the pioneers. They experienced the grasshopper and cricket invasion. They managed to save enough of the crops to keep them from starvation. One day while living in the fort, Sarah Ann was busy with her housework when someone knocked on her door. She opened the door and saw an elderly man standing there, a stranger. He asked if she would give him something to eat and let him rest a while. She invited him in and while preparing his food she was amazed at the things he told her. When he was ready to leave, he thanked her for her kindness and then gave her a blessing. He told her among other things that she would never want for bread and that her flour bin would never be empty. After he had gone she noticed that the food she had prepared was not touched. She went to the door to call him back. But he had vanished completely. She inquired about him from the neighbors, but none had seen him. The blessing was realized not only for her family, but many of the families in Mendon would have gone hungry for bread, but if Sarah Ann knew their supply of flour was gone, she would take them a pan of flour from her bin which was never empty.

Sarah Ann was a fine seamstress and made beautiful dresses for her daughters and other women of Mendon. Sarah Ann sat by the fire night after night burning sage brush trying to make a light bright enough to sew for her husband and children. Year's later kerosene lamps were brought into the territory.¹³ She was a good nurse and was always willing to help those in need of care.¹⁴

Sarah's husband, Charles died on the 29th of September 1884, in Mendon. At this time, her three older children, Mormon, DeLoss, and Mary Jane were married. She still had a family of five at home. Her youngest son, Heber, was eight years old. They had a few cows and chickens besides the farm. They had a large orchard of apples, pears, prunes and plums. They also had a good vegetable garden. She and her girls made butter to sell.

Sarah's children were active in the church. Her daughter Adelia was the President of the Ladies Mutual at the age of 20 years. Their home was always open to friends and neighbors. When the visiting sisters came from Logan and Salt Lake City to visit Mutual, they always stayed at the Bird home.

On the 7th of July 1898 Sarah's grandson, Mormon Delbert Bird was called on a mission for the Latter-day Saints Church to the North Western Mission. At that time Sarah was staying at her daughter, Mary Jane Tracy's home, because Sarah's health was very poor. She cried and told Mormon she would never see him again. Six months later, Mormon said the Lord revealed to him that she had passed away. He also said it was revealed to him of the passing of Aunt Adelia who had married James W. Quayle. He saw her and the baby lying in a casket together. Later when he read in the Deseret News of Adelia's death, it was just as it had been made known to him.¹⁵

¹³ Slater

¹⁴ *Daughter's*

¹⁵ Anna (or Annie) Adelia was the seventh child of Sarah Ann and Charles. She was born 9 July 1868 and married 26 April 1899 in the Logan Temple. She passed away 28 Jan 1900. A female child passed away the same day named Quayle and the daughter of J. H. Quayle.) Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946, Indexing Project (Batch Number: B54860-2, System Origin: Utah-EASy, Source Film Number 431094. Reference Number: p 9.) It could be assumed that Adelia died in childbirth along with her daughter. J.H. Quayle's daughter by his second marriage was named Adelia. The Monday, January 29, 1900 issue of the Deseret News stated: "The funeral services over

After Mormon Delbert left for his mission, Sarah Ann died in Ogden on the 4th of December 1899¹⁶ and was buried in the Mendon City Cemetery. She was a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹⁷



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the remains of Mrs. James W. Quayle. . who died on Sunday will be held in Logan tabernacle tomorrow at 12 o'clock.”



<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=71618324>

¹⁶ <https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.2/M1ZV-X4J/p1>, Utah Deaths and Burials, 1888-1946 for Sarah Ann Dunsdon Bird, indexing project batch number: B54860-2, system origin: Utah- EASy, source film number: 431094, reference number: p. 8.

¹⁷ Heninger

¹⁸ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=34064982>