

## SARAH WANLASS

Sarah Wanlass Atwood was born in Alston, Cumberland, England on 10 of May 1856. She was the daughter of Jackson R. Wanlass and Jane Bell, his 2nd wife.

Jackson married Sarah Bell first and had a daughter Martha (Mary). She died and he married Jane Bell. To them were born five children: Jackson, John (died as a baby), Sarah, and Samuel and Anne Twins.

After joining the church they sold their belongings and sailed for Utah the land of Zion. They set sail October 18th 1856 in a company of 223 Saints, under the leadership of J. Williams on the Sailing Vessel Columbia. The weather was bad, winter closing in on them and there was a great deal of sickness with several deaths among the saints. They arrived in New York on the 1st day of January 1857 having spent 75 days on the ocean.

After a short stay in New York the family went to Richmond, Missouri where Jackson's brother William Wanlass, who had come from England some time before, were then living. This was a time of rejoicing and much time was spent in questions and discussion about old home and friends back in England. Wm. Wanlass left soon after for Utah settling in Lehi. Sarah's father obtained a lease of some ground which he cleared for farming purposes.

There was a great deal of contention and feelings among the people of the country at this time. The question of slavery was at its height, and it was unwise, not to say unsafe, for one to express their opinion too openly.

Her father had been a coal miner in England and he found it extremely hard to adjust to life on a farm. The ground which he had been trying to farm looked more favorable for coal to him so he finally gave way to his impulse and started digging for coal. Soon his efforts were rewarded and he found coal. At that time little interest was manifested in his find as the people were used to burning wood of which there was an abundance. He found it difficult to sell his product in the country so it became necessary for him to haul it in a donkey cart to the city where it was sold from 7 cents to 10 cents a bushel.

Two children (twins) were here born to the family. They never recovered and soon wasted away and died. Before dying she made her husband promise he would bring her family to Utah where they could be with the Saints. She also impressed upon her stepdaughter Mary, who was in her early teens, not to let her father forget his promise.

The night the mother died was masked by the fighting of the Union and Southern Armies at Lexington and from their cabin in the woods they could see the light of the shells bursting.

After her mother's death her half sister Mary had to assume the role of Mother and housekeeper which she filled very well for a child of 13 years. She never lost sight of one fact that they had left their home and comforts in England to come to Zion, but had got no further than Missouri. She remembered how her stepmother had cherished the one thought Zion and had been forced to lay her frail body in the soil of a state whose people were bitter to the principles for which she had given all.

Away from home, the comforts they were used to, and above all far from that Zion of her people and God. She couldn't forget how her stepmother had pled to go on, and how when the lase came, she had turned to her and pled with her not to give her father any peace until he could take the family to the valley of the Rockies.

Mary resolved within herself to go to Utah if she and the children had to go alone. Her earnestness convinced her father to leave Missouri in spite of his leaser offering him half interest in the coal holding if he would stay. He sold all that he had for enough to buy a wagon, a yoke of young steers, a yoke of cows and provisions. Sarah was about 5 years old when they left Missouri.

They had heard of a large company of emigrants leaving from some point in Iowa and were in hopes of meeting up with this train or some other one when they reached the main traveled trail. This hope never materialized and the entire trip was made alone.

Soon after they started her father fell sick, suffering a second partial stroke of his left side. However, the brave little band knew no turning back. Inspired by the girl just in her teens and manned by a brother of about 12 years and a father helpless in the back of the wagon they pushed forward. Day after day they trudged through a country overrun by lawless renegades who were men who had deserted both armies. They pushed on until the last settlement was left behind and nothing but a treeless trackless wilderness lay before them.

They finally reached the Platte River. One night as they camped on the Platte their oxen became lost and it was 3 days before they were found. While camping there a sudden whirl wind came up picking up annie, one of the twins, blowing her into the river. Mary, although she had never learned to swim, jumped in the river and rescued Annie from the swirling waters. She felt to her dying day that through the Divine help of her Heavenly Father a miracle had been performed.

Instead of crossing the river which would have eventually put them with a company of Saints, they continued on. This isolated them from whitemen and led them through a country occupied by hostile Indians. They traveled daily among the Indians but were never molested. Sometime the Indians were friendly and talkative and sometimes sullen and painted with war paint. On several occasions young warriors would ride up in front of the oxen shaking blankets trying to scare them but the oxen only blinked their eyes and plodded on. Then the Indians would ride off laughing. Sometimes they would drive the oxen off at night but they would be found in a nearby gully next morning. They always considered this a joke being played to scare them.

The Indians would gather round the campfire and sit on the wagon tongue far into the night. The only fear of the family was that they would break the tongue so they couldn't continue. Sometimes they would lift the wagon cover where her father lay groaning, worse than usual, then they would come back with game or rabbits for them to cook for him. They were never mistreated by the Indians. Surely God's care was over this little band.

On one occasion a large buffalo herd came toward them and when they reached the wagon they parted and marched slowly by.

One thing which seemed hard to understand when in later years it was recalled was how the little black heifer which worked all day on the wagon and just got what it could pick at night and

sometimes nothing to drink, gave plenty of milk to feed the two babies and what was left was put in a bucket and at night there would be a nice lump of butter, enough for their supper.

They finally reached the mountains. What a thrill. For days they had watched the great peaks draw nearer. Finally they reached the foothills. By this time the wagon was showing signs of wear and the cattle were poor and tired, the roads steep and rocky, but in spite of this the little bank pressed on, after making necessary repairs.

Upon reaching the valley (Fall of 1863) they went straight to Lehi where his Uncle Wm. Wanless made them welcome in his little home. They soon built them a small dugout which was to them home. Her father recovered a little and was able to do little jobs around the place but was never able to walk very much or speak plainly. On the 31st of Oct. 1864, eight years from the time they left England, he died leaving the family orphans. They were in very poor circumstances but kind friends took them in and with the providence of God were all raised to manhood and womanhood and became an honor in the communities where they lived.

Sarah at first lived with Dr. Harvey C. Hullinger at South Cottonwood where she did house work and ran errands for her board and schooling. She remained there for 7 years. Then she stayed with friends and relatives in Lehi Next she went to Salt Lake City where she was employed in the home of Francis Armstrong, Mayor of Salt Lake. Here she was treated as one of the family and it was here she met Millen Dan Atwood, also an employee of Mr. Armstrong.

They were married Oct. 8, 1877, They lived in Salt Lake City until Oct. 1887 when they bought a farm (40 acres) in what is now Manila. At that time only a small portion had been brought under cultivation. No electric lights, no appliances, or water. A small stream of water run by the house for use but in the winter it would freeze up and they would have to haul water. In the spring it would be muddy and she had to dip the water in a barrel and put ashes in it to settle it for washing.

She truly helped pioneer this country. She was a wonderful woman full of love and faith. Because of neglect when her third child was born she had poor health ever afterwards. Her babe also was not expected to live but through her faith and prayers he grew to manhood. She carried him on a pillow for his first year. This baby was Lawrence Miner Atwood.

She was a devoted Latterday Saint and served her church in many capacities. Working in Sunday School, also she server as Second Counselor to Orinda Davis in the first Retrenchment Association in Lehi. In Relief Society she was President of the Manila Relief Society from Dec. 1902 till 21 Feb. 1907. Sister Elizabeth Stewart and Marie Swenson were her counselors with Christine Warnick secretary and Mary Jane Thomas, treasurer. Maud Warnick, Assistant Secretary.

She was released in 1907 on account of poor health and as she was leaving the ward to make her home in Pleasant Grove where they lived a short time. In 1911, she was chosen to act as Counselor to Christine M. Warnick in Manila Ward Relief Society. She held this position until she again moved to Pleasant Grove, residing in her newly build home on the corner of 1st North and 3rd East.

On August 2, 1914 she was set apart to act as Second Counselor to Minnie Anderson, Pres. of the Third Ward Relief Society. She served in this capacity until 12 August 1924 when she was obliged to resign on account of her health.

Her husband dies 23 November 1909. For 24 years she was left to be a guide and inspiration to her children and friends. She fell, breaking her hip which finally led to her death on Feb. 16, 1933.

Her funeral was held on 19 Feb. 1933 in the Pleasant Grove Tabernacle and her remains were laid beside her husband in the Pleasant Grove Cemetery.

Her children were: Millen William Francis Dan Lawrence Miner John Leslie Sarah Delilah Ardena Jane.

The following tribute was paid to her at her funeral.

Tribute  
To Sister Sarah Atwood's Memory

"Sister thou wert mild and lovely, gentle as the summer breeze, pleasant as the air of evening, as it floats among the trees.

We of the Pleasant Grove Third Ward Relief Society feel those words were especially applicable to our Sister Atwood. She was humble and meek yet her very humility and meekness were her strength, and ours. Her charitable fair mindedness and kindly spirit were a constant inspiration to us. We often sought her advise which always was kindly and wisely given.

We knew she would be fair to all concerned, and when troubled, even though her advise was not asked, the thought of how she would act under similar circumstances, gave us greater understanding and broader vision of our problems.

She with a few of our older sisters in our organization have been, we feel, as mothers to us with their courage and faith, making us feel that no task was so great but we could master it by prayer and determination. Her talks to us though never flowery or eloquent were full of inspiration.

The past few years she has been unable to meet with us, except occasionally, and though we have missed her gentle smile we have felt her influence and will always retain it throughout our lives.

There are souls so meek, yet so full of power, They inspire us as does a fragrant lovely flower. Their sweet influence is such We feel as though a divine touch Has given our souls a new desire To Make every day's efforts Lift us higher and higher. Even though they fade and go Beyond the veil, their souls reach Out to us throughout the years."

DEDICATED TO SARAH WANLASS ATWOOD ON THIS HER 100<sup>th</sup> YEAR

TUNE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

- 1 In eighteen hundred fifty-six a little babe was born  
In Old England across the sea she saw the light of morn.  
Her father's name was Jackson Wanlass, her mother was Jane Bell.  
Sarah came with them to dwell.
- 2 When Sarah was a few months old they left old England's sod

And sailed for good old U.S.A. to join the saints of God.  
They stopped in Missouri on the way with an Uncle to abide.  
And there her mother died.

- 3 A few years passed away and then, her father took his family  
And started west across the plains for Utah's Salt Lake Valley.  
They missed the train of emigrants by failing to cross the river.  
So they came along alone.
- 4 Misfortune seemed to be their lot as her father took a stroke  
Her brother now just twelve years old from then did man the yoke  
They arrived in Lehi in sixty-three and built a small dugout.  
And in sixty-four her father died.
- 5 This left five orphans all alone, kind friends did take them in.  
Sarah now was seven years old and she worked for other kin.  
She made her way and many friends as thru the years she grew.  
Full of grace and love and truth.
- 6 When she grew to womanhood she met a friend Millen Dan  
Their friendship ripened into love and then they made their plan.  
Marriage and a family was the desire of their hearts.  
This desire was fulfilled.
- 7 Sadie and Ardena were the girls of the Atwood family  
While the sons were Will and Frank and John and Lawrence, all so manly  
Their father died in 1909, their mother in 1933.  
Thus ended a life of love and charity.

#### CHORUS

Grandma Atwood, Grandma Atwood  
May we all remember thee  
On your hundredth anniversary  
Were glad to be your posterity.

Written by Cora W. Atwood 1956