

BIOGRAPHY OF SARAH ANNIE CLARK HALE

Sarah Annie Clark Hale was one of the sturdy, brave and noble pioneers who dared to brave the hardships of a five thousand mile journey by sailing vessel, railway, ox team, and on foot from her native home in England to the Salt Lake Valley.

She was born 27 March, 1842, at Colchester, Essex County, England, the second child of Daniel and Elizabeth Gower Clark, who were the parents of ten children. Her father was a maker of fine shoes and her mother a tailor; and her ancestors before her were moulded by their husbandry, thrift and common place things of life.

While Sarah was still a girl, the Clark family moved from their little town to the big city of London. The Mormon Elders found their way into the Clark household there in the summer of 1851, and they readily accepted the new doctrine in preference to their own religion, for it offered them a new way of life. Elder Charles W. Penrose brought the gospel message, and Sarah, her older sister Elizabeth, and her father and mother were baptized in November, 1851. Owing to the prejudice of their relatives, friends and townspeople against them, they made plans to “gather to Zion” where they could worship as they pleased, and where the children could have access to schooling, which was denied them in England because of their religion. They found it quite a task to get enough money together to bring a family of ten across the water. Elizabeth, Sarah and Rebecca, the three eldest girls, went to work and earned enough money to bring them to Zion ahead of their parents.

On the first of April, 1861 the clipper ship “Underwriter” sailed from Liverpool, England, with the three Clark sisters and 621 other Saints bound for Utah, under the presidency of Milo Andrus, Homer Duncan and Charles W. Penrose. The company arrived at New York on May 22, after a seven week’s trip on the water, and on June 2 they were at Florence, Nebraska, ready for the thousand-mile trek across the plains. They immediately joined the Joseph Home company, walked the entire distance over an almost desolate country, and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September 1861. The journey from London to the Blessed Mormon Home had occupied slightly over five months, and they found themselves among friends in a strange country.

One evening, while crossing the plains, they learned that the company following them was to have a dance. They could see the lights and it did not look far, so they coaxed Captain Home to let them walk back to the dance. He told them it was too far, but they insisted, so he let them go. They walked and walked and finally reached the camp. After dancing all evening, they walked back to their own camp and arrived just in time to start the journey on the following morning. They were surprised to find the distance was more than eight miles—but they loved to dance, and the trip was worthwhile.

The girls had been taught that cleanliness was a virtue, and so they changed and washed their clothing every day while crossing the plains. Even the thick prairie dust failed to dampen the spirits of their tired bodies.

Sarah and her sisters immediately went to work, saved every penny they could and sent the money back to their parents. Three years later, in 1884, the entire family had saved enough

money to emigrate to Utah, and came in the William Hyde company. However, a very sad thing happened enroute. Daniel Clark, their father, took sick with the cholera and passed away in July, 1864. It was a very sad occasion for the little family to bury their father out on the plains, at the first ford across the Platte River in Eastern Wyoming. It was even a bigger shock to Sarah and her sisters, for no word could be sent to them; and when they stood waiting for the emigration company to arrive so they could greet their loved ones again, they were happy and their spirits ran high. But it is hard to imagine the disappointment, the gloom and the sadness that came to them, for they loved their father very dearly. He was a kind, loving father and a good companion to his children.

Shortly after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, Sarah met a young widower by the name of Alma Helaman Hale from Grantsville, Tooele County, who had buried his first wife some months before, and was left with a daughter and two Sons; but the baby boy had soon passed on. Alma H. Hale was a kind man from a good American family, and Sarah soon fell in love with him and they were married on 24 December, 1861. The new mother took the two children and reared them as her own, and they always loved and respected her as their own mother.

Alma Helaman and Sarah Annie Clark Hale were the parents of seven children: Ernest Fredrick, Albert Henry, Almana Sarah, Rachel Clarissa, Katie Eliza, Grace Emma, and Rebecca Viola. Almana and Solomon passed away in infancy and the rest they reared to maturity.

Sarah Clark Hale was true to her new religion and never missed an opportunity to work in the church, and to urge her husband and children to honor the calls that came to them. She was made president of the Primary Association of the Grantsville Ward on 14 June, 1879, and three years later was made Stake Primary President in the Tooele Stake. She held both offices for some time and was released from the ward office in 1886. At this time, Sister Rachel Ridgeway Ivins Grant, President Heber J. Grant's mother, was General Primary President, and these two women were good friends and made many trips together to different wards of the stake. Nearly all these trips took several days and had to be made by team and buggy.

On one occasion, as these two women were returning from Skull Valley, a terrible storm came up and they were lost on the desert. Little ten-year old Aroet Hale, who had gone along with the idea of driving and taking care of the ladies, became so frightened at the thunder and lightning and storm, that he crawled in the back of the white top buggy and left the women and horses to find the way home. The horses stopped, and the next flash of lightning showed that the storm had washed a deep gully through the road. Mrs. Hale's husband and friends became alarmed and went out to their rescue with lanterns, and they returned safely.

In 1862, shortly after their marriage, Alma H. Hale was called to make a trip east to help a company of emigrants complete their trip to Utah. His wife was very ill, but the Bishop promised him she would be all right and would get well if he would go. He believed in the promises made to him by the Servants of the Lord, and when he returned he found his wife had made a rapid recovery and had been able to take care of things at home as well as if he had been there.

The Hale home at Grantsville was always an open house for the general church authorities on their visits to the Tooele Stake, and the mother of the home took great delight in preparing things for the “Men of God” who brought her new gospel truths. She loved to sit at their feet and learn the words of the Lord.

Sarah Hale was very handy with her needle, and was very artistic. She made all the children’s clothing, including the suits for her sons and husband, and knit all their stockings, mittens, hoods and other wearing apparel. When it came to weaving cloth, she could always make the prettiest plaids for dresses of anyone in the community. She was very clever with her crochet hook, also, and she always had a tidy on all the tables, stands and chairs in the parlor; and lace and edging on all the family’s clothes.

One day when President Wilford Woodruff was staying at the Hale home during Stake Conference time, he went out in the kitchen where dinner was being prepared and said, “Sister Hale, when do you get time to do all this knitting and crocheting?” And she answered him, “Oh, just in odd moments. I always have it handy when taking care of the baby, or doing other jobs. And if I do a few stitches now and a few then, it is soon finished.” President Woodruff said he was going to remember what could be done by the use of spare time in odd moments, and he talked of this in many of his sermons.

Sarah Hale was also a member of the Old Folks committee in Grantsville from the time of its organization until they moved from the town in 1888. She was a practical nurse and was noted for her proficiency in caring for the sick. If there was any sickness in the neighborhood, she was right there to bless and make life happy for her friends, If there was a death in the community, she was the first one there to help lay out the dead, and to make the burial clothes. She was a very clever seamstress and owned one of the first sewing for the neighbors in all directions.

In April 1888, the Hale family moved to Smithfield, Cache County, Utah, where they could be close to the Temple of the Lord. Here, they bought a small farm of 60 acres and went to work to build up a new community. They were ardent temple workers and their hearts had been touched by the Spirit of Elijah. They spent every winter in the temple doing the work for the members of their family who had died without hearing the gospel.

In the winter of 1902 they moved to the Logan Fifth ward so they could spend all their time in the House of the Lord. And when Sarah Hale became too ill to attend the Temple sessions, she always kept an open house for those who came to work there.

On a trip by horse and buggy back to visit their friends at Grantsville, Sarah Hale and her husband met with a severe accident. Their horse became frightened and ran away with them, and when the buggy crashed, Sarah’s chest was badly crushed and she was hurt internally. For many months people asked if Sister Hale were still alive, and they marveled at the recovery she made. She told them that she had not yet completed her temple work and that her life was spared for that purpose. She lived many years after, and one of her greatest achievements in life was her untiring energy in temple work. That seemed to be her life’s ambition and her heart’s desire.

Sarah Annie Clark Hale lived ten years after her husband's death, and passed away at Logan, Utah, on 7 September, 1918, at the age of 76. She was a true lover of flowers and all things beautiful. She was a most excellent housekeeper and a good economist in household affairs. It was often said of her that she could accomplish more with less labor than any one else. She was indeed, a woman of God, a good mother and a devoted wife, and she has left a noble posterity to bless the world.