

Autobiography of Sarah Edwards Hutchings

Transcription: Chad G. Nichols (3rd great grandson)

"I was born at Chippon, Lancastershire, England, 28 February 1830. My parents were married at Greasbrough, Yorkshire, England, 19 August, 1855, and I was the first child. The second one was Joseph, born 7 April 1858; the third child was Moses, born 26 May 1860; the fourth was Mary Jane, born 23 May 1862, died the same day; the fifth child was Aaron Robert, born 13 May 1863; the sixth Mary Elizabeth, born 1 April 1865, died at Birmingham, aged 14 months; all being born at Winfield, Yorkshire, England. In the fall of the year 1866 we left Yorkshire and went to Birmingham, living on Highgate Street, where my brother, David, was born on 8 March, 1867. Jesse, born 19 February 1869, died and was buried in the Atlantic Ocean.

In June, 1868, my father, being in poor health, was advised by his doctor to take an ocean voyage, and father, being a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, decided to come to Utah. His health improved so much after his voyage and his walk across the plains to where Brigham Young started on the building of the U.P. Railroad, that he started to work there, and worked 16 months. Then he sent what money he had earned to the immigration fund at Liverpool, the headquarters of the L.D.S. Mission. My mother was notified that our fares were paid to Utah and that a company would leave on Wednesday, the 24th. This was at a meeting on Sunday the 21st of September, 1869. Another company would leave in three weeks. We were asked which company we would go with and mother said the first. She had two days and two nights to get everything ready. Her baby, born on 19 February, 1869, at Spark Beuck, where we had moved after father left, was very sick, but she was determined to leave then, and we were nearly the first people of the company at the New St. Station on the morning of the 23rd of September, 1869. We left England on the ship Manhattan. After a very pleasant voyage of seven days, a great sorrow came to us. Our baby brother became so much worse that on the morning of the 30th he died. Soon after his death a great storm arose and we thought for a time that the ship would go down. The next morning everything was calm and after a short service, our baby was gently lowered to his watery grave. I was the only one of our family who saw Jesse Moses lowered over the ship's side. It was nearly 56 years ago but as I write I can see it all over again. After the funeral of our baby brother, my mother was so overcome with grief she wasn't able to look after us, so it was left to me to care for the boys and fix food for my mother. We came second class, and Mother couldn't eat the ship's food. We had brought a little tea and a few buns, so I would make Mother a cup of tea and give her a bun, or a part of one. In those days there was on shipboard what was called a cooking galley. I can't tell you where the heat came from, but its surface looked like a big boiler---flat on top. Passengers who had any extra food they had brought with them could cook it in the galley. We finally docked in New York Harbor and disembarked at Castle Gardens after having been on the ocean ten and one-half days. Under the direction of the elders we formed a line and all marched to the river where we were ferried across to Brooklyn. Then we traveled by rail to Omaha where we ferried over the Missouri River and waited two days for the train to come back from the frontier and take us on. We were put in freight cars to sleep, as none knew anything about camping out, and we had nothing to camp out with anyway.

We were eleven days coming from New York to the end of the railroad which was some miles east of Ogden. We were met by some good people at Ogden who took our luggage into the titling office yard. I remember my father was standing at the end of the track waiting for us. He had turned grey during the sixteen months he had been away from us. He looked so happy when I ran to him, but his smiles were turned to tears when he learned the baby had been left in the ocean. Uncle Joseph Huntington, Mother's brother, was at

Ogden to meet us with a small team and wagon. He had his wife, his mother-in-law, and three children, their bedding, a new cook stove, and a lot of other things he had brought in Salt Lake. Then there was my father, mother, and five children, and our luggage. We older ones had to walk.

When the word came to us that we could cross the plains on the train I cried and said, "I wish I could have gone when the Saints had to walk." I thought it would be so much fun, but I got all the walking I wanted by the time I walked from Ogden to Greenville, Beaver County, Utah. We arrived in Greenville, November 5th, making forty-four days from Liverpool to Beaver County. My father worked for a lot with a log house on it, and I worked out to help keep the family while my father and brother Joseph were working for a home and a cow. My salary was \$1.25 a week. I was allowed to keep 25 cents each week to save until fall so I could send to Salt Lake with someone who was going to conference and get myself a pair of shoes and a calico dress. The dollar I took in butter and meat so as to help keep our family. On 26 July 1870, my brother, Nephi, was born at Greenville, Utah.

I was married to John Rice O'Donnell, an Irishman by birth, but he was raised in Carriesville, Massachusetts. He was about six months old when his parents came to America. He was born in 1851. Our first child was born at Greenville, Beaver County, Utah, on November 5th 1872. My husband was a shoe and harness maker, and in 1874 when the United Order was started in Beaver he was called to go to St. George to work for the men who were working on the temple, and I was called to go to a ranch about 15 miles below Panguitch to help make butter and cheese. This was where the Cedar Ranch was located. I worked there about three months when my husband sent for me to come to St. George. His time was up there and the people of Greenville had sent for him. But leaving the ranch before they settled up in the fall, I had no money, no shoes, and only one calico dress that was fit to wear. Morris, of Greenville, was boss out there, and he was coming to Greenville so he brought me and my baby and my bundle and dumped us out in front of Bishop Easton's place. The bishop told me he couldn't pay anybody anything until all was settled up in the fall. It was then about the last of August, I didn't know what to do, as my father had moved north in the spring. A good sister gave me ten pounds of flour and about a pound of bacon, and the bishop's wife gave me a mold of butter and I started on my journey to Adamsville where I was living when I was called to go to the ranch. I walked the five miles and carried my baby, the flour, butter, and bacon. The team that was supposed to have been through there for me didn't come for nearly a month so my food gave out again. I could get plenty of work but no one had anything to pay with, until one dear old Welch sister came to me and wanted me to knit some socks for her husband. She would let me have a pan of flour and a piece of bacon in one meat bin and a sack of flour I are 'ide away, because I are afraid when John turn all in to the Order we will run short, so I don't want John to know or he will say, "Nellie, I are 'fraid you are a half-hearted Mormon." But I thought she had the biggest heart of anyone I knew just then. Well, I finally got to St. George.

After we finished our work in St. George, we had a little tithing pay, or "T.O." as it was called. But there was very little in the tithing office to obtain, so after a spell of summer complaints and sore eyes we were asked by Bishop Snow of Pine Valley, to come over and make up some leather they had into shoes and harnesses. By this time the weather was quite cool, especially in Pine Valley. My husband went to work for awhile there, but decided to go to Pinto, about 15 or 20 miles north of us, thinking he could do better. So we went and I was left in Pine Valley alone.....

On 10 November, 1877, my son John Lafayette, was born and in the spring of 1878 we moved on a farm about a mile south of Greenville and about four miles from Beaver. There I went to the dairy business again, taking cows on shares and my husband working on a piece of land he had taken up. We were doing very well until my baby was taken very sick

and on 2 August 1878, he died and was buried at Greenville. That was my first great sorrow. I had stood poverty, hard work and the intemperance of my husband, but all that was as nothing to losing my golden-haired boy. After ten months of grief and waiting, my heart was cleared again by the birth of my daughter, Sarah Catherine, born 15 June, 1879. The next spring we moved down to the "bottoms" as it was then called, twenty-five miles north of Milford.

My husband worked there for awhile, but it was too lonely for him, and I was left alone most of the time, milking cows, making butter and cheese until I finally became tired of it all and I sent for my father to come and get me. When he came, my husband was with him, and we went back to our homestead. Things went fairly well for awhile, and we were getting our home fixed up when, on 3 December, 1881, my son, Jesse A. was born. That winter my husband and brothers went to freighting and were gone all winter and until late spring. On May 1st I was expecting them home, but no one came and after a month of waiting and worrying, my brother Moses came and told me they had lost their horses. They had been to Milford on Saturday night and had to wait until Monday morning to unload the freight they had brought from Pioche. In those days there was lots of feed on the creek banks of freighters turned their horses out. That is what my brothers and husband had done, and when they went to find the horses, they were gone. My brother expected to find them home but none of them came. So he went back to the one they had kept tied to their wagon to gather up the rest of them, and after hunting a day or so they found two. They then had three out of the ten or twelve in all that had strayed away. My brothers, Moses and Aaron, brought four wagons with the three horses, but my husband wasn't with them. They told me he had become discouraged, had entered a gambling den, and when he was found he had lost all of his money except a few dollars. He bought a ticket for Salt Lake and left while my brothers were hunting horses. I cannot begin to tell how I felt. My baby was then six months old. That was forty-three years ago, but it is still fresh in my memory. My husband, a very pleasant, good-natured man who was always neat and clean in his dress, was very kind to me and his children. His great fault was his love for drink and for gambling with cards. Two years later I was on a horse coming down the street in Beaver, east of the courthouse, when I heard my name called. I looked up and saw my husband looking out of a window in the courthouse. It was only about six o'clock in the morning in the month of June and I was on my way to deliver butter in a basket to my customers in town. I had ridden four miles and carried fifteen pounds of butter in my basket. I had milked ten cows and left my children in bed with my daughter, Bertha, who was eleven years old. I rode past the courthouse and never spoke a word. I didn't know on what charge he was being held, but I found out afterwards that part of the money he had lost in his gambling the night before he left Milford belonged to the man he was driving team for. The man found him in Salt Lake and brought him back, but the charge was outlawed, on proof that the man owed my husband more than he had spent of the money. Again I waited for my husband---this time four years, but he failed to keep his promises, to return a sober man, ready to again assume the responsibilities of a husband and father. I divorced him and never saw him again.

I continued to operate my dairy business for two more years when I found that the time was passed for me to prove on my land. I was inexperienced in such matters and when I found out what I should have done, it was too late. The man who lived on the next quarter section had "jumped" my claim, so I sold what improvements I had made on the property and moved back to Beaver where I rented a house and worked at the Equality Co-Op Store. I was employed there nearly four years. I supported my four children without any help from anyone and bought a little house with the money I received from the improvements on my homestead, and from a horse and a wagon and cow I had sold with the improvements. I taught Sunday School for many years and was a member of the choir and the M.I.A. These were the places I found my greatest pleasures. I generally took my children with me and

tried to teach them the principles of the Gospel. They followed the teachings and today they and their children are active members of the Church.

In April, 1887, I was married to William Willard Hutchings. I was about that time the raid was made in Utah on the polygamists, and my troubles started again. In the fall of 1887 I left my children with my people in Beaver and traveled to Salt Lake. I lived with a Brother and Sister Bond, but my worrying and fretting over my children whom I had left in Beaver soon told on my health, and the baby I expected in March came on Jan. 30th. I only expected one, but there were two, a boy and a girl whom I named William Edward and Alice. The girl died May 30th at four months of age. I was living at Butlerville near the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon and there our baby was buried. I stayed there with my sister-in-law, Emeline Hutchings Butler, until September. My little boy was a very health baby, and I was so homesick to see my other children that I decided to leave my baby with my sister-in-law and go home for awhile. It was in the very worst time of the raid and any woman in polygamy with a young baby had to tell its father's name or go to jail, and if she told, the man was sent, so I lived on between two fires. I couldn't take my older ones with me for fear someone would find from them who I was. So I lived on in this way for seven months and then, feeling I couldn't endure it any longer without my baby, my husband decided to take me to Arizona.

Me not daring to be seen with them, I sent word to my sister-in-law to meet me at Minersville. My brother, Aaron, was going to his sheep herd and said he would take me, as he was going that way. So the night before we started I called my children together and told them I was going away but that they must not tell anyone, and I would send for them in May. This was January, 1889. I made all arrangements that night for the care and keep of my children and I left them again at twelve midnight. I was so overcome with grief at leaving them and my mother and father that my brother Moses picked me up in his arms and carried me to the sled. He took me as far as Greenville, four miles west of Beaver, and left me with a Mrs. Kelly. The next day he came along with a sheep wagon and took me with him, but when we got to Minersville, my sister-in-law and my baby had not come. The house in which we were to meet was full of people and we thought it best not enter. Knowing my baby would not be there until the next night, my brother said I had better go with him as he was only going to take supplies to the herds and would be back the next night. So we started through the snow until we could get no further in the wagon. We were miles away from the main road, but I was not afraid to be left alone, so my brother started on horseback with the supplies and I stayed in the wagon all night. The coyotes howled all around me. Although I wasn't frightened, I was nearly frozen.

We returned to Minersville the next night and found my sister-in-law was there with my baby. I can't tell you how I felt at seeing him. He had grown so much and was so fat, but he didn't know me and wouldn't come to me at first. Later on he came to my brother and slept with him part of the night. The next morning was the 30th and my baby was one year old that day.

On the 31st we started across the country by way of Cain Springs, where we camped that night. The next day we traveled to Bellevue and waited there until my husband came with his sister-in-law, Mrs. Libby Algates, and her four children. My brother left us to go back to Beaver. I shall never forget the lonely feeling that came over me when my brother left me. I knew that ever mile was taking me farther away from my home and loved ones. My husband tried to comfort me by saying that we would have a farm in Arizona and I could have my children with me in a few months."

Six children were born to William Willard Hutchings and Sarah Edwards O'Donnell. Sarah died April 9, 1934, at Ely, Nevada.