

SARAH WELLS HARTLEY

Born: 10 August 1836 England

Age: 19

Martin Handcart Company



Sarah Hartley



Eliza Gill Hartley

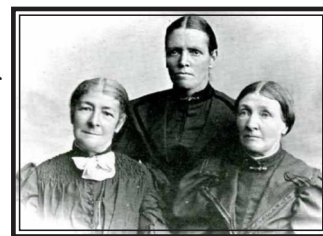
Sarah was born to Samuel and Eliza Gill Hartley in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England. From her sister, Josephine's, autobiography we read: "My mother joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and had her children baptized during Wilford Woodruff's mission in England in the early forties. There were seven children born, four boys and three girls; however a boy and a girl died in infancy and were buried in England.¹ The other children emigrated to Utah with our mother. Father did not join the Church and the family never saw him again." Eliza was known for her kindness to the poor in England, including the persecuted Mormon Elders. At age 39, she brought her children, Sarah (age 19), Matilda Jane (17), Samuel (Jr.) (14), Josephine Lucy Smith (10), Farewell Harrison (7), and sailed on the *Horizon* from Liverpool in May 1856. Eliza's sister, Hannah Richardson, came to see them off. The father, Samuel, also came to Liverpool and reportedly attempted to keep one of the children from leaving, but he was not successful. Samuel's drinking had placed a permanent wedge in the family. He died in England on October 16, 1856.

Josephine continues, "On August 25, 1856, we started on a thousand mile journey across the plains [from Florence]. I was ten years old at this time, and to my great sorrow, I had chills and fever, and had to have my Mother pull me on the handcart, which was heavily loaded with our provisions. The deep sand, rocky roads, and fording streams made it almost impossible for Mother to pull it, so we had to leave some of our things along the roadside. Mother would cook our meals, then rest for the night, and then take up the journey again.

"We continued on our journey with many hardships until we reached [Fort] Laramie, Wyoming, about October 8, 1856. We rested here for a short time, and it was necessary for us to dispose of our prized possessions and buy cornmeal, beans, and other food stuffs, as our supply was gone. We were rationed to a pound of flour per day. The portion was decreased several times until all of our flour was gone. The captain was very kind to mother and gave her some of the flour sacks to scrape off with a knife what little flour was left along with the lint. With this she was able to make some cakes and mush to help sustain life. ... We had to reduce our belongings to 10 pounds for adults and 5 pounds for children, sacrificing our bedding, which added to our misery and suffering. My mother's and sister's skirts were frozen stiff. They would try to dry them out in the evening by the fires, but were not very successful. My brother, Samuel's, feet were frozen, and he lost one leg below the knee and always wore a peg leg after that. On our way, we camped at a gulch called 'Martin's Ravine.' Here we suffered terribly with the cold. It was only with the power of God that we survived. When we reached Devil's Gate, we met wagons from Salt Lake City with provisions and clothing waiting for us. From this time on, the journey was better and much easier."

Samuel Hartley is remembered as a jolly person who sometimes tried to dance a jig. He never married, but lived for a time with his brother, Farewell, and his wife, Carline Carlson. Josephine married Thomas Zundel. They had any children of their own, but were known as Aunt Josephine and Uncle Tom to all. They did adopt an Indian boy named Bennie. Matilda married 3 times and had 5 children. Eliza married Samuel John Couch. He died shortly after in Fillmore, Utah. Eliza died in 1891 at age 77, in Oak City, Utah.

Sarah had two sons with her first husband, but was later divorced. She married Lyman Curtis who adopted these boys. Sarah and Lyman had 6 children. Sarah was a talented weaver, and made her family's clothing. Peach leaves and sagebrush were used to dye the cloth. She knit stockings and sweaters for the needy and for the men in the armed services during World War I. She made temple clothing for members of the Church. She made and quilted dozens of quilts for family and friends. Sarah was well educated, having attended a private school in England. She instilled in her family a love for good literature and especially for the gospel of Jesus Christ. She was a person of great spiritual strength, like her brave mother who brought the family to Zion. Eliza supported herself and children with hard work in Utah. They milked many cows, and built up a large herd of cattle and horses. She had a beautiful flower garden, grape vineyard and orchard. Eliza regularly drove her wagon to Salt Lake to sell produce and dairy products. As an original pioneer of Oak City, Utah, Eliza was noted for her strong character and for standing up for what was right.



Sarah Wells Hartley (Curtis),
Josephine Lucy Smith Hartley
(Zundle), Matilda Jane Hartley
(Brownell) (White) (Overson)

¹ Family histories indicate eight children. Three who died in England were Robert Gill, Clementine Emma, and Lorenzo James.