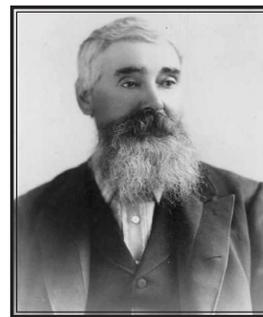


JAMES BARKER

Born: April 7, 1827 in Shelfanger, Norfolk, England

Age: 29

Rescuer



James's parents, Frederick and Ann Bligh Barker, immigrated to America from England when James was just three years old. Missionaries found them in Watertown, New York, in 1844 and the family joined the Church. They arrived in Utah in 1849 and stayed for a time at Lorin Farr's fort in Ogden. James met Polly Emily Blodgett there. They were married in 1851. James and his father-in-law worked on building the first grist mill in Ogden on Cold Water Creek.

In 1856, James accepted the call to rescue the belated companies on the plains, leaving his wife and three children to fend for themselves. James's great-granddaughter, Carol Manning Hutcheson, wrote the following biography of James:

"James, as well as other rescuers, suffered their own problems while on their rescue mission. It is reported that while on their journey, two of their animals strayed. James and another teamster went to find them. It was very cold and dark. They hunted for a couple of hours before finding the animals. The company failed to keep the bonfire burning, so James had to hunt for the camp. Because of exposure to the extreme cold, James' hands were frost-bitten and became stricken with crippling rheumatism and arthritis. He lost the use of his hands for the rest of his life.

"However, his frozen deformed hands didn't prevent James from developing one of the finest farms in Utah. He employed many hired hands, and along with additional help from sons and daughters, he became one of the outstanding agricultural leaders in the community. The first red delicious apples in Utah were imported and raised by James. It was because of his urging that other farmers began raising the red apples that helped to make Utah famous. He was one to advocate the rotation of crops. He dug five big flowing wells which furnished fresh water for his orchards of apples, cherries, peaches, and pears, grape and berry vines, corn, potatoes, tomatoes and onions. He was always known to have as good an apple or potato on the bottom of the basket as on the top."

About three months after returning from the rescue, James and Polly were sealed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. James also built a log cabin that year near what is now about 2300 North Fruitland Drive in North Ogden. Polly became a midwife and was known for her doctoring skills among her neighbors as well as the Indians. James and Polly's family soon outgrew the little cabin and James built a nice new house just north of the log cabin. James continued to accumulate property so he could give each of his sons a farm after they married. He also worked hard to see that each of his daughters' needs was met. The Barker children grew to be well-respected citizens in their community. James was widowed in 1911 when Polly suffered a stroke. James died four years later at the age of 88.

"James and Polly Barker were pioneers who recognized the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ at an early age. They made the sacrifices necessary to gather to Zion. James braved the elements in providing succor and rescue for others. They raised righteous and industrious children. They left a permanent imprint on the history of the Church and of their community, North Ogden, Utah."

Source: email from Carol Manning Hutcheson, August 25, 2011, in files of Jolene Allphin.