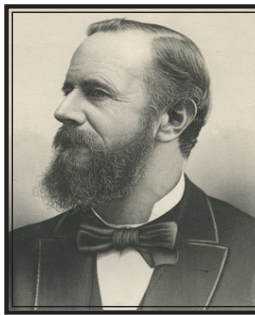


## SAMUEL STEPHEN JONES

Born: February 9, 1837 England

Age: 19

Martin Handcart Company



Samuel S. and mother, Sarah Ann Bradshaw Till Jones

Samuel came to Zion with his mother, Sarah Ann Bradshaw Till Jones (age 55), his brother, Albert Jones (16), and his fiancé, Lydia Elizabeth Hooker (20). A half-brother, Robert Till, had emigrated to America in 1852 and settled in Provo.

Samuel's Bradshaw grandparents were bakers by trade and were good honest people. His mother's first husband, Robert Till, ran the "Angel Inn" with its large, old-fashioned dining room, its large yards and stable, furnishing accommodations for a great number of horses and omnibuses staying there. Coaches calling there made it a good business in the hand of Mr. Till. With Sarah Ann's business tact, considerable money was saved. Unfortunately, Mr. Till died and Sarah was left a widow until she married Samuel's father, whose name was also Samuel.

Samuel's mother learned of a new religion which the family embraced. Young Samuel opposed it at first but soon became convinced it was what he wanted. They joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and decided to emigrate. Due to the alcoholism of Samuel's father, his parents divorced, and his father did not emigrate with the family. He died in England in 1861. Samuel's mother married Daniel Vicent after arriving in Utah.

Samuel's family set sail on the ship *Horizon* on May 25, 1856. His mother, Sarah Ann, was very congenial and was called "Sister Unity" because she so often talked of the principle of unity which was emphasized by the Church.

Upon arrival in Iowa City, the family was outfitted with handcarts with the Edward Martin handcart company. They had a good start, but winter came early and many died. They were in critical condition. The handcart company was saved from certain death by the rescue teams from Salt Lake City and finally filed into Salt Lake and into the arms of sympathetic compassion on November 30, 1856. Rescuer George W. Bean took the Jones family to his home for recovery for a few days. The family then went to stay with Robert in Provo. It is recorded that the Jones family, particularly Samuel's mother, was true to the faith for which she lived valiantly, always being kind, loving and gentle.



Lydia Elizabeth Hooker

Samuel married his sweetheart, Lydia, about ten weeks after their arrival, on February 9, 1857. They had nine children, six of whom died in infancy. Samuel eventually became the father of 22 children. Samuel is said to have been very aristocratic looking. He was five feet, eight inches in height, had dark hair, bluish gray eyes, and wore a beard.

As a young boy, Samuel had worked in a tea merchant's store and learned good business methods. He also took every opportunity on his own to learn and get an education. His efforts surely bore fruit as Samuel became a successful merchandiser, farmer, contractor and miner. He was also interested in civic affairs, serving as mayor, city councilman and alderman. He was active in the Church and held many positions. He served a mission to England from 1872-1873 where he was editor of the *Millennial Star*. Upon his return from his mission, he brought a company of 980 Saints with him. He was a devout member of the Church all his life.

(Samuel Jones - Page 2)

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Samuel wrote “Adown Provo River,” and other poems on Utah. Especially well-known was “Utah’s Natal Days,” which was rendered on the State’s 21st birthday, under the Bowery, in Brigham Young’s presence. “Home of the Old Years” and “The Life of the Master” are some of the masterpieces from his pen. He died in 1923 at the age of 86.

Samuel’s great-great granddaughter, Chris Perry, wrote:

“Samuel Stephen Jones, known as SS Jones, gave up all he had - all he knew - to join with the Saints. He came with his mother, brother and the young woman who was to be his wife . . . with the ill-fated Martin handcart company.

“SS Jones was a strong young man of 19 years. He was said to be ‘as active and able-bodied as anyone in the company.’ He did well until they arrived at Devils Gate. At this point - the cold - the hunger - the fatigue took its toll and broke him down. He fell while trying to get his handcart across the Sweetwater River. The exposure seemed to be the end of him - his fiancé despaired for his life. She wrote that if the rescuers had not come from Salt Lake - she is sure he would not have survived.

“He suffered all his life from the effects of that experience - but he only increased in faith and testimony.”

This faith and testimony is evidenced in the following transcription of a letter he wrote:

SS Jones

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Feb 9 1912

I am Seventy five years old to day. We spent a very happy Christmas time. All of my sons and daughters, with their children were present with the exception of my daughters Polly and Annie and their families, but we placed their pictures on the Piano, and made believe they were present.

The winter has pass’d pleasantly thus far and I thank my Heavenly Father that I am feeling well in mind and body, although my sight [is] quite poor.

In looking back over my past life from this stand point, I wonder how I have been able to outlive the many struggles and difficulties I have pass’d through and I feel to bow my head reverently before the Lord and thank Him for His protecting care. I know not how much longer I may sojourn here on earth, But my testimony at this time is that the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith is true, and that I rejoice in its principals more and more, as my years on earth advance, And I pray that my Sons and my daughters may continue in the faith, and bring up their children to do the same, for we are living in the last days, and it is not very long untill the Lord will take vengeance upon the wicked, and come and dwell upon this earth with His Saints upon an earth redeemed. So it behooveth us all, each and every one to live in a manner, that we will not be ashamed to meet Him.

Source: Harold B. Lee Library, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University Provo, Utah. Some excerpts are available online at Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website; letter by Samuel S. Jones courtesy Chris Perry.