



Life Sketch of Joseph Shipley

Born November 1, 1813

Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire, England

Died October 24, 1901

American Fork, Utah, USA

Joseph was the son of William Shipley and Margaretta Payne. William, the father, was born January 5, 1786 to Thomas Shipley and Sarah Faysey. Joseph's grandfather, Thomas, was born about 1752 and died June 3, 1826 at the age of about 74 years. His grandmother, Sarah Faysey, was born in 1760. She died July 4, 1833, at the age of 73.

William, Joseph's father, married Margaretta Payne in 1809 in Burton, Latimer, Northamptonshire, England. She was the daughter of Thomas and Ann Wollard Payne being born in August 1786 at Burton Latimer. She bore one daughter, Sarah, and four sons, Thomas, Joseph, Benjamin and William.

Joseph's mother died March 20, 1820, at 34 years of age leaving his father with five children, the oldest ten years and the youngest only two years old. Joseph was seven years old at the time of his mother's death. Nothing is known of the family during the lonely hard years that followed. His father, William, died 14 years later on November 3, 1834 at 48 years of age.

Joseph married Elizabeth Garley on 17 Nov 1842 in Little Harrowden Parish, Northamptonshire, England. The marriage is documented in the Registration district of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, England. To this union was born a son, Nephi, in 1844. Elizabeth Garley's parents are John and Elizabeth Garley. About this time Joseph met the Elders of The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints. These young elders had come from America. After hearing the strong testimonies of these Mormon Missionaries concerning the divine truth of the Book of Mormon and of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Joseph was convinced that the missionaries were servants of God and that their message was the truth. He was baptized August 13, 1843.

Joseph had a strong desire to go to America and be with the Saints. This entailed great sacrifice leaving home, family and friends. It took much preparation and planning. However, preparations were eventually made and on September 1, 1845, Joseph and Elizabeth and their son Nephi, sailed from Liverpool, England on the ship, Oregon with about one hundred twenty-five Latter-day Saints aboard. Little is known of this voyage, except that Captain James Borland commanded the ship and that she arrived at New Orleans on 28 October - a fifty-seven-day passage. It was a long, dreary trip across the ocean. A first hand account of the trip is not available but most of these ocean voyages of the early saints were indeed rugged. The people were housed in close quarters for weeks. Storms and sickness took their toll. When the Oregon finally landed in New Orleans, Louisiana they were joined by other Saints headed for Nauvoo.

To reach Nauvoo and be with the Saints was the dream of all these weary immigrants. Nauvoo, the Beautiful! Haven of rest! It is situated on the East bank of the Mississippi River about one hundred miles up the river from St. Louis, and nearly the same distance from Chicago, toward the West. It is bound on the East by an extensive prairie of surpassing beauty, and on the North, West, and South by the Mississippi. The setting of this city was unsurpassed for scenic beauty and the industry of the Saints had made it a veritable paradise. Homes were built with wide streets running North and South, East and West. It boasted a fine university. The Nauvoo Temple, then the finest building in the Western country, cost the Saints in their poverty a million dollars and was the admiration of everybody. Nauvoo was the largest and fastest growing city in Illinois.

Joseph and his party arrived at Nauvoo November 6, 1845. It was far from being the "haven of rest" the builders had planned. In June 1844 the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum were murdered by a mob in Carthage Jail. The death of the Prophet brought about a crisis in the Church. There were those who would not accept The

Twelve Apostles as the governing body. These men claimed that the leadership was in their hands. There was great unrest in the Church because of these dissenters. Some of them joined with the enemies of the Saints to bring about their expulsion from their beautiful city in the dead of winter.

The exodus of the Saints from Nauvoo began February 4, 1846. Thirteen days later Joseph, with Elizabeth and their two sons left Nauvoo. This was scarcely three months since their arrival. They crossed the Mississippi River to the Iowa side. Their first camp was at Sugar Creek, just nine miles from Nauvoo. Here the Saints gathered for a short time. Their flight had been so hasty that many had brought little food, clothes and warm bedding to sustain life. Those who had these comforts shared with those less fortunate. Many of the least hardy succumbed due to exposure at this time.

The first move the company made was on March 1, 1846, when four hundred wagons started forward. The weather was cold and stormy. Many wagons were without covers and others had covers that would not shed the rain. When they camped at night Joseph had to shovel the snow away where he pitched his tent. The company moved westward across the territory of Iowa; as they advanced the spring rains came and often drenched the travellers. The ground became muddy making it difficult for the horse teams.

Brigham Young divided the travellers into companies of hundreds, fifties and tens, with officers appointed to preside over each. This organization led to better discipline, less selfishness and a better spirit among the Saints. These people saw in their leader another Moses, which indeed he was.

On April 24 a point on the Grande River 145 miles West of Nauvoo was reached. Here it was decided to form a temporary settlement which they named Garden Grove. Joseph helped build houses and plant crops, so that those who came after would have food and clothes and a stopping place. The men were organized and each given a job to do. One hundred were selected to cut trees and make rails; ten to build fences; forty-eight to build houses; twelve to dig wells and ten to build bridges. The remainder worked in clearing land and preparing it for cultivation. All were busy and in a few days a respectable village had risen in the wilderness. A few of the less sturdy were left to care for the new settlement. The Saints that followed would find a resting place and harvest the crops the first company had planted.

The next stop was in June at a beautiful place about thirty miles from Garden Grove, which they called Mount Pisgah. Here it was decided to make another settlement for the Saints. Several thousand acres of land were fenced for cultivation, and this place became a resting place for the weary exiles for several years while crossing the plains. Joseph again helped to build houses and plant gardens while Elizabeth gave birth to a second son who they named John.

The companies now travelled thru Indian country, where there were no roads, no settlements and only Indian trails. On June 14, President Young and the leading companies arrived at the Missouri River. A camp was made on some highlands called Council Bluffs. Here a ferry boat was built and on June 29 the companies began crossing the river.

On June 30, Captain James Allen of the United States Army arrived at Council Bluffs requesting the Mormons to raise five hundred men to serve as volunteers in the war with Mexico. Such a demand caused surprises and dismay. President Young asked the Saints not to judge the nation by the persecutions received from a few states. President Young's patriotism won and he declared that the volunteers would be forthcoming. It was voted at a meeting of the brethren that a battalion of five hundred men be raised. President Young and Heber C. Kimball returned to Mount Pisgah to raise volunteers. Letters were sent to Garden Grove and Nauvoo urging the men to enlist. The Stars and Stripes were hoisted on a tree at Council Bluffs, Iowa and the work of enrolment began. Within a few days, in obedience to the call of the authorities, five companies were raised comprising 549 men.

Joseph Shipley was among these volunteers coming from Mount Pisgah with other recruits from Garden Grove to join the men from Council Bluffs at the Grand Encampment. He was mustered into service July 16, 1846. He was in a company with James Brown as Captain. Within three days the little army was organized and ready for the march. President Young gave them a farewell blessing. He told them their families would be cared for in their absence. He counselled them to be clean, virtuous and prayerful. He also promised them that they would not be required to shed human blood.

On July 19, the afternoon before their departure, a ball was given in honor of the soldiers. Colonel Thomas L. Kane wrote, "a more merry dancing rout I have never witnessed, though the company went without refreshments and their ballroom was of the most primitive kind, (under a bowery where the ground had been trodden firm and hard by frequent use), to the canto of debonair violins, the cheer of horns, the jingle of sleigh bells, and the jovial snoring of the tambourine, they did dance! French fours, Copenhagen jigs, Virginia reels, and the like forgotten figures (were) executed with the spirit of people too happy to be slow or bashful, or constrained. Light hearted, lithe figures, and light feet, had it their own way from an early hour till after the sun had dipped behind the sharp sky lines of the Omaha hills."

Joseph sat in the shadows, watching the dance. His thoughts were back at Mount Pisgah, where he had left his wife and babies. Unknown to him, he had seen his little family for the last time in this life. Elizabeth and Nephi succumbed in the autumn of 1846 to the hardships and disease that beset the little settlement. What became of the other son, John, Joseph never knew. Was he cared for by kind friends? Joseph could only hope.

Silence was called and a well cultivated soprano voice sang, "By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept." We wept when we remembered Zion. "There was a danger of some expression of feeling when the song was over but an elder with his hard voice asked the blessing of Heaven on all who with purity of heart and brotherhood of spirit had mingled in that society and then all dispersed."

The battalion started on their march to Fort Leavenworth July 20, 1846, where they received their guns and other Army equipment. At this point Colonel Allen died. This was a blow to the men, as he was a good, kind officer. After the death of Colonel Allen, Lieutenant A.J. Smith of the regular Army was given command, contrary to the wishes of the men. With Lieutenant Smith came Doctor George B. Sanderson as surgeon. According to the journals of the men they were caused to suffer considerably because of, "the arrogance, inefficiency and petty oppressions," of these two officers.

The Battalion left Leavenworth August 12, 1846, and travelled across the Kansas River, then westward to the Arkansas River, which they followed upstream for about 100 miles. From there they journeyed southwest to the Cimarron River and passed near what is now the junction of the states of Kansas, Colorado and Oklahoma, on a south-westerly course to the old Spanish town of Santa Fe. From Santa Fe their route was by way of the Rio Grande, southward near the present city of El Paso, and thence to the West, through the city of Tucson, across the Gila and Colorado rivers to San Diego.

The heat of summer was excessive; their rations were reduced, and thus the drinking of tainted water, many suffered from Malaria. They had already become weakened from their travels across the plains of Iowa, in incumbent weather, without proper food and shelter. They were thus more susceptible to disease. Doctor Sanderson prescribed Calomel and Arsenic, refusing to permit the men to use their own simple remedies, and ridiculing their exercise of faith in the laying on of hands.

The first division of the Battalion arrived at Santa Fe the 9th of October, the second division, of the sick and less able bodied, arrived on October 12. At Santa Fe a council was held and it was decided to send all the sick, together with the remaining women and children in the camp, to Pueblo for the winter. They were to journey toward the main body of the Saints in the spring at government expense. Joseph was among those put on the sick list. Captain James Brown of Company C and Lt. Alan Luddington were given charge of this company. Captain Brown left Santa Fe October 18, 1846, with nearly ninety men incapable of making the journey to California because of physical ailments. Doctor Sanderson discharged some of these men without pay or means to procure conveyance to the states. Colonel Deniphan countermanded the order, however, and ordered the men to be sent to Pueblo and receive their pay. Their journey to Pueblo took them over rough country a distance of some two hundred miles. Several died on the way and others succumbed after Pueblo was reached. They arrived on November 17. Another company of sixty-six men was sent to Pueblo from a point one hundred miles further. They commenced their journey with one wagon, four yokes of oxen, and rations for five days, on a march of three hundred miles. Many lost their lives. The company finally arrived at Pueblo in an emaciated condition, December 24, 1846.

In the spring of 1847 the Battalion, led by Captain James Brown and Nelson Riggins, began their march to join the main body of the Saints. They entered Salt Lake Valley July 29, 1847 - just five days after the arrival of Brigham Young. Immediately after their arrival the Battalion members built a bower where public meetings could be held with protection from the excessive heat of the sun.

President Young felt great concern for the companies of Saints travelling to the Valley. Elder Ezra T. Benson and several horsemen started immediately back to Winter Quarters. They were instructed to obtain the names of all who were in the several camps, also to ascertain the conditions of health and needs of the immigrants in order to render assistance when necessary. A few days later a larger company selected for this same purpose was organized. This company comprised seventy-one men, thirty-three wagons, 14 mules and 92 yokes of oxen. It was divided into two divisions with Eunis Rappleye and Shadrach Roundy as captains.

Joseph was in the first company under Captain Rappleye. His prime reason for making this hard and weary journey was to be with his wife and family and to bring them back with him to the Salt Lake Valley. What a bitter disappointment awaited him to find that his wife and younger son, Nephi, had died of cholera in his absence and were buried at Mount Pisgah, Iowa. He never knew what became of his eldest son, John.

The journals of the men depict the hardships they suffered - hunger, cold and Indians. Yet they were preserved and when they arrived at Winter Quarters, the Captain reported they had been cared for and he was grateful. He had made a map or plan of the way and measured the distance from the Salt Lake Valley to Winter Quarters to be one thousand thirty-two miles. They had travelled this distance in nine weeks and three days. They passed a number of wagon trains on the way to the valley, totalling more than fifteen-hundred men, women and children with five hundred sixty wagons and five thousand heads of stock. To these they gave helpful advice.

It is not known just how soon Joseph returned again to the Salt Lake Valley. We read in an indexed clipping of April 19, 1848: "A wind prevailed most of the day at Winter Quarters. During the night the Missouri River rose two feet. Elder Edwin D. Woolley and William H. Kimball arrived in Winter Quarters bringing news from St. Louis and Nauvoo. Joseph Shipley was a dispatcher for the mail."

Upon his return to the Salt Lake Valley, Joseph Shipley worked for and lived at the home of Elder Levi Willard Richards. Here he met Elizabeth Anderton, a convert from England, who was also working in Willard Richard's home. Joseph was fifteen years her senior. The sad experiences through which he had passed gave him a tender feeling for this girl who had left friends and home for the Gospel. Her health had not been good. On January 6, 1854, Brother Richards asked Joseph to take Elizabeth to City Creek, break the ice and baptize her. When they returned home, Brother Richards told them to stand up together and he would give Elizabeth to Joseph in marriage. There had been no courtship and she wondered if she really wanted to marry this man, although she had the greatest respect for him. Brother Richards told her if she would marry Joseph, be true to him and do her duty, she would never regret it. They were married and lived a long, happy and useful life together.

They made their home in Salt Lake City for a few years. While there they were blessed with two children, Amelia Elizabeth born October 22, 1854, and Willard John born October 14, 1856. During the time of the Johnston Army Episode Joseph joined the Echo Canyon Soldiers to protect the homes and rights of the Saints. The family moved to Brigham City for a short time at which place a son, Henry, was born in March 1858, who died shortly after birth. In 1859 they settled in American Fork, Utah where Joseph engaged in farming. He hauled many loads of hay by ox team into Salt Lake City when it required two days to make the trip. For a short time in 1875, Joseph worked on the St. George Temple. Eight more children were born to this family: Sarah, May 3, 1859; Joseph Anderton, February 18, 1861; Nettie, November 21, 1863; Elizabeth, February 1, 1865; Mary Eliza, January 16, 1868; Thomas, September 19, 1869; Benjamin, February 15, 1872; Grace Ada, July 23, 1874. Joseph's wife Elizabeth also had a six-year-old daughter whom she brought with her from England named Margaret and born August 14, 1848 in Ashton under Lyne, Lancashire, England.

They suffered the hardships of early pioneer days. Although Joseph owned his own farm and for many years was a successful farmer there were times when it was hard for Joseph and Elizabeth to provide for their family of twelve children. During these lean years they moved to Provo where they kept a boarding house for students attending the Brigham Young Academy. Elizabeth was an excellent cook and a very gracious hostess. She endeared herself to all who lived with them.

The children of this family were taught honesty and integrity both by precept and example. Joseph Shipley was an honest man. His word was as good as his bond. Elizabeth was a loving wife and mother. They were friendly, hospitable people. Friends and associates loved to visit in their home. Both Joseph and Elizabeth had a special way with children. Their grandchildren were never happier than when they could be with them. They each had a keen sense of humor which carried them over many a difficult spot and endeared them to all who knew them. Joseph was a short and stocky in build. He had a remarkably fine solid set of teeth with which he could bite a nail in two.

In July 1890, Joseph and Elizabeth made a trip to Manti and on the 10th day of that month were sealed in the Manti Temple for time and eternity. Six of their children, Amelia, Sarah, Nettie, Mary Eliza, Willard and Benjamin were sealed to their parents at that time. The others were sealed to them June 12, 1896, in the Salt Lake Temple.

Joseph Shipley passed away on October 24, 1901. He lacked one week of being eighty-eight years old. His wife, Elizabeth preceded him in death by about fifteen months. She passed away on July 27, 1900. This fine couple were revered in the memories of all who knew them. They stood steadfast to the truth through trials and persecutions. Each was found loyal and worthy in all the hardships and afflictions they were obliged to endure.