

A life sketch of

Sariah Fidelia Pew Hendricks

1833 – 1919

Sariah Fidelia Pew Hendricks was born in the Garden of Eden, Jackson County, Missouri, August 11, 1833, and blessed when eight days old. Her father's name was William Pew, who was a shipbuilder serving his apprenticeship in St. Louis, Missouri. Her mother was Caroline Fidelia Calkins. The Pews heard the Gospel and joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They had a little son in 1831, who they named Hyrum, after Hyrum Smith who had taught them the gospel.



William either went into apprenticeship, or went back to shipbuilding and it was decided that Caroline should move on with the Saints. Caroline went with the Saints to Jackson County, Missouri, and there in August, five months after William had left her, a little baby girl was born. She was named Sariah Fidelia. Caroline had frequent letters from William always reminding her he was coming home as soon as his time was up, a hint that he had to sign up for a number of years. It is believed that he had signed to work for a certain amount of time before they heard the gospel. Before the time came for his release from the contract his letters stopped and several months after she received his tool chest. Instead of having the tools and effects in it as in the case of death, it had only rocks and shavings in it. No other word was ever heard from him though Caroline tried for years. She always thought he had been killed and robbed.

Caroline went with the Saints when they were driven out of Jackson County to Caldwell County. Again they were mobbed and ordered out of the state or die. She went with a friend, John Harvey Tippetts and his family. Many Saints apostatized and the poor had to be helped by others. They had gone only six miles when the wagon tire broke and J. H. Tippetts and an old man walked back the six miles to a blacksmith to have the wheel mended. Then they walked back to the wagon. They went on and caught up with the company by dark where they had camped.

They arrived in Quincy in April 1839. Caroline went on to Nauvoo where she lived near

the Prophet. Little Sariah, now six years old went to school in the Prophet's home. One day he took her on his lap and asked her if she knew she was born in the Garden of Eden. He said, "Always remember that and tell your children that you were born in the Garden of Eden." He always begged her mother to let him adopt her, as it was hard for her mother to get along. Her mother was a tailor and had to work so hard. Sariah was baptized in the Missouri River.

In March 1840, their friend, Abby Tippetts, died in childbirth and the child, a son, died too. Caroline had gone to care for her friend, but returned to Nauvoo after her friend's death. In April, John Harvey Tippetts took his little boy, three years old, and went to Nauvoo with his cousin, Alva who was moving to Nauvoo and married his friend Caroline Pew. In the spring of 1842, their little baby girl was born, who they named Abby Jane after his first wife and Caroline's friend. She died four months later.

After the death of the Prophet, 27 June 1844, Caroline went to her sister's home. The Temple was being pushed as fast as possible, so the Saints could get their Endowments before going to the West. On 30 April 1846, the Temple was secretly dedicated. On May 18, 1846, their son, John Harvey Tippetts was born. In August 1842, Sariah F. Pew was baptized in the Missouri River by her step-father, who left for a mission soon after. On 16 Jan 1846, before the Temple was dedicated a number of Saints were endowed. John Harvey Tippetts was sealed to his first wife Abby Jane Smith, to Caroline Calkins Pew, her sister Nancy Calkins, and to Abigail Sprague. Nancy and her wee baby were drowned when the boat they were crossing the Missouri River in capsized. Her efforts to save her baby were in vain and they both drowned.

In July 1846, John Harvey Tippetts joined the Mormon Battalion and was gone fifty-two days, arriving in Winter Quarters 15 Feb. 1847, with a sick detachment that he had been sent back with. His family had arrived before him. In April, he went with Brigham Young's Company as far as Laramie, Wyoming and then went on with the next company. They arrived in Salt Lake in August. He stayed there for a time and then went back to Winter Quarters with Brigham Young to get his family and the rest of the Saints. In April, they left Winter Quarters for the long trek westward. William became sick with chills and fever and had only gone six miles when the tire came off the wagon wheel. They all stopped, unloaded, fixed the wagon and then reloaded their possessions, learning in that short way how things would ride.

Most of the way there was no wood to burn, but they made fires with buffalo chips and little Ott, as they called him would go with Sariah to gather them for the fires on the journey. They lost two cows and three oxen, leaving them with one ox and two cows. The trip was not only hard on the cattle, but on the people as well. They were going to a home where they could live as they desired and they did not complain, but sang and danced and made the best of everything. They milked the cows in the morning and put the milk in jars and by night there was butter for the new salt-rising bread. Caroline would set the bread in the morning. The 'emptings' were set in the morning, then mixed with the water and flour at noon and baked in ovens at night.

The Indians stole their cattle on the Horn River and four young men were sent after them. Thomas E. Ricks was one of them and was shot as he was turning them back. He was shot in the back. His companions took him to camp and he was put on a stretcher. It was four months before he recovered, but he carried the bullets to his grave. They crossed on the Loon or Wolf Fork of the Sweet River, at Independence Rock, crossing the Big and Little Sandy, stopped at Fort Bridger, Wyoming, then on into Salt Lake traveling about eleven miles a day. Sariah and her brother Hyrum drove an ox team or walked the long distance of 1,100 miles. Their first home was a dugout about 10 feet into a hill on City Creek. The front was built of dirt. In the spring, they moved to a house they had built on a lot given to them.

Fashion followed them west and it became the style to have very small waists. If a man could span his sweetheart's waist with his two hands, she was the "belle of the ball." One morning, when Grandpa Tippetts went to call Sariah, he found she had slept in her corset thinking she could draw it tighter in the morning. He took out his pocketknife and cut the corset string. It popped like a gun. Sariah would surely have awakened had she not fainted. Sariah adored her stepfather. He always treated her as his own child.

Just a month after Sariah was 23, her father was called on a mission to England. The next 4 Jan 1857, she was married to Joseph Smith Hendricks. He was 19 and she was 23. They went to live in the "Bath House" just north of Salt Lake City. Joseph and his mother had taken a lease on this business. They had three Negro servants who did most of the hard work but Sariah was

not used to being waited upon and always found something to do. Because of her desire to work with them she was greatly admired by the servants, whose names were Bill, Cad and Chloe. They became great friends.

Sariah's first baby girl, Lily, was born November 1858 in the Bath House, but she only lived two months. September 23, 1859, another baby girl was born whom they called Sariah Fidelia. She grew up to be a wonderful woman and a nurse to all of the Snake River Valley. She acquired the nickname "Aunt Deal". When she was eight months old the family moved to Richmond, Utah, with a colony sent there to build up that part of the country. Joseph took his mother and father and gave up the bathhouse. They lived there for years. Joseph was a minuteman and kept his horse saddled all the time to be ready for Indian trouble. He was always good to the Indians and they called him "Richmond Joe". Here a son was born February 22, 1862. He was named Joseph Smith Jr. after his father. December 16, 1867, a baby girl was born. This baby was given the name of Elizabeth Precinda Hendricks, who became my mother and was lovingly called "Aunt Libbie" by all that knew her.

May 11, 1861, Grandpa Joe married a young woman, according to the advice of the church, named Lucinda Bess. Grandpa made most of his living at this time hauling freight and had many thrilling adventures. April 19, 1870 little Inez Catherine was born who died of Diphtheria in Swan Lake. Her half sister, Laura died two hours before. Lola, another sister died of Typhoid. The other children, who had typhoid at this time recovered. They were Will, Juel, Jody and Libbie. They said they could just remember being lifted up to see Inez and Laura in the same coffin and then put back to bed. Libbie lost all her hair and it came in very curly. She had lovely curly hair all the rest of her life. Grandma went with grandpa on some of his railroad contracts, but they always had a Chinese cook who helped provide for the family needs.

In 1891, grandpa and grandma moved to the Snake River Valley taking with them a young man who had come from Nebraska to work. Grandpa treated him like his own son. Aunt Deal had moved there two years before and they all homesteaded 160 acres and took desert claims of 320 acres. The snow was deep in the winter, always covering the fence posts. The roads were hard to keep open. They made a conveyance of an elk hide and hooked up a team.

Using this method they went over the snow, fences and traveled wherever they wanted.

Church was held at Grandpa's the first winter until they could build a log house. It was the largest house and had a board roof. Most of the roofs were dirt. They had parties there too and danced and ate until morning, so no one would get lost in the darkness. They hauled water from Fall River in barrels for the house on a wagon fixed up for just that purpose. It was usually the youngest who did the hauling.

The nearest market was Market Lake, now known as Roberts, about 60 miles away. Everyone had their own meat, milk, butter, eggs and vegetables; not much fruit except wild fruit. They raised their own hay and grain for the grist every fall. One sack of sugar had to last a year, so they bought "sorghum" in kegs.

Grandmother was the first Relief Society President in Marysville. She was always on time. No one ever waited on her. She was always the first one up in the morning. Grandpa was not very well and she always petted him. When she was 60 years old her son's wife died and left six children. The youngest was two weeks old. There were two girls and four boys, and she raised them until the youngest was 25 years old. One boy, James, was shot while cleaning a twenty-two and died of lockjaw.

In 1916, grandpa and grandma moved back to Cache Valley, Utah to be near the Logan Temple. On 16 June 1919, two months before she was 86 years old Sariah died of Pneumonia and heart disease, which had bothered her for years. She was buried in the Richmond Cemetery, a wish she had made just weeks before. Surviving her were two daughters, "Dealie" Whittle and "Libbie" Hale and her son, Jody. Her faithful companion, Joseph, followed her 18 January 1922 and was buried by her side.

This Life Sketch of Sariah Fidelia Pew Hendricks was written by her granddaughter, Elizabeth Precinda Hale Hammond

Names, places, and dates have been verified with family genealogy information and records in possession of K. Oswald, and family history records in possession of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.