

*A life sketch of*

# Mary Hutton McMurray

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1801 – 1896

There were many women in the early days of the Mormon Church that after the death of their husbands, were left without means of support for themselves and their families. It was a custom of the time that worthy male members of the church would take these widows as their plural wives to care for them. These women usually entered into the plural marriages for “time only” since the majority were already sealed to their deceased spouses.

During the spring of 1857, the widow Mary Hutton McMurray moved to Ogden, Weber, Utah, with her son, James Hutton McMurray. Since the death of her husband, John McMurray, she had been living in Grantsville, Tooele, Utah where several of her children had settled.

On the 24th of July 1857, Brigham Young was informed that there was a large troop of soldiers marching to Utah under orders of President James Buchanan to escort a new governor and put down the alleged Mormon uprising against the federal government and officials. Upon receiving this word, Brigham Young called 1200 men to serve in the Nauvoo Legion, or Utah Militia. Brigham Young instructed the people that this time they would not leave but would fight for their property.

The militia was organized and left in August of 1857. These men were sent to detain Johnston’s Army and to guard the entrances to the Great Salt Lake Valley.

Mary McMurray’s daughter and son-in-law, Harriet McMurray and Moroni Fairchild were living in Ogden at the time. Moroni was called to serve with the militia. Mary’s oldest son James, then 29 years old and single probably left with one of the several groups called to guard the approaches into Zion.

James Lake, a prominent leader in the community and the Patriarch of the Weber Stake, in Ogden married Mary McMurray in President Brigham Young’s office for “time only” on October 15, 1857. He was already practicing plural marriage having been married to Philomela Smith Lake and the widow Ester Ann Gheen.

The widow, Mary Hutton McMurray, was born November 6, 1801 in Warrington Township, York, Pennsylvania. Her parents were Simeon Hutton and Mary Underwood. She had a rich heritage in the Quaker religion. Her great grandfather, Joseph Hutton, had emigrated

from Ireland in 1710 and settled with other Irish Quakers in Pennsylvania. Her maternal great grandfather, Alexander Underwood was also Quaker and an “illustrious Quaker Preacher of Warrington”.

Mary Hutton McMurray’s parents, Simeon Hutton and Mary Underwood were married on 14 December 1786, just after peace was established from the Revolutionary War in which her father had served as a private with Captain Ephraim Pennington’s company, First Battalion, York County Militia. Simeon and Mary Underwood Hutton had eight children. The Huttons and the Underwoods were very intelligent people and were considered leaders in their communities. Education was very important to these people and the children were taught to read and write.

In 1820, John McMurray traveled from Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, to work for Simeon Hutton, Mary’s father. John was the son of William McMurray and Ann McAdams and was born on March 9, 1798 in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Mary Hutton became acquainted with him at the time he came to work for her father. They were married on August 18, 1821. In the minutes of the Quaker’s Warrington Monthly Meeting dated April 7, 1822, it stated that Mary was brought before them and told them that she had been “married by a magistrate to one not a member”. As a result she was cut from her church.

John and Mary McMurray remained in York County, Pennsylvania, where their first two children were born; Ann in 1822 and Sarah in 1824. During this time, they dropped the “Mc” from their surname and were going by the name of Murray. After they joined the Mormon Church and moved to Nauvoo, Illinois they were counseled to use their full name so they then returned to the name of McMurray.

John and Mary Hutton McMurray were the parents of ten children:

Ann McMurray born July 21, 1822 and died as a child on July 22, 1826

Sarah McMurray born March 12, 1824 and died as a child on July 29 1826

William McMurray born October 8, 1826 and died as a child on October 14, 1826

Arabella McMurray born November 4, 1827

James Hutton McMurray born December 24, 1829

Joseph McMurray born April 13, 1832

Mary Jane McMurray born May 23, 1834 and died as a child on June 26, 1835

Matilda Jane McMurray born July 17, 1836

Charles K McMurray born July 17, 1838

Harriet Lucinda McMurray born July 18, 1840

About 1826, John and Mary Hutton McMurray moved to Silver Springs Township in Cumberland County of Pennsylvania. John (according to the tax records) worked as a tailor. They remained in that area for several years.

They were living in Hogestown when in July of 1826 their two small daughters died and then Mary gave birth to a son, William and he lived only 6 days before he died.

On April 21, 1827, Mary Murray was admitted to membership in the Silver Springs Presbyterian Church. They had two other children born in Hogestown; Arabella and James Hutton. They were christened in the Silver Springs Presbyterian Church.

The Murray (McMurray) family moved several times in the first years of their marriage. They lived in York and Cumberland counties of Pennsylvania and Columbiana County in Ohio. Joseph was born in Ohio as well as Mary Jane. The family then moved to Beaver County in Pennsylvania and Mary Jane died. Matilda was born in Beaver County and then the family moved back to Columbiana where Charles and Harriet Lucinda were born.

While living in Beaver County, Pennsylvania in 1836 they first came in contact with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. James Worthington, a cousin, joined the Mormon Church in 1836 in Beaver County. In March of 1844 John and Mary McMurray were baptized.

On April 9, 1844, John and Mary received a signed letter from a missionary, James Craig, which declared their good standing in the church and left to join the saints in Nauvoo. The McMurray family arrived in Nauvoo just at the time they brought the bodies of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum to Nauvoo from the jail in Carthage where they had been murdered. On June 29, 1844, the bodies of the two martyrs laid in state in the Nauvoo Mansion where many of the saints passed to view for the last time their "dear" prophet. James Hutton McMurray, the oldest child, watched over their family possessions and the younger children while John and Mary viewed the dead prophet and his brother Hyrum.

Mary McMurray often told her grandchildren of attending the meeting where Brigham Young was sustained to lead the church. As Brigham Young rose to speak, "he looked like Joseph Smith. Everyone at the meeting said that the mantle of Joseph had fallen on Brigham."

John and Mary McMurray received their patriarchal blessings from John Smith, the uncle of the prophet, Joseph Smith, at Macedonia on September 23, 1844. In the spring of 1845, they again presented a letter of membership dated May 24, 1845 and were accepted in the Fairplay Branch at Nauvoo. Persecutions of the saints were increasing again and the saints had been asked to move closer into Nauvoo so that they could help protect each other.

The construction of the Nauvoo Temple continued so that it could be completed before the saints left Nauvoo. Mary and John with many other of their fellow members of the church received their endowments in the newly constructed Nauvoo Temple. They received their endowments on February 6, 1846. Their sons, James and Joseph received their endowments the next day. Their married daughter Arabella Wetherbee had received hers earlier on January 20, 1846.

On February 4, 1846, the saints, because of increased persecution and trouble with the mobs, started crossing the Mississippi River to leave Illinois. The McMurray's did not leave Illinois with the other saints. Their son, Charles was baptized in August of 1846 in the La Moine River, which is northeast of Carthage not far from Macedonia. They then traveled south to Pike County. Their daughter Arabella Wetherbee and her husband Oliver, were travelling with them. Arabella and Oliver had a daughter, Mary Lucinda born October 2, 1846 in Pike County and during this time John and Mary's youngest daughter, then 6 years old, attended school in Pike County, Illinois.

They arrived prior to January of 1848 in Kanesville, Pottawatomie, Iowa, where John McMurray signed a petition, January 20, 1848, requesting a post office in Kanesville. Kanesville was the headquarters of the Church in Iowa, since Winter Quarters had been abandoned. The United States government did establish the post office in Kanesville on February 7, 1848 with Evan M. Greene as the first postmaster. Also while living in Pottawatomie County, John received a letter certifying that he was an Elder in the Church and was "duly authorized to preach the gospel, agreeably to the authority of that office... (it was) given by the direction of a conference of Elders of said Church, assembled in the Council House at Kanesville. The 7th day of May A.D. 1848" and signed by Jos. H. Tipets, Clerk.

By 1852, the McMurray family was ready to begin their trip across the plains to the Great Salt Lake Valley. They were members of the Warren Snow wagon train. They arrived in Salt Lake sometime in September, because on September 29, 1852, Mary and John McMurray and their youngest daughter, Harriet, were rebaptized in Salt Lake. They were residents of the Salt Lake 17th Ward.

On October 4, 1853, John McMurray died in Great Salt Lake. Mary Hutton and John McMurray were the parents of 10 children with seven living at the time of his death.

After his death Mary McMurray and family moved to Grantsville where several of her children had settled. She lived there until 1857 when she and her oldest son James Hutton McMurray traveled from Grantsville to the Endowment House in Salt Lake where she was

sealed to her husband, John McMurray, on March 26, 1857 with James Hutton McMurray acting as the proxy for his father. Mary McMurray and her son, James, then traveled on to Ogden where her daughter, Harriet McMurray Fairchild and her husband Moroni lived.

Mary McMurray's son, James McMurray, was ordained a Seventy in the 53 Quorum of Seventies on June 28, 1857. The 53rd Quorum of Seventy was part of the Weber Stake, where James Lake was serving as a member of the High Council and patriarch.

It was during this time that she became better acquainted with the Lake family. After the call up of the Utah Militia and her son, James, and son-in-law, Moroni Fairchild left to guard the entrances to the Great Salt Lake Valley, she married James Lake.

On October 15, 1857, Mary Hutton McMurray and James Lake were married for "time only" in the office of Brigham Young in Salt Lake. She became James Lake's fifth wife. James Lake cared for her during the winter of 1857.

By the spring of 1858, Brigham Young had made the decision to evacuate the area and to move all the settlers south of the Great Salt Lake Valley. Each family was to place straw in the doorways of their homes to be burned at a moment's notice so that if the army came into the valley and broke their promise, everything would be burned. By the first of April 1858, the people of Weber County took up their march to Utah Valley where they had been directed to go by Brigham Young. James Lake settled in Spanish Fork. The settlers remained in Utah Valley until July of 1858, when Brigham Young instructed the saints that they could return to their homes because Johnston's Army had marched on through Salt Lake Valley and were camped at Camp Floyd, some sixty miles from Salt Lake.

James Lake and his family returned to Ogden (Harrisville) to their homes the end of August of 1858. Mary McMurray did not return with James Lake to Ogden but instead returned to Grantsville in Tooele County where she lived close to her children. James Lake and Mary McMurray do not seem to have had any further contact with each other.

Mary McMurray remained in Grantsville for a while and then moved to Liberty, Bear Lake, Idaho with her son James Hutton McMurray and his family. She lived in Liberty until her death on May 31, 1896 and is buried in the Liberty Cemetery.

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*Source:*

*Adapted from a history written by James Barnet Cole*

<http://trees.ancestryinstitution.com/tree/1172435/person/1195036789/media/1?pgnum=1&pg=0&pgpl=pid%7cpgNum>