

Sarah Ann Price Godfrey

1842 - 1928



Sarah Ann Price Godfrey lived a remarkable life – from the time she was a child until her death at age 86. Her faith, loyalty and tenacity are as admirable as her courage in honoring her decisions and in devoting herself to her family. Of ordinary beginnings, she had many extraordinary life experiences. Abraham Lincoln himself was a common man whose background was, as he said, of the “simple annals of the poor.” This is such a story.

Sarah Ann Price was born the 7th of February 1842 to Jeremiah and Jane Morgan Price at Rhymney, Glamorganshire, Wales, the 8th of 13 children born to the Prices. Jeremiah was superintendent of a coal mine¹ in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales at the height of the industrial revolution in that country. He also owned a general merchandise store and several brick houses which he rented out. Merthyr was a boomtown and the Price family, though not wealthy, was comfortable largely through their own efforts. Jane Morgan Price, Sarah Ann’s mother, had apprenticed as a hat maker and she supplemented the family income with this trade.²

Sarah Ann loved her grandmother Morgan. The Morgans, parents of Jane, lived not far from the Price family, and Sarah Ann, spent considerable time during her childhood with her grandmother, Margaret Llewellyn Morgan. For most people, including little Sarah Ann, walking was the favored, possibly the only, mode of transport. She said:

I lived with my grandmother, Margaret Llewellyn Morgan, a good deal of the time. She lived at Merthyr Tydfil. I walked the five miles as there was no means of transportation. We walked to Gamorrah to shop... There were two roads between Merthyr and Gammorah.

One passed a cemetery and the other [passed the] iron works. When traveling back and forth I had to make a choice and I was quite afraid to pass either way.³

Below: Jeremiah and Jane Price's home. On the back of the photo is the following inscription: "Sarah Ann Price Godfrey born here – Merthyr Tydvil, Wales Feb. 7, 1839 [1842]. This picture taken in 1925, at this time [the house] being in a very good state of preservation."



Merthyr Tydvil was situated close to reserves of iron ore, coal, limestone and water, making it an ideal site for the ironworks which provided the foundation for the industrial revolution. Small-scale iron working and coal mining had been carried out at some places in South Wales since the Tudor period, but in the wake of the Industrial Revolution (1780s – 1860s) the demand for iron led to the rapid expansion of Merthyr's iron operations. As these works were established, along with their associated iron ore and coal mines, Merthyr, the true center of the "Black Country," grew from a village of some 700 inhabitants in 1800 to an industrial town of 46,000 people by 1851.⁴

As superintendent of the coal mine, Jeremiah presided over the second tragedy to befall the Price family, as reportedly their son, David, was killed at the age of 8 "while working in his father's mine."⁵ The first tragedy took place when little Jane Price, a toddler, toppled into a mop bucket and drowned. A neighbor had come running in to alert Mrs. Price that her cow had escaped its enclosure and she hurried out to get it, only to return moments later to find a loss far greater than any cow. Then four years after David's death, their son Richard Price also died at age 8, but no details are available. In the early days of the industrial revolution, long before child welfare laws were enacted, it was not uncommon for both women and children to be employed in the mines, as their bodies were smaller and could get into the narrow passageways

of the veins of coal. Conditions in the mines were, by modern standards, deplorable. Men were sometimes cramped into tunnels no more than two feet high. Operating the air doors to control the ventilation was a task usually assigned to children 6-8 years of age:

*They would sit by the door with nothing for light but a candle. Once the door opened, the rush of air would blow out the candle and they could be there for an hour before someone would come along to light their candle again. But many little children never had a candle to start with. They would be in the dark all day long and their shifts would be 10-12 hours long. A lot of them had no shoes or socks on their feet. At the end of each shift, the "pits" or mines, all but bottomless, would release the thousands of grimy, blackened workers, each with a Davy lamp [a safety lamp containing a candle] in hand, who hastened to their humble homes to wash, eat and rest. When the daylight hours were shorter, they would only get to see the sun once a week. Any wonder these ancestors of ours would hope for something better?*⁶



But for some, Merthyr's bounties became financially rewarding. While the workers were cramped into crude houses, cheaply constructed, William Crawshay built this castle-like home in 1825 with the wealth he had accumulated in the manufacture of iron. Its beautiful lawn and gardens were not far from the scenes of dirty, ugly industry. A somewhat grim eyewitness account of the environs of Merthyr Tydfil was recorded in 1855 by a George Borrow.⁷

Now a museum, Crawshay's Cyfarthfa Castle is one of the more impressive structures in South Wales and adjoins the Brecon Beacon National Park.

Many social and political changes took place in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Merthyr Tydfil was the center of one such movement for justice. An uprising called The Merthyr Rising of 1831 was precipitated by a combination of the ruthless collection of debts, frequent wage reductions when the value of iron periodically fell, and the imposition of truck shops. Instead of using the normal coin of the realm, some ironmasters paid their workers in specially-minted coins or credit notes, known as "truck." These could only be exchanged at shops owned by the ironmasters. Many of the workers objected to both the price and quality of the goods sold in these company-owned shops.⁸

There is still controversy over what actually happened and who was to blame for the rebellion, but the owners took fright at the challenge to their authority, and called on the military for assistance. Soldiers were sent from the garrison at Brecon. Some 7,000 to 10,000 workers marched under a red flag, which was later adopted internationally as the symbol of the working classes. For four days, they effectively controlled Merthyr.

The military clashed with the rioters, and several on both sides were killed. Despite the hope that they could negotiate with the owners, the skilled workers lost control of the movement. Even with their numbers and captured weapons, they were unable to effectively oppose disciplined soldiers for very long, and several of the supposed leaders of the riots were arrested. The first trade unions, which were illegal and savagely suppressed, were formed shortly after the riots. The uprising also helped create the momentum that led to the Reform Act of 1832.⁹

Many families had had enough of the strife, and they left Wales to use their skills elsewhere. Numerous people set out by ship to America where the steelworks of Pittsburgh were booming. Jane Morgan Price's sister, Sarah, wife of Howell Jeffries, and her family were among them.¹⁰

When the message of the Restoration was preached in Merthyr some years later, it met with a receptive audience. Many were eager to learn about a Prophet in America and the building of Zion as the long-awaited answer to many hopes and dreams. So thoroughly did missionary tracts cover Wales, that hardly anyone would not have been aware of the "Mormons." Missionaries of the church, Dan Jones in particular, met with great success in Wales, converting thousands during the late 1840s and 1850s.

Jeremiah Price became converted to the message of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and was baptized the 4th of December, 1851 in Merthyr. Our Sarah Ann and an older brother, Josiah, were also baptized on that date. The Mormons, however, met with stiff opposition in Merthyr. "We were baptized in the night," recalled Sarah Ann about their baptisms which took place under a bridge to avoid the persecution that sometimes accompanied such a conversion. This change was not entered into lightly and became a major turning point in their lives. However, Jeremiah's wife, Jane, not fully converted, was more cautious, and waited some time before she complied with her husband's wishes and was baptized in April 1853.

When word got out that the Price family belonged to the Mormons, Jeremiah was discharged from the mine.¹¹ He was denied the association of his peers, and as he attempted to dispose of his properties so he could emigrate, he was unable to sell his possessions at a fair market price.

As the message of the restoration spread throughout Wales, many saints eagerly asked, "Pa bryd y cawn fyned i Seion?", which means "When may we go to Zion?" The new converts sought to follow the counsel of their leaders to leave "Babylon" (Wales) and go to "Zion" (Utah).¹²

Many emigrated. Each spring during that era a call would come from church headquarters in Salt Lake City for the Latter-day Saints to gather. It has been estimated that about 20% of the population of Utah is of Welsh descent. In order for European converts to emigrate to Zion an Emigration office of the British Mission was set up in Liverpool, England to assist those who wished to go overseas. But the sea voyage was only the first leg of a very long journey.

During the years from 1847 until the transcontinental railroad was connected in 1869, thousands of Mormon converts from all across Europe and the eastern United States would form wagon trains to emigrate to the Great Basin of Utah Territory. During those years Mormon emigrants traveled on the pioneer trail in more than 250 companies departing from various

outfitting places. These companies in which about 60,000 L.D.S. Church members traveled included freighting trains, independent companies, handcart companies, and various types of other Church companies. Later immigrants could travel the full distance by water and rail. Much of the travel was funded by the Perpetual Emigration Fund of the Church, funding loans with the expectation that when possible, repayment would afford others to immigrate.¹³

Jane was reluctant to leave Wales and her comfortable home of plenty, so Jeremiah arranged for two of their children, Josiah, 21, and Sarah Ann, age 10, to go on ahead of them with a company of converts aboard the ship *Jersey* which sailed for New Orleans on February 5th, 1853. Jeremiah hoped this would motivate his wife, Jane, with a desire to follow.

“Ah,” Sarah Ann would say to her grandchildren, “Mother hated to see me leave to come to America and Zion.” She grieved a lot when Sarah and Josiah left and “was ill for some time afterward.”¹⁴ At the time Jane had twins just a few months old. An older daughter, Margaret, had married the previous year, and four other children had perished from accidents or illness. That left at home 15-year-old Ann who would surely have been needed to help with the twins, 7-year old John, 5-year-old Isaac, and 2-year old Jemima. It is interesting to note that it was not until later that year that Jane and Ann were baptized.

Sarah Ann wrote: “Josiah, my brother, and I left our home at Rhymney, January 25, 1853. We walked to Merthyr, then traveled by bus, then train to Swansea. We sailed from there to Liverpool. We were lost in Liverpool all one day.”¹⁵

They sailed on the ship *Jersey* February 5th, 1853, from the port of Liverpool, England along with 314 Latter-day Saint immigrants, under the direction of George Halliday. On March 22, 1853 they arrived in New Orleans, Louisiana.¹⁶ “After landing at New Orleans we sailed up the Mississippi to Keokuk [Iowa, not far from Nauvoo, Illinois, which the Saints had left a few years earlier]. We spent nine weeks there. I do not know why we remained there but we spent our time killing rattlesnakes and swinging on grapevines. My aunt lived near Keokuk but we had no opportunity to see her. I was named after her, Sarah Jeffries.”¹⁷ In fact the Jeffries lived in Pennsylvania, a long way from Keokuk. A child’s concept of geography is largely experiential and Sarah Ann would soon learn for herself how vast the American continent actually is.

Sarah Ann and her brother Josiah joined the Joseph Young¹⁸ Company that left Keokuk, Iowa the first of June 1853. There were 402 individuals and about 54 wagons in the company when it began its journey from the outfitting post. This company crossed the Missouri River July 11th. At that time there roamed thousands of buffalo all across the plains. Deer and antelope were plentiful too.

On the plains one day when most of the women and some younger children were riding in the wagons, Sarah Ann was walking alone a little ways off. Suddenly an Indian came up and held her hand and walked along with her. When Joseph Young saw them he ordered frightened little Sarah Ann into the wagon, but the Indian would not let go of her, so the company had to stop and feed all the Indians before they would let them go on.¹⁹ Thus a possible kidnapping was averted.

Another narrow escape involved Sarah Ann and her playmates, Blanche Thomas, Lovina Jones and Sarah Morgan. At the Platte River the girls were playing with a small raft, taking turns pulling each other along the shore. When it was Sarah Ann's turn to ride the raft, the children suddenly dropped the rope when they heard the call to camp, letting the raft start drifting with the current. Sarah Ann began to scream. As soon as the situation became clear, help was called for. The men had a very hard time getting the raft back to shore.²⁰ Once again Sarah Ann was rescued.

Ann Gregory Wilkey, a fellow traveler on the trail remarked, "When we started we did not realize what our trip would be nor did we think of what we would have to pass through before we reached our valley home."²¹ Another member of the pioneer company, Mary Lois Walker, described running out of provisions 10 days away from the Salt Lake Valley, although help was on its way.²² They did not arrive in the Salt Lake Valley until October 10th, 1853, an overland journey of over four months. It had been nine months and fifteen days since Sarah Ann and her brother had left Liverpool.

Sarah Ann wrote:

From the time I got to Salt Lake until I was married I worked for different families. First I went with my brother Josiah to a family by the name of Whipple. From there to Algers, who made quite a sacrifice to take me and keep me that winter. Mrs. Winegar took me next. Isaac Hunter came after me and I stayed with them for some time. Then my brother, Josiah, came after me and we went to Blanchards, two miles north of Farmington, [a few miles north of Salt Lake City] walking all the way. While we were walking, Josiah read to me the first letter we had had from home. We went to Jimmie Taylor's mother who kept me for a while. From there I went to Mrs. Goodale's who was very good to me and provided well for my needs, dressed me well and sent me to school.²³

This would be the only schooling she would receive after coming to Utah.

Sarah Ann worked for board and room, not for any money. Occasionally she would be given a few clothes that were no longer in use. Many, if not most of the immigrants who settled Utah faced a meager existence during the years they were getting established.

"I was influenced by others to go back to Taylors to live," she said. Just what she meant one can only surmise. One of her granddaughters reported that she had a difficult time working for these various families, some of whom were very hard on her. Another granddaughter said, "She was just bumped around from pillar to post," a slang expression describing a life that was full of hardship and uncertainty.

Sarah Ann continued, "The Taylor family moved to Weber and I walked down from North Ogden, some snow on the ground and I waded Mill Creek." The Taylors' farm was close to the mountains, but they moved into the city because of the Indian threat. When Sarah Ann was with them she said, "I spent a bad winter there—three families living in one room. It was while I was with them that my parents and family came to Utah in 1855 [two years after Sarah

and her brother arrived in Utah].” The Prices went to North Ogden where Josiah had taken up some land and had started building an adobe house.

The winter of 1855-1856 was the most severe experienced since the first settlers had arrived in Utah. Crops had failed due to another grasshopper plague and the ensuing famine forced many to subsist on only what was available—sego lily roots. The sego lily grew wild and plentifully, and like the manna of ancient Israel, became the symbol of survival.²⁴ In her later years Sarah Ann recalled that she had “endured the hard winter” when she was 14 years of age. Many had experienced the survival struggle, but it would leave a lasting mark on Sarah Ann’s life.

Continuing, Sarah Ann said, “I returned to North Ogden and lived with John and Sarah Ann Mowers for a time. I also worked for Ailene Bowen, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Middleton. Then I went to live with my folks.” It was not easy for Jeremiah Price, reportedly suffering from severe rheumatism, to support a family in the dire circumstances they were in. They were forced to sell their clothes and to do any kind of work that would provide sustenance. Somehow they made it through the remainder of the winter and through the rest of the year of 1856.

Then, in January of 1857 the wife of Joseph Godfrey, a neighbor, passed away in North Ogden a week after giving birth to her 8th child. Joseph Godfrey, well established in the community, was urgently seeking help for his family and his new infant. He sent an inquiry over to the Price household to ask for the services of Ann Price, now 19 years old. Since she was soon to be married to Rosser Jenkins²⁵ Joseph Godfrey then requested that her younger sister, Sarah Ann, come. She did and it changed her life.

Sarah Ann worked for the Godfrey family for about a month when Joseph proposed to her. She also understood that she would be entering into a polygamous relationship as Joseph intended to also marry his deceased wife’s sister, the widow of his long time companion and best friend, George Coleman.²⁶ George had enlisted with the Mormon Battalion but never returned. Joseph honored his commitment to George in caring for Mary and her son, Moroni. Sarah Ann thought about Joseph’s proposal for about three weeks before deciding to accept his offer of marriage. It was a May-September wedding because he was 57 years old and she was only 15. Mary Reeves Coleman and Sarah Ann Price became the wives of Joseph Godfrey on the 7th of March 1857. The marriages were performed by Brigham Young in his Salt Lake City office.

Much pondering and conjecture has been given to Sarah Ann’s decision to enter into such a marriage. Why did she accept? What did her parents think about it? How did it affect Joseph Godfrey’s considerable status in the community? Other questions come to mind about the patterns of coping with severe stress that have been noted in the generations that followed, including depression and psychosomatic illnesses. The heartbreak of the Price family is replayed again and again as tragic events engulf them in an almost constant stream: the early death of baby Enoch in 1832; the accidental drowning of the toddler Jane in 1833, the deaths of David and Richard, each about 8 years of age in 1844 and 1848, the loss of one of the twins during the sea voyage of 1855, and finally the accidental death of Jeremiah in 1860. These tragedies must surely have left family members feeling vulnerable, and even though her father’s death took

place after her marriage, perhaps this feeling of vulnerability was one of several factors motivating Sarah Ann's decision to marry Joseph Godfrey.

When Kay Shaeffer, Sarah Ann's 15-year-old 3rd great granddaughter, heard Sarah Ann's story, she said it reminded her of the book *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. Perhaps like Jane Eyre, Sarah Ann's life story was a quest to be loved and valued, and to acquire a sense of belonging. Her decision points to a need for stability and a desire to set aside the constant struggle for survival. She had known nothing else since she was a 10-year-old. Surely her self esteem was undermined by the constant shift of her living circumstances, as though she were a foster child who was moved from family to family.

As her great-granddaughters consider these questions, no definitive answer can be found. One can only regard with compassion the anguish, doubts and fears as well as the hopes and aspirations of those concerned. One also wonders if her parents or her sister, Ann, tried to dissuade her from marrying. Ann eventually became disenchanted with the whole idea of polygamy. She and her husband, Rosser Jenkins, left Utah and the Church three years later.

Because of numerous misunderstandings between the residents of Utah and the government of the United States the U.S. military was sent to the territory in late 1857. Brigham Young recognized that resistance was not possible, but that a scorched-earth policy might need to be adopted. They began preparations for a move south. Between the end of March and mid-May of 1858 some 30,000 settlers from Utah's northern towns, North Ogden included, moved south to the vicinity of Provo, leaving behind only enough men to care for fields and crops. Sarah Ann Price, now Godfrey, and the rest of the Price family were among those who fled south. She wrote, "I was in the move south, going as far as Summit Creek below Payson [south of Provo, Utah]." Her husband Joseph likely remained at home. Later that year when hostilities ended Sarah Ann returned to North Ogden, but her parents and younger siblings stayed behind, settling in a community near Payson, although no records of the Prices there have been located. Sarah Ann's father, Jeremiah Price, died in a tragic accident in March of 1860 as a result of breaking through the ice of Utah Lake.²⁷

Sarah Ann and Joseph Godfrey waited almost three years to have their first baby. Thereafter eight more babies came at about two year intervals. Family life has been well described by their daughter, Sarah Jane, who was born in 1862, the first daughter and second child. She wrote:

I heard my father call but I was so busy with my playing that I paid no attention. But soon he was close by, telling me I was needed. I left my play and never again was as carefree as I had been in those days playing in the orchard behind the house. Yes, I had done chores that the ordinary child of that day was used to doing: running errands, gathering wood or kindling, picking up after this or that person of the home, rocking the cradle that always seemed to be in use, or the many things that small hands could do to help lighten work for older folks. Ours was an ordinary home in many ways except for the fact that my father was almost past middle age when he married my mother who was still in her teens, and she was, or seemed to be, never really well. So Father took over many of the duties of the household and spent more time around home helping than most men did.²⁸

The nature of Sarah Ann's illness has not been determined. One wonders if perhaps she was plagued with debilitating headaches, or some form of incapacitating depression. The human body often uses illness as a coping strategy, so although there is no doubt about the reality of her illnesses, there is some question raised by her daughter's phrase "she was, or seemed to be, never really well."

So Sarah Jane at age nine took over doing the family laundry. "A tub was filled with water and placed on two chairs in the center of the kitchen. Father brought one of Mother's big aprons and tied it around my neck and waist. I was too small to reach the clothes in the tub, so a small box was brought and placed for me to stand on."²⁹ If her mother was well enough to help, the two of them would work together, but if not, Sarah Jane would do the arduous work alone. Some families had a long haul to bring water to the house, but the Godfrey household had a spring close by.

Joseph Godfrey raised a variety sugar cane³⁰ and operated a mill to make molasses in the fall. Sarah Jane said,

My older brothers would strip the cane then haul it to the mill. My part was to keep the old horse going round and round. Sometimes I would feed the cane into the mill two or three stalks at a time... In this process the pulp would roll out at the back of the mill, the juice in front into buckets. Father built a huge fireplace for boiling the juice in a large vat for molasses. He would boil, skim, clarify it then put a big keg of it in the cellar for winter. While all this was going on, children would come from all over town with small buckets to get some candy. We had many a candy-pulling through the winter...He kept bees so we had a supply of honey. We had apples, too, in the cellar for winter.³¹

Joseph Godfrey also made preserves from peaches and molasses. As a father he was very involved in family life. Sarah Jane wrote, "When Mother would get tired of us kids, Father would load us all into the wagon and take us wherever he would be going." In 1869 when Sarah Jane was about seven years old the railroad came through Ogden and the laying of the Golden Spike connecting the transcontinental railroad was completed. Joseph took all the children to see the first train come in. The older boys rode on it for several miles, then walked back home. After the trains were running, sometimes a circus would come to Ogden. Joseph always took the children. Sarah Jane explained that,

We grew up in the house just south of the North Ogden meetinghouse along with the families of my father's first wife, who had died and left four boys, and his second wife, who had three children, together with my own mother and family, When I was about twelve Mary, the second wife, inherited some money from a bachelor brother in New York so she bought a lot and built herself a house about three blocks from us. That left the older boys and my mother and her children in our old home. But Father lived with us all the time.³²

Joseph was primarily interested in seeing to the needs of his family. Sarah Jane reported that "we always had plenty to eat and wear, although many at that time never had enough. Father was a great help in the rearing of us children. He tried not to let us girls work for

other people, but rather he wanted to make us comfortable at home.” Joseph and Sarah Ann actually had a fairly typical family for the time and place that they lived. Many lived the subsistence lifestyle that favored home production and self reliance. Not a few in North Ogden lived in polygamy until the practice was abandoned in 1890.

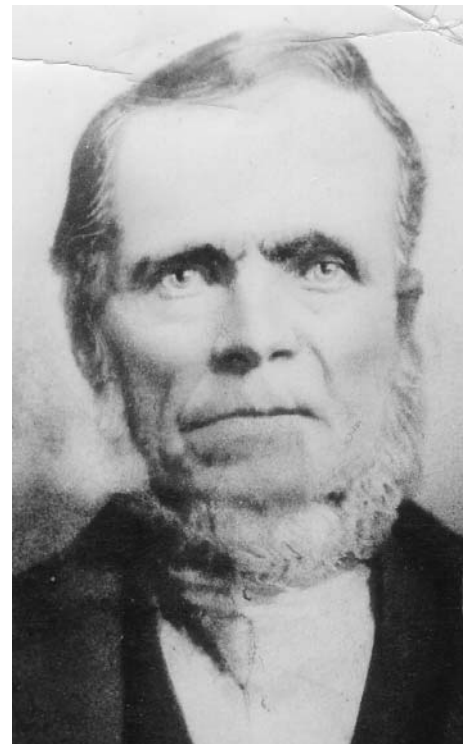
Sarah Ann worked as hard as her husband. “Mother used to spin and dye our own yarn for sox for the family. I remember the old spinning wheel very well,” wrote Sarah Jane, “but I never learned to use the spindle to spin because Mother did it all. In spite of her health, Mother was always busy.” She taught the girls to knit when they were quite young. They learned to knit their own stockings, wool for winter and cotton for summer.

When Sarah Jane was about twelve years old Joseph brought home a sewing machine. “I remember how we all crowded around to see it. Oh, it would be nice to use, because all our spare time had been spent in sewing by hand the many things that were needed for the family,” wrote Sarah Jane. The Godfrey family lived between two periods of home production. They didn’t weave their own cloth, nor did they buy readymade clothing. They were able to buy fabrics and some yarns so that they were able to produce what they needed. Now, with the sewing machine home production was stepped up a notch. The use of the new machine was delegated to Sarah Jane who was not only the oldest girl, but was the most interested in learning how to use it. “Mother cut out the cloth and directed me how to sew it together,” she wrote. “From this time on I became a seamstress, and as long as I lived at home or even nearby, I sewed for all the family, even when it branched out into many families,” said Sarah Jane.³³ “Later she learned to make patterns from a Mrs. Ship and Mrs. Ship was from Salt Lake. She came to stay at Mother’s and taught Sarah Jane many ways to use the machine and to cut and fit,”³⁴ wrote Jemima, Sarah Jane’s sister.

The local Indian tribes had an impact on the community of North Ogden. Once when a band of Indians rode whooping and yelling into town in warpaint, the frightened baby [Jemima or Charlotte] crawled under the crib and then fell asleep. After Joseph calmed the situation down by talking and smoking with the Indians, they left. Soon it was discovered that the baby was missing. Immediately Joseph and some other men rode out after the Indians to rescue her, and in the commotion the baby awoke and was taken to her mother’s grateful arms. Tearfully, Sarah Ann recounted tales of stolen children whose stories had not had such a happy ending.³⁵

Photo: Joseph Godfrey

Tragedy struck the town of North Ogden with the advent of the smallpox in 1876. Two daughters, Margaret Ann and Sarah Jane, both contracted the disease. Margaret Ann, “Maggie,” passed away 15 January 1877 at age 12, but Sarah Jane, 14, survived, largely through the loving care provided by her parents, especially her father. Later



she wrote: “I think I would have died if my father hadn’t taken such good care of me and stayed by my bedside day and night—although we had a good nurse for days. Mother was too sick to help much.”³⁶ Surely Sarah Jane’s illness reminded Sarah Ann of her own survival struggle at the same age when she nearly starved during the winter of her 14th year.

Tragedy struck again less than four years later. Joseph Godfrey died the 16th of December 1880 at the age of 74. He had lived a long and useful life. His years were filled with adventure and hardship, heartache as well as joy. His advice was often sought after as attested in the Minutes of the North Ogden Elders Quorum,³⁷ and he was sorely missed by his family. Sarah Ann was only 38 years old with a one-month-old baby when she became a widow.

It was very hard for Sarah Ann, a mother with nine children, to make ends meet. Her oldest son, John, 21, was a great help, building her a new home across from the church where the family took part in the many activities provided. Sarah Ann also contributed her time and talents to serving in the church.³⁸ She taught Sunday School and was later a counselor in the Primary presidency.

Five years were spent homesteading in Montana, but she returned to live with her youngest daughter in North Ogden. At the 1910 census she is listed as living in the home of her daughter, Josephine and husband Nephi Swenson and their children in Weber County, Utah. By 1920 the Swensons had moved to Preston, Franklin County, Idaho, but by then Sarah Ann was living in Canada with her daughter Sarah Jane Holmes and family. Sarah Ann’s great granddaughter, Marjorie Hall King who was born in 1907, wrote:

I remember my great grandmother very well. She spent some time with us in Taber [Alberta, Canada] during her lifetime and in my young years she told us wonderful pioneer stories. Her own life history would make good reading anytime and she could remember a great many historic occasions of early days in Utah. She crossed the plains in a wagon train about 1850 [1853] ... with a brother who was a little older. Their parents joined them later coming from Wales as converts.



Photo: left-right clockwise:
Ethel Evans Hall, Sarah Jane
Godfrey Evans Holmes, Sarah Ann Price Godfrey, Marjorie Hall King
(Four generations.)

She married very young, a man much older than herself and bore several children, my grandmother Holmes being her eldest daughter.

She lived with us in Taber on the farm in the summer of 1909 and I have very faint recollections of her at that time. She was proud of my bright, curly hair and I remember her saying so. She was a widow for over 60 years [48 years in fact] and she lived to be over 90 years [86 actually] of age. She passed away in November 1928 about a week after my sister Sona's eldest child, dear little Connie. For a span of about 2 years there had been five generations in our family but Grandmother Godfrey was not back in Canada for several years before she died so we have no picture of them together. I cannot remember when I saw her last but believe it was the winter of 1922-23, when she was living in Raymond with Grandma Holmes. My mother [Ethel Evans Hall] was very fond of her and could tell of many happy times spent with her when Ethel was a youngster in North Ogden. My mother, Ethel, was born in North Ogden in 1886 and her father was killed in a coal mine explosion in Almy, Wyoming three months later. Her mother, Sarah Jane Godfrey Evans, brought the two small children back to North Ogden where they lived until coming to Canada shortly after the turn of the century. Grandmother Sarah Jane was a widow for [7] years and then married Henry Holmes who had wanted her before she became Mrs. William Evans.

Olive Hall Johnson, another great granddaughter of Sarah Ann wrote:

I remember her wearing long skirts with a snow white waist apron, also long. She came out to our farm to visit and mother was very fond of her and we kids also treated her with respect. She came one time at threshing season, it was when Dad had a steam engine and did threshing for hire. Grandma Godfrey went out onto the porch on the south side to look for the threshing crew so she and mother [Ethel] could put the pots of food to cook for them. It was prepared and they were busy setting the table for a large crew, but no one came. Grandma was upset because she was sure that she had seen the machinery and men coming. We never did figure it out.

About that same time I felt sick to my stomach and was throwing up. Grandma Godfrey said to me "Let her go gallegher."³⁹ I did not figure that out either, but still say it to myself when in the act of throwing up. Another time I can remember the family going to Grandma Holmes farm in Raymond because Grandma Godfrey was there for a visit, still the long skirt and white waist apron.

Sarah Jane Godfrey Evans Holmes, eldest daughter of Sarah Ann⁴⁰, took care of her mother during her later years in Raymond, Alberta Canada. Her grandmother, Jane Morgan Price, widow of Jeremiah Price and Sarah Ann's mother, also came to Canada. Grandmother Price lived with her daughter Jemima Price Coleman and passed away in 1904 in her 98th year and was buried in the Magrath, Alberta, Canada cemetery.

With regret Sarah Jane wrote, “Mother, [Sarah Ann] who had been with us for quite some time went with me to Preston, Idaho to be with my sister, Jemima [Jemima Ellen Godfrey Campbell], named after her aunt, Jemima Price Coleman. I have always been sorry I did not insist on bringing her back to Canada with me. The following year, 5 November, 1928, she died at Preston⁴¹ and was buried in North Ogden.”⁴²

Obituary:

Sarah Ann Godfrey, 86, of North Ogden died at 2pm Monday in Preston, Idaho at the home of a daughter, Jemima Campbell. She was born in Rhymney, Wales in 1842 and came to Utah in 1853. She has resided in North Ogden since that time. Funeral services will be held in the North Ogden meeting house Thursday with Bishop Herald Campbell officiating. The body may be viewed at the family home from 12 until 1 o'clock on the day of the services. Interment will be in the North Ogden Cemetery. Surviving are the following sons and daughters: John Godfrey of Emmett, Idaho, Sarah Jane Holmes of Raymond, Alberta, Canada, Jemima Campbell and Josephine Swenson of Preston, Idaho, Jeremiah Godfrey of Tabor, Alberta, Canada, Josiah Godfrey of Ucon, Idaho, Melvin Godfrey of Magrath, Alberta, Canada and a number of grand and great-grandchildren.



* * * * *

Editor’s note:

It is amazing to trace the matriarchal line back several generations. I feel a tremendously strong bond with these women. My mother, Margaret Holmes Weaver, lived to the age of 67, her mother, Sarah Jane Godfrey Evans Holmes, lived to age 88; her mother, Sarah Ann Price Godfrey, lived to the age of 86; her mother, Jane Morgan Price, lived to be 94; and her mother, Margaret Llewellyn Morgan reportedly lived to 100. What a heritage of strength! But an even more important legacy is the spiritual heritage they claimed of love, service, courage, faithfulness, endurance and the triumph over many and varied obstacles. I can relate to W.H. Zoschak’s statement about ancestors, “I look into your name and see myself.”⁴³ It is this joy as well as the pain that I recognize. It was theirs, and now it is mine. Those who come after me will know it too – as part of the stream of life flowing ever onward, the source of which is Mother Earth and God, the Father of us all.

Ellen Claire Weaver Shaeffer, 2009

NOTES

ENDNOTES

¹ According to some accounts Jeremiah was superintendent of the iron works.

² See biography *Jeremiah and Jane Morgan Price*, by E. C. Shaeffer, 2009

³ Swenson, Josephine, *Sarah Ann Price Godfrey*, Preston, Idaho, 1928

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merthyr_Tydfil#Influence_and_growth_of_iron_industry

⁵ *Jeremiah & Jane Morgan Price*, unknown author, in possession of Rae Hall Eller, Salt Lake City.

⁶ Wissel, Kayleen Jones *A Story of the Life of Martha Price & Thomas Jones*, Farr West, Utah, Dec. 2000, p.3

⁷ www.trevor.jones4.btinternet.co.uk/GeorgeBorrow.html

George Borrow, who wrote many travel books and described gipsy life, travelled through Wales in 1854. This is an extract of that account during his time in Merthyr Tydfil:

“Turning round a corner at the top of a hill I saw blazes here and there and what appeared to be a glowing mountain in the south-east. I went towards it down a descent which continued a long, long way; so great was the light cast by the blazes and that wonderful glowing object that I could distinctly see the little stones upon the road. After walking about half an hour, always going downwards, I saw a house on my left hand and heard a noise of water opposite to it. It was a *pistyll*. I went to it, drank greedily, and then hurried on, more and more blazes and the glowing object looking more terrible than ever. It was now above me at some distance to the left, and I could see that it was an immense quantity of heated matter like lava, occupying the upper and middle parts of a hill and descending here and there almost to the bottom in a zigzag and tortuous manner. Between me and the hill of the burning object lay a deep ravine. After a time I came to a house, against the door of which a man was leaning. "What is all that burning stuff above, my friend?" "Dross from the iron forges, sir!"

“I now perceived a valley below me full of lights, and descending, reached houses and a tramway. I had blazes now all around me. I went through a filthy slough, over a bridge, and up a street, from which dirty lanes branched off on either side, passed throngs of savage looking people talking clamorously, shrank from addressing any of them, and finally undirected found myself before the Castle Inn at Merthyr Tydfil. Merthyr Tydfil is situated in a broad valley through which roll the waters of the Taf. It was till late an inconsiderable village, but is at present the greatest mining place in Britain, and may be called with much propriety the capital of iron and coal.....The Taf, which runs to the south of Merthyr, comes down from Breconshire, and enters the Bristol Channel at Cardiff, a place the name of which in English is the city on the Taf. It is one of the most beautiful of rivers, but is navigable on account of its numerous shallow. The only service which it renders to commerce is feeding a canal which extends from Merthyr to Cardiff.....

“The morning of the fourteenth was very fine. After breakfast I went to see the Cyfarthfa Fawr iron-works, generally considered to be the great wonder of the place. After some slight demur I obtained permission from the

superintendent to inspect them. I was attended by an intelligent mechanic. What shall I say about the Cyfarthfa Fawr? I had best say but very little. I saw enormous furnaces. I saw streams of molten metal. I saw a long ductile piece of red-hot iron being operated upon. I saw millions of sparks flying about. I saw an immense wheel impelled with frightful velocity by a steam engine of two hundred and forty horse power. I heard all kinds of dreadful sounds. The general effect was stunning. These works belong to the Crawshays, a family distinguished by a strange kind of eccentricity, but also by genius and enterprising spirit, and by such a strict feeling of honour that it is a common saying that the word of one of them is as good as the bond of other people. After seeing the Cyfarthfa, I roamed about making general observations. The mountain of dross which had startled me on the preceding night with its terrific glare, and which stands to the north-west of the town, looked now nothing more than an immense heap of cinders. It is only when the shades of night have settled down that the fire within manifests itself, making the hill appear an immense glowing mass. All the hills around the town, some of which are very high, have a scorched and blackened look. An old Anglesea bard, rather given to bombast, wishing to extol the abundant cheer of his native isle, said: "The hills of Ireland are blackened by the smoke from the kitchens of Mona." With much more propriety might a bard on the banks of the Taf who should wish to apologize for the rather smutty appearance of his native vale exclaim: "The hills around the Taf, once so green, are blackened by the smoke from the chimneys of Merthyr." The town is large and populous. The inhabitants for the most part are Welsh, and Welsh is the language generally spoken, though all have some knowledge of English. The houses are in general low and mean, and built of rough grey stones. Merthyr, however, can show several remarkable edifices, though of a gloomy, horrid, Satanic character. There is the hall of the iron, with its arches, from which proceeds incessantly a thundering noise of hammers. Then there is an edifice at the foot of a mountain, half way up the side of which is a blasted forest, and on top an enormous crag. A truly wonderful edifice it is, such as Bos would have imagined had he wanted to paint the palace of Satan. There it stands; a house of reddish brick with a slate roof-four horrid black towers behind, two of them belching firth smoke and flame from their tops-holes like pigeon holes here and there-two immense chimneys standing by themselves. What edifice can that be of such strange, mad details? I ought to have put that question to someone in Merthyr Tydfil, but did not, though I stood staring at the diabolical structure with my mouth open. It is no good putting the question to myself here. After strolling about for some two hours with my hands in my pockets, I returned to my inn, called for a glass of ale, paid my reckoning, flung my satchel over my shoulder and departed."

⁸ www.angelfire.com/ga/BobSanders/MTRISING.html

⁹ <http://libcom.org/library/1831-merthyr-tydfil-uprising>

¹⁰ Ancestry.com; The Jeffries are listed in the United States census of 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880 as living in Pennsylvania. Sarah Ann Price (Godfrey) mentions her aunt living near Keokuk, Iowa in 1853, but perhaps she was mistaken, or Sarah Jeffries was there temporarily. In any case, the only Sarah Jeffries listed in the entire 1850 census was living in Cass, Schuykill County, Pennsylvania, where they remained.

¹¹ <http://welshmormonhistory.org/index.php?/resources/view/2608>

¹² www.welshmormonhistory.org (home page)

¹³ Jeremiah Price and family are included in the list of emigrants traveling via PE funds in the Emigration Records of the Liverpool Office of the British Mission 1851-1855, Libr. No. 1044; Family History Library film # 0025690, p. 159.

¹⁴ Swainston, Myrtle C., *Brief History of Jane Morgan Price*

¹⁵ Swenson, p.1

¹⁶ Sources: British Mission Records, Book #1044, pp. 87-103 (FHL #025,690); United States Customs #96 (FHL # 0200173)

¹⁷ Swenson, p. 1

¹⁸ Joseph Watson Young was a nephew of Brigham Young.

¹⁹ Swenson, p. 1

²⁰ Swenson, p. 1

²¹ <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/pioneercompanysources/0,16272,4019-1-333,00.html>

²² <http://www.lds.org/churchhistory/library/source/0,18016,4976-21885,00.html> : “We traveled along day after day, each day our provisions getting less and the journey very rough. We started out with a pound of flour a day then a half pound, then a quarter of a pound a day then it got to nothing at all.

“The night my first child, Annie, was born the first of October 1853, there was not a spoonful of anything in camp. We were then 10 days travel from Salt Lake City. Aunt Elizabeth told me if I had seen the mountains we were going down I would not have stayed in the wagon. It took all the men with ropes tied to the wagons to keep them from tipping. The men had to pull back with all their strength to keep them from turning over. That was hard on the men as well as the horses. The next day after Annie was born teams came from Salt Lake City with provisions and helped us along until we reached our journey end.

“We were then placed on the public square in Salt Lake City, with no shelter, but the blue sky above us and the ground beneath no home and nothing to eat and in October. My baby was then ten days old. I was very sick and tired and very weak having had not much food and being sick, but dear friends came. Bro. and Sis. Theabald took us to their home. They had been in Utah two years. We remained with them a few weeks. I had a chance to get rested and regain my strength. It took me a long time to get very strong, I was so run down and half starved.” Mary Lois Walker.

²³ Louder, Theresa Chadwick, *Sarah Ann Price Godfrey*, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Camp 29, North Ogden.

²⁴ The Mormons learned from the Paiute Indians of an abundant supply of food that was safely hidden from ravenous crickets and grasshoppers, the soft walnut-sized root of a lily that the Paiutes called *sego*.
<http://www.answers.com/topic/sego-lily>

²⁵ The International Genealogical Index (www.familysearch.org) indicates that she had already married in Nov. 1856.

²⁶ See biography *Joseph Godfrey*, E. C. Shaeffer, 2007

²⁷ See biography *Jeremiah and Jane Morgan Price*, by E. C. Shaeffer, 2009

²⁸ Weaver, M. H. & Winkler, E. H., *Just Jane*, 1968, edited 2006 by E. C. Shaeffer, p. 5

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Whitney’s Popular History of Utah, p. 558, states that great quantities of sugar cane were raised and molasses and a crude quality of brown sugar was made from boiling the cane juice. Sugar mills were also an important aspect of the Utah economy, both before and after the coming of the railroad. Until the manufacture of sugar from beets at the end of the century, molasses took the place of sugar. Molasses mills consisted of sets of rollers which squeezed the juice out of the grain sorghum and sugar cane, which were raised in special plots in the valley [Salt Lake and Ogden] for this purpose. In addition to a number of hand-cranked rollers, the larger mills were variously powered by horses, mules, oxen, or water power. Utah History Resource (history.utah.gov/apps/markers/detailed_results.php?...)

³¹ *Just Jane*, p. 7

³² *Just Jane*, p. 6

³³ *Just Jane*, p. 10

³⁴ see following endnote:

³⁵ Letter from Jemima Godfrey Campbell (1867-1957: daughter of Joseph Godfrey and Sarah Ann Price) to Ellen Holmes Winkler (1896-1955: daughter of Henry John Holmes and Sarah Jane Godfrey) of Alberta, Canada. Jemima was the sister of Sarah Jane Godfrey Holmes:

Preston, Idaho

Nov. 5, 1951

Dearest Ellen and family,

.... What I remember of early days: there was a rock wall built from near Grandpa Holmes's house east for a few blocks or near the public square. There was an adobe schoolhouse of one room facing west just about where the back of the church house now is and a meeting house on the southeast of the square with a basement for tithing office. Sidney Stevens lived in one corner of the basement for some time. One time when I was quite small there was a lot of Indians came and rode around the bishop's house that was and is now standing called the Old George Dean home. Our house was built like that house, only our house had a wall built part way around the porch and the wall had adobes out in two places so if Indians came they could watch them.

When the Indians to the Bishop's that time Father came from the field and talked to them. Then they sat down and Father smoked with them. They called Father "Hemegary." I don't know what that means but I got scared and crawled under the crib and when the Indians left they couldn't find me so they sent men to look through the Indians as they were going, but I woke and Mother took me on her lap and cried, but I didn't seem to understand. But she was so glad that the Indians didn't have me.

There were three big Utes that came to our house often. One was called Big Bush, one Big Ben, but I don't remember what they called the other. One time one of them came when there were no men folks around and he made Mother get dinner for him and then he asked her for one of Father's shirts. Mother gave it to him and then he laughed and laughed at Mother before he left.

The Indian boy that lived with my grandmother up on Henderson Creek: I don't know. He came to live with them, [and] he was with them for years. When there he was very good to Grandmother and she learned to love him. He was a good fisher and kept them well supplied with trout. After they moved to Malad he fished in the Malad River. He made a dam of sagebrush and when the fish would try to go up the dam he had a little net and would catch them in it. Us kids would watch him. He left my grandmother's when he was about 16 or near that. My sister, Margret Ann lived with my grandmother a lot at that time. When he left they never heard of him again, though Grandmother often wondered why he never came to see them.

The school house where we went to school was adobe, one room with a fireplace on the west and by the door there were two windows in the east end. At first we only had a few benches around the wall and a few desks for older boys and girls. The blackboard was on the north wall. Then later there were more desks where two could sit together. They had a two-by-four running thru all of the seats that was in one row. The same thru about four rows of seats and about five seats in a row. These were piled up when they had a dance and there could be three sets of quadrille on the floor if they didn't get too lively, for those days they would step-dance while on a quadrille. In school we didn't all have books so the books were passed from one to another to read a verse or so much of a paragraph.

There was another rock wall built up about one mile south of the long bench, but it wasn't very long or very high and as for signals of trouble I don't remember of them.

The reason of the trouble that Father settled: a Mr. Garner had a flour mill on Cold Water Creek and an Indian boy kept bothering him so he picked up a board and spated him one. Then the Indians wanted a man so they came for the man all dressed in feathers but Father had to get them a beef so they would settle without taking a man. I don't know if they wanted to kill a man or not. That is the only time I saw them dressed in their war feathers and paint and if it hadn't been for the paint and feathers and my Father smoking I would not remember that.

There were a lot of Indians for many years that came to trade dried service berries for dried peaches and lots of times just begging. Those days the women all had shawls but the men wore some kind of skin or fur from their waist down nearly to their knees even quite young ones.

Mr. Alfred Berrett had the first sewing machine in North Ogden. It was a Howe. My father bought Mother a Singer and Sarah Jane was so she wanted to sew, so she did the sewing for us. Later she learned to make patterns from a Mrs. Ship and Mrs. Ship was from Salt Lake. She came to stay at Mother's and taught Sarah Jane many ways to use the machine and to cut and fit.

When Sarah Jane was 14 she had smallpox very bad and after that she went nursing for smallpox and got paid mostly in goods.

I guess you have maybe more than I have written [Sarah Jane wrote her autobiography]. Anyway you will have to arrange it in your own way as I have just written it as I have thought of it.

I sure hope the weather clears and warms so that people can get their crops harvested and fixed for winter. I hope it won't stay this cold for long, as the folks are not prepared for winter now anywhere. People have frozen to death in the East, several as they weren't prepared for so cold, but people don't dress for such cold. The radio just said a cold wind will reach Idaho sometime tonight. We have had more wind this year than I have seen for years—all kinds of wrecks both in the air and on the ground by bus, train and car, getting shot and lost while out hunting deer. So it goes. And war, earthquakes—the world over is in trouble, so one is lucky to not be mixed up in some of it.

We are all well as far as I know but I have 4 or 5 great grandchildren on the way somewhere. But it costs so much to have a baby now days. The doctor alone is 75 dollars besides the hospital. And they won't come to the house. And the hospital is 50 dollars for five days and you have to get up the first time you need the toilet and go to the restroom yourself, so no wonder people are trying to keep from having a family now. I never paid a midwife only three dollars. She came and took care of me and baby for ten days and didn't have any trouble and could nurse the baby but now it costs a small fortune to feed a baby till it is old enough to feed itself. Well, I guess you are not interested in this gab so please write soon, for I do miss your mother's letters [Sarah Jane had died the previous year].

Love as always, Jemima

³⁶ *Just Jane* p. 14

³⁷ Elders Quorum genealogical records and minutes of meetings 1869-1886, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, North Ogden Ward, Utah [FHL US/CAN Film #0025652 Item 1] :

1875: "Bro. Jos. Godfrey (visitor) then spoke a little to the Elders and his remarks were good and edifying to all."

1876: "Bro. Godfrey, Prest. of the Teachers Quorum (visitor) was then called on for to say a few words. He spoke upon the trials that the people had to pass through in building up the temple in Nauvoo and he was proud of hearing the report of the treasurer and he said that if all the quorums were as ahead as we were it would not be long before it would be finished [the Salt Lake temple] and his teachings to the brethren were good and beneficial to all and he hoped the brethren would still continue. Amen."

³⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the Mormon Church

³⁹ The phrase, "Go Gallagher" was first used in the boxing ring of a Roy Gallagher in Cincinnati, Ohio. A granddaughter, Margaret Holmes Weaver, used to use her grandmother's expression of "let her go gallagher" as well, which in its most prominent sense meant "let's begin," a quaint slang of the 1890s used by Sarah Ann.

⁴⁰ Sarah Jane noted in her memoirs that in 1935 she visited some of the Price family "Mother's people" in Missouri who were members of the Reorganized Church. She also noted that "I had traveled behind oxen once, by horse and buggy all my days, in early trains and modern trains, old slow cars and modern fast ones. I could go easier and faster by plane now, so I did. It seemed strange—once my mother walked the plains from Keokuk to the valleys of

Utah, footsore and weary and now I skimmed it all in the clouds in a few hours! How often I thought of the courage, hardships and faithfulness of my people before me!” *Just Jane*, p. 46.

⁴¹ Certificate # 063735, Idaho death certificates

⁴² *Just Jane*, p. 44

⁴³ <http://www.umstead.org/poetry.html>

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