

HISTORY OF EMMA WHALEY CURTIS

Born: 12 April 1823
Sheffield, Yorks. Eng.
Died: 3 Sept. 1894
Payson, Utah, Utah
Father: William Whaley
Mother: Emma Johnson

Written by her daughter
Emma Sophronia Curtis Simons
First Child of:
Emma W. and George Curtis
Born: 24 Sept. 1851
Payson, Utah, Utah

Emma, daughter of William Whaley and Emma Johnson, was born April 12, 1823 in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England. At the age of eleven her mother became an invalid thus leaving her in charge of a family of four children younger than herself; the youngest being Charlotte who at that time was a year old. She had a brother four years older than herself. Her father was a cutler and an excellent workman. The mother was taken from home in order that she might have the constant attention of a physician, for she was being treated for a cancer. A year later her children were left motherless. Emma continued in care of the family perhaps three years longer when her father married again. Then the older children sought employment never returning to the home except as visitors. Emma made her home usually with her mother's sister, Martha Johnson Chapman.

She listened to the Gospel message as proclaimed by the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the year 1842.

As with all other converts at that early time, for she had accepted the Gospel, her one desire was to emigrate and gather with the saints. She was not indifferent to the ties of kindred, nor could she be accused of having no love for her native land, yet she felt that she must heed the message; hoping the time would come when her family would follow her to the new land. She came to America in 1847, spending the first year in Winter Quarters. In 1848 she and her companion, Elizabeth Turner came to Utah crossing the plains with George Curtis.

In 1850 Emma Whaley became the wife of George Curtis. She was a woman of strong individuality, possessing a clear mind and a good memory. She would have made a scholar had an opportunity been given for an education. As it was she was well read and in time became well versed in her religion, ever rejoicing in the Plan of Salvation which was broad enough for the redemption of all mankind.

She believed in the Law of Celestial Marriage as it was revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith; and that it was her duty as a wife not only to consent to her husband taking another wife but to encourage him in doing so. This she did. Let no one think she did not sense the sacrifice she was making. She well knew that only the best and noblest of earth's children could successfully pass the ordeal that must follow.

If successful, success must come to all three, and the only way to insure it was to be humble and prayerful.

Each wife had her own home and the management of her own children. The two homes were about twelve rods apart. As the children came they were welcomed as special

gifts or blessings; the parents realizing an immortal soul had been placed in their keeping, for which they must render account at some future time.

Among people with little means the home comforts depend to a great extent upon the cleverness of the wife to provide, or rather to produce them. The wives of George Curtis had been reared in large cities where money could purchase the luxuries as well as the necessities of life; here they were in a new land, entirely unaccustomed to the ways of the people, but each had in her heart a strong love for the Gospel, for which she had traveled so far, sacrificed so much – this love was as a magic band bringing these two noble women into harmony. Indeed it made all who felt its influence as brothers and sisters of a large family.

Emma and Mary soon learned to do all kinds of work necessary to be done in the home, this was not difficult: but in addition to that, they took the wool as it came from the sheep and made it into clothing for the family.

As the homes were improved and enlarged their own HOME-MADE carpets covered the floors, and their own HOME-MADE coverlets covered the beds.

As years passed their home surroundings became very pleasant but the habits of industry were too strong ever to be laid aside and they continued workers to the last.

Emma took a deep interest in every move that promised to benefit humanity. She regarded education when accompanied with suitable moral and religious training as a stepping stone to higher and more useful life; so determined was she that her children should be educated that she seemed to endow them with her own love of knowledge and they eagerly accepted the little that was available in that line. Every child in the family was to some extent benefited, by her determination; for she desired the children of her husband should be capable and useful as well as her own.

Emma died September 3, 1894. Her health failed years before. She was a great sufferer; but through all her trials her love for and her faith in her religion had never faltered.

She knew that Jesus was the Christ and that a glorious reward awaited those who were faithful.

FOLLOWING ARE THE NAMES AND PLACES OF RESIDENCE OF EMMA'S CHILDREN:

NAME	TO WHOM MARRIED	RESIDENCE
Emma S. Curtis		Provo, Utah
George W. Curtis	Permelia Haws	Logan and Newton, Utah
Horace A. Curtis	Martha J. Wightman	Mexico
Harriet E. Curtis	Joseph H. Greer	Chicago, Illinois
Lilyus M. Curtis	Jonathan S. Page	Payson, Utah
C. Selena Curtis	James L. Brown	Provo, Utah
Lexia A. Curtis	Hyrum S. Harris	Mexico City, Mexico.

Emma's grand children number thirty-one. Great grand children four; making a total of forty two descendants in the year 1903.