

Edward and Helen Pierce Conder

A short sketch of the life of Edward Conder and his wife Helen Pierce Conder

Transcription: Judy Hansen

Edward Conder son of Edward and Deborah Matthew Conder was born in Wadden, Cambridgeshire, England November 19th 1826. While a babe his mother died and his father married again. His stepmother was very kind to him. At an early age he went to work for a man named William Pierce. When the humble missionaries with their message of salvation came to the home of William Pierce, and family, Edward with them was convinced of its truthfulness and embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A singular thing happened in the life of William Pierce just before joining the church. His people were strong Catholics. One night in a dream he was told that the truth would be known to him. The following day he met two of the Latter-day Saint missionaries, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards. They were in the act of washing rotten eggs with which they had been showered from their clothing and the explained the gospel to him. Remembering the dream, he felt he had indeed received the truth.

It took more than this to convince his wife. She was inclined to be bitter toward the Latter-Day Saints until one evening the spirit of the Lord was so greatly manifested in a meeting held in her home, that she arose to her feet and spoke in tongues. This was a testimony to her of its truthfulness.

In the year 1843, the family moved to St. Louis, Missouri – Edward with them. While in St. Louis, in the year 1846 he was married to Helen Pierce, daughter of William and Sarah Hayman Pierce who was born in Wadden, Kimbershire, England on December 19, 1826. She was the 2nd child in a family of nine. A sad thing happened in St. Louis. William Pierce, Helen's father was accidentally drown in the Gravi – a branch of the Mississippi River. While in St. Louis, two children were born to Edward and Helen, William and John Spencer. In the year 1850, the left St. Louis for the land of Zion in the Edward Hunter company. They arrived in Salt Lake City October 13, 1850 the fall of the year.

They remained in Salt Lake for one year where their first daughter Elizabeth was born. Then they came to American Fork where they made their home. Their happy union was blessed with ten children; William, John Spencer, Elizabeth, Edward, Mary Ann, Erma, Rachel, Ruth, Hermina, and Deborah. His occupation was mostly farming and freighting. He loved the great outdoors and courageously met the hardships incident to pioneer life in which his wife willingly and cheerfully shared. She was an expert with her needle, which proved a blessing to their large family. She learned to do well those things that our pioneer mothers were forced to do such as soap making, making of candles, etc. and was indeed to see her husband dressed in a suit of homemade cloth that she had spun out of home grown wool. She was not only a mother to her own large family but to three others who were left without a mother's care and whom she raised as her own to manhood, William and Charles Pierce - children of her brother and Sydney Phillips. Also years of care she gave to her granddaughter Sadie after the death of her daughter Hermina. Proving her unselfish sweet spirit she gave to her husband, Sister Sarah Shelly Conder to be her sister-wife. Their lives together proved their devotion and love.

Dec 18, 1885 in American Fork, Utah at the age of 59 years, he was called from them to death leaving by his passing a vacancy of love and devotion that could never be filled. He died a faithful Latter-Day Saint, holding the office of High Priest at the time of his death.

A little over eight years after in American Fork, Utah on February 2, 1894 she too was called to join him and to meet a reward of a well-spent life.

We as the offspring of such as they we hope to honor them by our lives of kindness, love, devotion, and service.