

## HARRIET JULIA ROBERTS PARRY

Written by her daughter  
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In the town of Ruthin, Denbighshire, North Wales lived Robert Roberts and Margaret Owen Roberts. Their family consisted of Ann Vincent, Margaret, Charlotte, George Frederick and Foster. Then, on January 2, 1829, another baby girl arrived, and Margaret, who would be seven in April, said to her mother: "See the baby's pretty dark curls." While little Charlotte, who was just five years and three months old exclaimed: "She has little hands." The little brother, Foster, wanted to kiss the new baby. The parents decided they would name the baby Harriet Julia, not knowing that she would become the leader of the household since she was destined to receive the true Gospel. Later these parents were blessed with two other boys, Goodman and Thomas, and two more girls, Jane and Lavinia. The latter died at the age of two, and Goodman died when he was four.

They were not blessed with the riches of the world but they were honest and industrious. The children attended the school of the town but Harriet was claimed by her aunt, Mary Mason of Wrexham. Mrs. Roberts consented if Harriet would be permitted to spend part of each year at home.

Aunt Mary Mason and her husband owned a shop at Wrexham and they sent Harriet to school. She also learned sewing and other needlecraft, in which she excelled. Her aunt and uncle often told Harriet that she was to possess their home, shop and all they owned when they died. Harriet enjoyed her two homes very much.

One day in her early teens she was at home helping her brothers weed the garden, when one of them said, "Do you know Harriet, if we were Mormons we could just say weeds come up and the garden would all be weeded?" Harriet replied, "Not so, the Lord does not do things for us that we can do for ourselves."

Some years later Harriet was invited by one of her girl friends to attend a Mormon meeting. Out of curiosity Harriet went with her friend. They walked several miles to the place of meeting and found three Mormon missionaries who lived in Flintshire, conducting the meeting. Harriet was quite impressed with the doctrine they taught but kept it to herself and pondered over it. Several months passed before she had an opportunity to attend another service conducted by the Mormon missionaries. When she did, she was convinced of the truth of the Gospel as taught by them. She felt that her family would gladly embrace it. When she told her aunt Mary Mason about the new Gospel as Harriet called it, her aunt was furious and said: "Harriet we have always told you that all we possessed would be yours at our death but if you align yourself with that deluded sect we will cut you off without a penny." The following days Mrs. Mason used all her persuasive powers to turn Harriet against the Mormons.

Harriet knew the truth of the Gospel and could not give it up. Realizing her aunt's feelings toward her, Harriet decided to go to her parents' home for a while.

Her parents welcomed her home because Harriet was a kind, lovable young lady. Although they didn't see the truth as she expected, they were kind to her. The oldest sister, Ann Vincent, had died on Harriet's birthday in 1842. The baby girl, Lavinia, also died that year. Charlotte had married Peter Rogers so she had two sisters and three brothers at home. Her brothers often teased Harriet about the Mormons and would tell her all the lies that they heard about them, but when the mother heard them she said, "Leave the girl alone. Harriet is the best child I have, and she is right." Harriet felt encouraged and thought her mother might some day embrace the Gospel, but she could persuade none of her family except her youngest sister, Jane, to even attend any of the meetings. Harriet often attended church and at one of their testimony meetings she received the gift of tongues and sang a song of praise. She met a missionary by the name of John Parry, a tall handsome man with black curly hair and gentle dark brown eyes. They had many gospel conversations and often he would walk home with her, explaining the principles of the Gospel to her. They soon learned they were congenial spirits and though he was twelve years her senior she felt that he, of all her male friends, was her ideal. When he asked her to be his wife she accepted, and on the 26th day of December 1853 they were married in the church. Richard Roberts (no relation) was best man and her dear friend, Elizabeth Francis, was her bridesmaid. Harriet's own family felt so bad because she had been baptized into the Church and was marrying the young missionary that they did not attend the marriage.

Her youngest sister Jane often visited Harriet at her home and attended church with her and John and soon decided that she would get baptized. This hardened the hearts of the family toward Harriet and John but they were kind to Jane for they hoped to win her away from this new Gospel. Jane met all the Mormon missionaries who came to town and among them was Hugh Evans, a cousin to John Parry. He was a widower with three children, who, a few years later married Jane.

On the April 26, 1855 John and Harriet rejoiced over the arrival of a son; then on April 30, John, Griffith Roberts and Edward Parry blessed the child and gave him the name of Brigham Bernard. Now Harriet did not feel so lonesome when her husband traveled around his Mission Conference.

The next spring he was released from his labors to go to Zion. How happy they were to know that soon they would be with the Saints in America. Harriet asked her mother to have her photograph taken and give her one, but was told, "No! If my children cannot remember me without a picture they will have to forget me." And she never did have a photo taken.

John and Harriet with their young child embarked from Liverpool on the 19th of April 1856. There were somewhere near nine hundred saints on the vessel and between three and four hundred were from North and South Wales. Twenty of those from North Wales were relatives of John Parry so they were not lonely. The sea was very rough and it took six weeks to cross the ocean.

Many of the children were sick with the measles and one little child died and had to have a watery grave in the ocean. John and Harriet prayed continually that their child might be protected, at least while they were on the seas. After landing in Boston, they took the train to Iowa City, Iowa. Before long their little son, Brigham, had the measles and became very sick. Although they administered to him he did not improve, but seemed to be in great pain, so John and Harriet talked

it over and decided to place him in the hands of the Lord. They knelt in humble prayer and asked the Lord to take him if it was the Lord's will and in a short time he passed peacefully away, and little Brigham and a little girl of Thomas Giles were buried in the same grave at Chicago. One comfort they had was to know they did not have to cast him in the ocean.

On arrival at Iowa City they camped just outside the city for several weeks while the men built handcarts to cross the plains. They had a few wagons to carry the supplies. They divided the company into three companies. The first one started with Edmund Ellsworth as Captain and some days later the second company started with Mr. McArthur as captain and a few days later the third company composed mostly of Welsh people was organized with Edward Bunker as head Captain and David Grant, George Davis and John Parry as captains over each hundred.

The first night after pitching their tents there came the worst thunder and lightning storm they had ever witnessed and they all got wet, but the next morning, after drying their clothes, they traveled on. They were put on rations; one half pound of flour a day, a little tea and sugar and sometimes a little other food. Of course a few wagons could not haul a great deal for about three hundred people for that long journey.

John, being captain over a hundred, could not spend only a part of his time with his wife, so she must pull their handcart a good share of the journey. To make it more difficult, a young boy of his hundred took sick, and John felt it his duty to push the boy's cart with him in it. Thus the responsibility of this Captain bore heavily upon him and Harriet also suffered the hardship.

Nights came, camp was made, the frugal meal prepared, then around the bonfire the Saints gathered, sang songs, some would dance, others would relate stories, and after an ardent prayer to God they would retire, always leaving guards lest the Indians or the mobs would come to steal their few oxen or their supplies.

When Sunday came they decided to stay in the small town of Newton, Iowa. The townspeople came and visited with them and when they found some who felt discouraged, these people offered them good food, and promised to give them land if they would stay and work for them. On Monday morning when the camp moved on, it was discovered that a few had turned aside intending to stay in the town. The head Captain called the other captains to counsel and decided what course to pursue. They decided that Captain Parry should return to the town to persuade these saints to travel on with them. With his gentle persuasive talks he induced them to travel as fast as they could that they might overtake the company. The news of their leaving the town after promising to work was soon made known throughout the town and a mob soon gathered and with firearms and clubs they came after them and they sent two of their number to fetch tar and feathers to put upon this John Parry, but one Brother McDonald came out of a store where he had been to make some purchases and he talked to the mob, asking why they were molesting this man. Their attention was given to Brother McDonald and Brother Parry slipped away and soon began to run out on looking around he discovered they were after him. He managed to get to the company and changed his clothes so the mob did not recognize him. The mob also failed in their endeavor to get any of the saints to return with them. The company traveled on day by day and arrived at Florence where they remained for a week and prepared themselves for the journey across the uninhabited plains.

One young lady had complained many times and had declared she would remain in the next town, but friends had intervened. Now at Florence a number of men of the town visited the camp and offered homes and wages to any who would stay, and one man, stepping over to this young lady, said: "Here is a young lady I am sure will be glad to stay in your town." The young lady answered, "No, I would not stay if you gave me the whole town."

The rations were now increased so that each person was allowed one pound of flour a day and a small increase in the other foods but not enough for the strenuous duty of traveling afoot for so many miles. Sometimes twenty six miles a day, and often little children only six years old would walk that distance. These people would wade the rivers and travel on and on.

One night about ten o'clock John and Harriet discovered that an older brother was missing, so John took two other men and a handcart and walked back about eight miles when they found him walking slowly. He said he had been asleep and awoke when some wolves came and barked at him. These brethren put him in their cart and hauled him to camp.

One day a large herd of buffalo crossed before them and they were able to kill some of them and enjoyed the fresh meat, but many of the company did eat too freely of it, and they had no salt to put on it, so they became very sick. They learned their lesson by sad experience.

Each day seemed harder now to the weary travelers, but finally they arrived in Salt Lake City on the second day of October 1856 and how they rejoiced to behold the Prophet Brigham Young. After remaining in camp two days John and Harriet went to the home of his father, also named John Parry, who had come to the valley in the year 1849 and had settled on lots situated at what is now Fifth West and South Temple Street, and John and Harriet purchased the lot north of his father's and soon they had a dugout in which they lived until John worked the next Spring getting logs from the canyon to build a home. Though this style of living was very different from her former life, Harriet was never known to complain.

Clothing and foods that had to be shipped in were a very high price and money became scarce, but Harriet was apt with her needle and would sew for others in exchange for things she could use, and John planted a garden so they had some vegetables. Harriet would boil carrots until she could obtain a sweet syrup which she used to sweeten other foods as sugar was not to be had. In the year 1856 they joined the other saints in the move south. Later John was called with others to travel to meet Johnston's Army, so Harriet was left alone with her young babe. She had the cow from which she had milk and butter. The room in which she lived had no floor, and one day as she lifted her cream jar she discovered a rattlesnake curled up where the jar had stood. She quickly snatched her baby from the cradle and ran to the neighbor for help to kill the snake.

When the rains came, the roof on her one room house was found to be leaking and she used all her pans and buckets to catch the water, but her clothes and bedding were getting wet. A brother who, with his wife and two little ones, lived in a two-room house not far away, knowing Harriet to be alone with her babe, called, and seeing the condition, said: "Sister Parry you must come and live in one of our rooms." With grateful heart she accepted the offer. When John returned he thanked the brother for his kindness, and that night they bowed in humble prayer to thank their Heavenly

Father for his manifold blessings. Shortly after that they returned to Salt Lake.

John was a mason by trade, but he accepted work of any kind. He went to Ogden to help his two brothers, William and Caleb, build their homes, so Harriet was left alone much of the time. In the year 1865 he was called to fill a mission in England, and she was again left to provide for the home as best she could, but Harriet was never known to complain.

They owned eighteen sheep and her share of the wool she washed, carded, and spun into yarn. She used some of the yarn to pay for the weaving of the cloth which she made into bed sheets, dresses, and petticoats. For the latter the weaver would weave a colored stripe and the petticoats were called Balmoral petticoats. She also knit all the winter hose for the family until the girls were large enough to help her knit.

When the oldest girl was about twelve, Harriet bought some white linen and made dresses for the older ones. These dresses she embroidered by hand doing much eyelet work on them. The younger girls asked to have dresses like them but she said that when Lavinia and Mary grew too large for their dresses the younger ones could have them; that would not be for five or six years since they were that many years younger, but they finally owned the dresses and were delighted. Harriet also made sunbonnets and coats for her girls.

After the railroad came to Salt Lake, she bought a hand-sewing machine which was a great help to her.

After Brother Parry's return from his mission he obtained contracts with the railroad in doing the masonry for the bridges, and when he would come home he would get the money to pay off the men. One month he left nearly \$1000 with his wife and returned to work. That night she heard someone trying to open the side window. She arose, lit the lamp, but the noise did not cease, so she called, "John, get up, someone is trying to get in." The ruse worked, for she heard footsteps receding. The next night she asked two of the neighbors whose husbands were also away to come and stay, so they brought their little children and, after putting all the children to bed, they armed themselves with a policeman's club, an old sword, and an axe, turned off the light and awaited the return of the marauder. Midnight came and they heard the bars of the fence near the side of the house go down and footsteps come toward the window and a noise of his trying to open the window, and the three women stood ready for him but Sister Parry's oldest girl had also remained awake and listened to all that was going on. She was frightened and she kicked the baby by whom she was laying, and the baby gave a terrible scream that frightened the robber away. The next day Brother Parry came home with the men to draw their pay.

After the railroad work was accomplished Harriet's husband obtained contracts to build homes in Sessions' settlement in Davis county, so Harriet was left to manage the home and care for the children which she did with honor. She did not even care for public work, but always paid her just dues and taught her children to be strictly honest and upright. She did all kinds of work in her home, papering the walls, painting the woodwork, sewing rags for carpets, making curtains for the windows and piecing quilts, besides sewing the clothes of her children. Also she would plant, hoe, and water the garden.

She made a happy home for her children, always giving them parties on their birthdays and making the home a social center for all the neighborhood in which her husband joined by providing playground, swing, croquet, etc. for their amusement. She made every Christmas a special day for her children, and if she learned of any child around not having a Christmas present, she would have the child come and get a present from her. Another joy to her children, early Christmas morning was the Christmas Carol which she sang in Welsh. She had a sweet voice, but used it only for her family.

In August 1877 her husband was called by President Young to be master mason of the Logan Temple, so he gave up two years contracts at Bountiful to accept the call and immediately went to Logan. When his little daughter, Armenia, asked him if he were going to Logan, he answered, "Yes. More than one year ago as I stepped from the train and was walking home, my father, who has been dead many years, walked by my side and said, John, if you are called to work on the temple, you go, and so I am going."

The next Spring Harriet packed the furniture and hired a man to take it to the depot to be shipped to Logan, and on the 20th day of May, she took her five children, four girls and one boy, and boarded the train for Logan. Her husband and Brother C. O. Card, who had been at Collinston examining a rock quarry, boarded the same train and they learned the furniture was on the same train, so Harriet and her husband remained at the station to see that it was cared for and sent to the house John had bought. It was an old adobe house on the corner lot of Third North and Third East Streets. Brother Card, whose spring wagon had been taken to the station for him, and Brother Parry took the children to their new home. Brother Card was full of his jokes, so to tease the older girls, on coming near a small log house, would say, "Well, here it is." This he did several times, even stopping the horses once and telling them to get out, but the older girls said, "No, their father had written that it was an adobe house."

When the children arrived at the house they found Martha Ann Rowland there with several loaves of fresh bread and about two pounds of her mother's fresh butter. Sister Rowland had sent her young daughter through the snow storm (yes, it was snowing) the eight blocks so that Sister Parry and her family might have the bread and butter to eat. Such thoughtfulness was never forgotten by the family.

It was difficult for Harriet to make a home in a new place, but no complaint ever passed her lips. She did all she could to make a happy home for her family and succeeded. Four happy years were spent with her husband home to help make the home circle complete, but then on the 18th of May 1882, John passed to the great beyond, and Harriet was left without her life's companion, and this caused her to feel that something very precious was gone from her life. Her family had never known their parents to quarrel, nor had they ever heard either of them swear. She found some solace in her dear friend, Sister Mary Rowland, who also had been left a widow. They had both come from the same part of Wales, in fact she was a relative of brother Parry.

Sister Harriet was called as one of the first officiators of the Logan Temple, and later she was appointed to serve as head lady. She had been told in a blessing that the elect of the land should eat at her table. This was fulfilled when she entertained many of the Saints who came to do work in the temple. Some of those who ate at her table were Lucy B. Young, Emeline B. Wells, Annie Wells

Cannon, Ruth May Fox, Bishop and Sister Woolley, and other bishops and their wives, also some Stake Presidents and their wives, Dr. Talmadge and his grandmother, Sister Toronto and her son, and many others. Also while living in Salt Lake, one day a knock came on her door, and when she opened it, two fine looking strange men stood there and one asked if she would give them something to eat. She invited them in and placed on her table the best she had. They sat up and ate then they thanked her and left. Sister Parry picked up a handkerchief from one of the chairs and immediately opened the door to give it to them, but could see nothing of them though there had not been time for them to get to a neighbor's, and later she inquired of all the neighbors but none had seen them and she wondered if they were two of the Three Nephites.

She was an officiator in the temple from May 1884 until her death which occurred on the 30th of September 1902. One of the most beautiful characters that ever came to dwell on earth was Harriet Julia Roberts Parry.

Her eldest daughter Lavinia C. P. Maughan died September 1902 and her son John M. Parry died the second of February 1929. Her children who are living now, May 1938, are Mary A. P. Nielsen of Preston, Idaho; Sarah C. H. P. Hyde of Hyde Park, Utah, and the writer (Armenia J. P. Adams) of Logan, Utah.