

CHAPTER 17
BIOGRAPHY OF ABRAHAM CHADWICK (1821-1904)

Written by Jack Stephan Bailey, Revised by Abraham's Grandson, Floyd J. Woodfield

The following note was found with the original biography, written by Jack Stephan Bailey: "The information for this sketch was gathered by Jeanette S. Greenwell and Leone B. Bitton, great grand-daughters. With many thanks to Thersa C. Lowder, Mabel R. Orton, Lena B. Hansen, Margaret S. Roylance, Ellen S. Bailey and Joseph Chadwick." I did not revise or edit the poems written, presumably, by Jack Stephan Bailey but I did revise the text.

The Holy Bible tells about Abraham, son of Terah, born in Ur of the Caldees. Some unique characteristics of this ancient patriarch were very much like the characteristics of Abraham Chadwick. Neither their parents nor their families accepted the Gospel. They were both wanderers. At an early age, they both left their home lands to seek for a new, promised land. Abraham in the Bible found the promised land of Canaan, and our Abraham found the promised land of America. Like Abraham in the Bible, our Abraham was chosen of the Lord and kept the commandments. They were both polygamists. Abraham in the Bible had three wives and eight children. Our Abraham had five wives and 26 children.

Abraham Chadwick was the husband of five wives. He lived a merry life—or shall we say "Mary" life. His first four wives were all named Mary. And perhaps he pressed his luck a bit when he tried not to marry a Mary; for his fifth and final marriage ended in divorce, just nine months to the day after it began. Our Abraham's fifth wife's name was Ellen Burton.

In all, Abraham Chadwick, whose first name means "Father of a multitude" had 26 children, his last, Margaret May (Floyd's mother), being born when he was a few months short of 60. He lived to the ripe old age of 83. Abraham was born in Blackley, Lancashire, England, 30 March 1821. His parents were Samuel Chadwick and Esther Consterdine. Samuel was a beer seller in the "Paul Pry Inn." Abraham spent his early years walking on the cobblestone streets of England.

As a boy, Abraham had no time for vacations, play grounds or school. When he was eight, his father, Samuel, not wanting him to follow in his foot steps as a beer seller, marched him off to a factory where he labored as an apprenticed printer at a "Dye Works." Abraham at the age of fifteen changed his vocation and began a five year apprenticeship as a tailor with an Uncle, John Elsby. Abraham later became one of the finest tailors in Utah.

Abraham was a happy, jovial lad. Once he played a practical joke on a gentleman at an exclusive banquet, where he was serving as a table waiter. As the distinguished guests filed to their places at the banquet, they looked like penguins in their newly starched shirts and long-tailed coats. As Abraham moved between the kitchen and banquet table, he stopped to obey an impulse. He fastened the coat tails of one stiff collared gentleman to the rounds of his chair. After the meal, the men all stood up from their chairs and left with dignity, except the man with the anchored tails.

On 15 December 1840, at age nineteen, Abraham married his first wife, Mary Burton, who was born 26 June 1820, Bolton, Lancashire, England. He married three more Marys after immigrating to America.

Now Abraham was faithful,
A true and loyal being.
He always treated Mary
Just like she was a queen.

And he always married Marys,

Which multiplied his charms
Cause he never used the wrong name
While in his sweetheart's arms.

A second event of the same year caused Abraham to look to the future with great hope and anticipation. In 1840 Abraham and his wife, Mary Burton, were baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, much to the dismay of his father, mother, brothers, and sisters, who told him they wanted nothing more to do with him.

A freighter christened "Hope" sailed from an English port on 5 February 1842. On deck Abraham Chadwick with his wife Mary watched the country which they loved shrink in the distance to what looked like a small island, then a dot and then nothing. They left their parents, their family and England, the country they loved, forever and never returned. They sailed to the New World on the ship with a company of 270 people, led by an Elder Burnham and Elder Amos Fielding. The ocean crossing of eight full weeks was a hard trip. The ship seemed to battle to save itself from the fury and storms of the sea. During the battles with the ocean, Abraham and Mary prayed for safety, and prayed that they would reach America. Their prayers were answered. Once Abraham almost met death when he stayed on the deck to watch a heavy storm. As the ship lurched back and forth and plowed through the rough ocean, a large cannon broke loose, slammed across the deck, and barely missed throwing Abraham overboard to an ocean grave. Perhaps after his narrow escape Abraham looked at an engraving on the bow of the ship and silently whispered its name over and over in his mind, "HOPE."

Because the fare to America almost took the last penny from Abraham's purse, he resumed his tailoring trade aboard ship. The ship reached New Orleans on 1 April 1842. Eight days later on April 10, the couple started up the Mississippi River on the boat "Louisiana." When they reached St. Louis, Abraham and Mary decided that they had had enough of ships and water for a while, so they settled there for six years. Abraham spent much of his time as a tailor, and together the couple also tailored three custom-made children. At St. Louis, Missouri, Abraham Chadwick and Mary Burton had three children: Mary Jane, born 27 April 1842; Abraham, Jr., born 30 March 1845; and Ann, born 8 May 1847.

The Chadwick home in St. Louis was a major headquarters for traveling Mormon elders. Orson Hyde stayed in their home upon his return from dedicating the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews. In St. Louis, a sectarian minister offered Mary a large sum of money if she would sing in his church, but she refused the offer. Mary wanted to serve the L D.S. Church..

On 4 September 1848 the Chadwicks moved to Kaneshville, Council Bluffs, Iowa, and joined the main body of Mormons. Upon arriving in Council Bluffs, Abraham bought a plot of land from Orson Hyde for \$11.00. On this land Abraham built a home for Mary and the children. A portion of the land was sold to the city of Council Bluffs, where a courthouse was built. Tragedy struck the family on the evening of 11 August 1850. Abraham stood near the bed of his bride of ten years and watched in grief as she died of cholera. She died quickly, leaving him with four children: Mary Jane, Abraham, and Ann, born at St. Louis, Missouri, and Sarah, born 16 October 1849, at Kaneshville, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

On 27 October 1850 Orson Hyde performed a marriage ceremony for Abraham and Mary #2, Mary Foxhall. The new Mrs. Chadwick was the daughter of James and Mary Foxall, born 3 January 1832 in Herfordshire, England. She had been baptized a member of the Church when she was thirteen. Abraham and Mary Foxhall had four children: Marion, born 27 July 1851, on the Nebraska trail, coming to Utah; Edward, born 20 December 1852, Salt Lake City, Utah; Alonzo, born 21 March 1855, Bingham's Fort, Ogden, Utah; and Eva Elizabeth, born 23 October 1856,

North Ogden, Utah. In the spring of 1851 Abraham and his family started across the plains with a company of saints driving 150 wagons pulled by oxen. While In Nebraska the rolling wheel of one of the wagons crushed Abraham's oldest son's leg. Abraham called for help, and after administering to the injured lad, they performed a crude operation on his leg. The child's leg healed completely, and he walked without any sign of lameness.

While on the trail in Nebraska, Mary gave birth to her first child. The birth took place in a covered wagon.

While the plains were being conquered
A few miles each day.
Mary Foxall winced in anguish,
A child was on the way.

A wagon was her shelter,
The doctor just a guy;
But Mary's pains began to drain
As she heard her baby cry.

On 11 October 1851, after six months crossing the plains, the company arrived in Salt Lake City, which had a population then of over 30,000. On 23 February 1852, Abraham Chadwick was sealed to Mary Burton (deceased) and Mary Foxall.

Abraham played a "saxhorn" and became a member of Utah's first band led by Walter Baker. On 6 April 1853 Abraham played with the band during the laying of the cornerstones for the Salt Lake Temple. Abraham described the ceremony as follows: "The General Conference opened at 10 a. m., and after a few remarks by President Young, a procession was formed and moved forward to the S. E. corner of the Temple site. When all was ready, the First Presidency, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards with Patriarch John Smith, laid the S. E. cornerstone, while the choir sang a hymn. An oration by Pres. Young followed. Then President Kimball offered the dedicatory prayer. Another song was sung and the procession moved to the S. W. corner where Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter, his counselors and various presidencies of the Lesser Priesthood laid the cornerstone. The oration was delivered by Edward Hunter. The prayer of dedication by Alford Cordon. The choir sang and the order of the procession was resumed until the N. W. corner was reached. Pres. John Young and the Council of High Priests Quorum, David Fullmer, President of the Stake officiating. John Young delivering the oration, and the dedicatory prayer was delivered by Elder George B. Wallace. Then the N. E. corner was reached. Eleven of the 12 Apostles were present, Orson Pratt being absent in Washington on a mission. The First Council of the Seventies and Presidents of the Elders' Quorum were present. The oration was delivered by Elder Parley P. Pratt, and the dedicatory prayer was offered by Orson Hyde; thus the cornerstones were laid. When all the people were reassembled in the Tabernacle, President Brigham Young blessed the people and gave instructions." Abraham had the honor of tailoring the first suit Brigham Young wore after his arrival in Salt Lake City. Brigham Young wore that suit at the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple.

On 22 May 1853 Abraham married again, Mary #3, Mary Wheeler. Abraham and Mary Wheeler had twelve children: Albert William, 4 March 1853; Elizabeth, 15 September 1855; Esther Caroline, 2 September 1857; Clarissa, 18 June 1859; Mary Louise, 21 December 1860; John Samuel, 1 October 1842; Olive Alberta, 10 May 1864; Ellen Adelia, 8 March 1866; Frances Alice, 18 October 1867; Eliza Ann, 30 May 1869; Sarah Emily, 17 April 1871; and Joseph Edward, 30 March 1873 .

On 14 October 1853 Abraham was called to serve a full-time mission in Fort Supply country, in Wyoming, known as Fort Bridger. When he returned home on 9 August 1854, after 10 months, he learned that the first two children by his wife Mary Foxall, Marion and Edward, had died of scarlet fever.

On 14 November 1854, Abraham and his family traveled north and spent the next winter at Bingham's Fort, which is near the present location of Five Points in Ogden, Utah. In the spring, Abraham moved with his family from Bingham's Fort to North Ogden, arriving there on 4 April 1855. He built a brick home at what is now approximately 1380 North 400 East (Washington Boulevard).

While living in North Ogden in about 1862, Abraham decided to write to his family back in England and let them know where he was. It had been about twenty years since he left home. They answered his letter immediately after receiving it, and told him "all was forgiven." Abraham corresponded regularly with his family in England after hearing from them.

Abraham played with a band on 24 July 1857 during a big celebration at Big Cottonwood in Salt Lake City. It was during this ten-year celebration to honor the arrival of the saints in Salt Lake City, that Abraham heard the official announcement that the United States Army of Albert Sidney Johnston was marching towards Salt Lake City. Abraham accepted a call to help resist the invasion. With companions he walked from North Ogden up Echo Canyon to meet troops who might try to invade through the Ogden valley. His only weapon was a pair of his tailor shears, which he took apart. He kept one blade for himself and gave another to a companion. Luckily, no fighting occurred. Abraham returned home and put his pair of tailor shears back together.

With Johnston's Army coming fast
To crush the Mormon dream;
Brother Chadwick took a break
From sewing up a seam.

He hurried forth to battle
But young Mary had her fears;
Cause the only weapons that he chose
Were awkward tailor's shears.

Abraham has been described as having a slender build, being of medium height, with muscular shoulders, high cheek bones, prominent nose, light brown hair and blue eyes. He lived a very active life in North Ogden. He was a farmer and also a tailor. He tailored suits for men in North Ogden and in surrounding communities and also tailored overalls, which were sold at the Sidney Stevens Mercantile store in North Ogden. In 1865 Abraham was elected President of the North Ogden Canal Company. He was also elected as a member of the School Board. He worked to improve roads, ditches and canals in North Ogden. He was honored by being asked to hold the plow that made the first furrow for the Harrisville Canal. For years Abraham walked from his home in North Ogden to Ogden once each week to play in a brass band. When he returned home late at night, he always whistled a familiar tune so that as his wife heard the tune she would know it was Abraham and not the Indians

In the hard winter of 1867-1868, Abraham sold five tons of hay for \$150 and ten shocks of corn fodder for \$130. The winter was so hard that many animals died. To save dying herds, men from North Ogden went to the Hot Springs area, north and west of North Ogden, and there gathered sacks of dry grass, which they brought home and fed to their animals.

Abraham was very dedicated to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1863 the first

Bishop in North Ogden named Thomas Dunn was called from North Ogden to help settle Bear River Valley. Church leaders called North Ogden members into a meeting and asked them to vote for their choice of Bishop. Abraham Chadwick and Henry Holmes received more votes than any one else, but Abraham lost the election by three votes. Henry Holmes became the new Bishop.

In the early days of settlement
There is a startling note;
A Bishop once was chosen—How?
The people had to vote.

Abe Chadwick made the ballot
His friendliness the key;
But when the votes were tallied up
Abe had lost by three.

Abraham was called to serve as a ward teacher in 1863 and served for many years. In 1865 he was called to be a “home missionary,” and he preached in several communities and occasionally in the Ogden Tabernacle. One evening at a teachers’ meeting he spoke in part as follows: “There is room for improvement in all of us, yet I love the people and feel well in the Kingdom of God. And polygamy, though a stumbling block to many, if lived up to as designed by the Almighty, will prove the salvation of the human family.” In his later years, Abraham went to the temple often and did much temple work for his ancestors.

On 8 October 1866 Abraham Chadwick married Mary # 4, Mary Ann Newby. Mary Ann was born 16 December 1836 in Monkwearmouth, Durham, England. Abraham Chadwick was sealed to Mary Ann Newby and Mary Burton on 24 November 1866 in the Endowment House. Abraham and Mary Ann had the following children born in North Ogden, Utah as follows: Isabella, 27 September 1867; George Edward, 19 December 1869; Elizabeth Ann (Linford), 3 May 1872; Thomas Henry, 29 June 1875; John Charles, 20 February 1878; and Margaret May (Floyd’s mother) 17 Jun 1880. Margaret May was Abraham’s 26th and last child. Abraham built his first home in North Ogden at what is now about 1380 Washington Boulevard. In about 1870 Abraham built a big beautiful home at what is now about 521 East 2600 North. Mary Ann Newby lived with her family in the first home, and Mary Burton lived with her family in the big, beautiful, new home.

Abraham owned a fine herd of dairy cows, which he drove each day during the summer from his home place to a pasture. He rode a bay mare named “Betty,” with a little willow stick to hurry her along. He thought spurs were cruel. He loved to stop and chat along the way while driving his cows to the pasture. He also liked to stop at his garden, dismount from old “Betty,” stuff vegetables inside his shirt, remount, and take the vegetables to his married children.

Abraham was always a favorite with the children. Sometimes when his wife was gone for an afternoon, he would have his grandchildren and their friends come to his home, and they would make candy and popcorn, but they had to clean up the mess before his wife came home.

Children loved Pop Chadwick.
He understood them well.
If they hungered for amusement,
He had a yarn to tell.

And as he told his story,
The children echoed hints;

Then with a sigh, he'd wink his eye,
And handed out peppermints.

Abraham was definitely converted to polygamy, but Mary (Wheeler) Chadwick, Abraham's third wife, when asked if she was converted to polygamy, told Olive Alberta, one of her daughters, "Well, Dearie, I'll tell you. The only way you can live in polygamy and be happy is to think more of the Church than you do of your husband."

The Lord said to Adam and
Eve—at their birth,
Please multiply and
Replenish the earth.

T'was Abraham Chadwick
That took this advice to heart;
With twenty-six children
He really did his part.

On 7 July 1873 Abraham married Ellen Burton, a sister of his first wife, Mary Burton. This was the first time he had three wives living at the same time. Abraham's marriage to Ellen didn't work out, and Ellen left Abraham's home after nine months. They had no children and had a temple divorce on 22 April 1874.

In the 1880's opposition to polygamy grew across the country and in Congress. Congress passed the Edmunds Act in 1882 which disenfranchised Mormons in the Utah territory, and placed territorial jurisdiction in the hands of a non-Mormon, Utah Commission. Congress authorized deputies to search for polygamists, gather evidence against them and throw them into court and into jail. Abraham spent much of his time hiding in the tall grass and corn next to his home to avoid arrest. On 4 September 1886, he was arrested by a U. S. Marshall. His wives, Mary (Wheeler) and Mary Ann (Newby) were forced to testify against him. Abraham Chadwick was convicted of "unlawful cohabitation," fined \$300 and sentenced to six months in prison, starting on 8 January 1887. He was discharged on 8 July 1887, but two years later he was arrested again and served another sentence of six months.

With a law passed by Congress
Plural marriage was doomed;
But the wives I have married
I can keep, Abe assumed.

But a marshal came looking
To punish such men;
And Abraham Chadwick
Spent months in the pen.

Abraham died 4 July 1904. John Hall, who spoke at his funeral said, "As long as I worked alongside of him, I never heard him swear or tell a smutty joke. If something went wrong or he became upset, he would say, "Oh, bother to it."

Abraham Chadwick always worked hard and did his duty. He was a counselor to a bishopric, a home missionary, a ward teacher, a school trustee, road builder, canal builder, president of the North Ogden canal, farmer and tailor. He was a loyal citizen, a disciple of Christ, a beloved husband and an honored father.

Abraham Chadwick's Polygamy Trial

28 December 1886. The report that follows is a verbatim account of Abraham Chadwick's polygamy trial.

"ABRAHAM CHADWICK Polygamy Court Trial

"At 10 o'clock this morning the Courtroom was packed with witnesses and spectators, it being the day set for trial of a number of cohabitation cases.

"The case of the United States vs. A. Chadwick, three counts, was called for trial

"W. H. Dickson conducted the prosecution and C. C. Richards and Ben Sheeks appeared for the defense.

"The following jury was empaneled: Johnson Pullam, Andrew Larsen, Mark Fletcher, John Germer, William Beeston, I. E. Spaulding, George Corey, and John Keek.

"The Clerk read the indictment and Mary Ann Chadwick was sworn. Mr. Chadwick had another wife living at the same time.

"Witness was excused and Mary Chadwick was sworn. Witness came to the Territory in 1852; was married to defendant in 1852.

"Mr. Chadwick then took the stand and testified as follows:

"Prosecution, When was you first married? In 1840.

"When did you marry again? In the Spring of 1850.

"What was the lady's name? Mary Foxall"

"Did you marry again? Yes.

"To whom? Mary Ann Newby.

"Have you married any more? Yes, one.

"When? About 16 years ago.

"Where is she? She is divorced.

"Have you married any more? No, I never married any more. (Laughter)

"Mary Ann Chadwick was re-called and asked if she was married to defendant in 1866. She replied, 'Yes, Sir.'

"Where have you lived? In the out-skirts of North Ogden.

"An objection was here raised to the accepting of further testimony from this witness, by the defense, on the ground that she was defendant's legal wife. The court said that it had not been shown that the lady on the stand was a legal wife.

"The examination continued. 'Has your husband lived with you during the year 1884-5-6?' 'Yes, Sir'.

"Mary Wheeler took the stand.

"You were married to the defendant in 53 were you? Yes, Sir."

"Where do you live? In North Ogden."

"How far from the other house? About two miles."

"Does he come to visit you? Yes, once in a while."

"About how often? About twice a week."

"Does he ever take meals with you? Sometimes."

"He stays with you all night when he comes I suppose? Yes."

"How often does he stay with you? About twice a week."

"Isabel Chadwick was called and testified that she was a daughter of Mary Ann Chadwick. She

did not remember of ever hearing her father speak of her mother as a wife. Her father sometimes came to see her mother; had heard her mother speak of her marriage to her father.

“The prosecution then rested, and the case was submitted.

“A recess of ten minutes was taken, after which the Court charged the jury that if they believed beyond a reasonable doubt that defendant within the time mentioned in the indictment had lived with or held out these women as his wives he was guilty of the charge named in the indictment. A form of verdict was made out covering all three of the indictments and so arranged that the verdict on any one of them could be separately noted. An officer was sworn and the jury went out.

“After the lapse of thirty minutes the jury returned with a verdict of guilty on the three counts.”

Abraham Chadwick received his Patriarchal Blessing at, Dukinfield, 13 July 1841. This patriarchal blessing was given by John Albiston, Patriarch of the Newton Moor Branch, England. Patriarch John Albiston was born 3 June 1783 at Caogleton, Cheshire, England, the son of Joseph and Nancy Foster Albiston. He was ordained a patriarch 6 April 1841 at Manchester, England by Brigham Young. He died 2 June 1849 at Ashton-Under Lyne, England.

“Dear Brother, I lay my hands and pronounce the Blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I say unto Thee, as Thou hast obeyed the Gospel ordinances of baptism, having believed—Thou art brought into the new and everlasting covenant, and hast a claim to all the promises of the Gospel.

“The mysteries of redemption by Jesus Christ shall be revealed to Thy mind in clearness and Thou shalt preach the fullness of that Gospel to others--even in foreign lands, and assist in gathering the scattered tribes of Israel and Judah.

“Being blessed with wisdom and knowledge and discernment, and be saved from error and declare the whole council of God--and be brought to Zion and overcome all enemies and see signs and wonders wrought in the name of Jesus Christ, and have an inheritance with the Saints. Many blessings shall be given Thee, all the glorious things of the day of Christ. Thou art of the blood of Ephraim. I seal ye, Amen.”

Obituary, Abraham Chadwick. The Ogden Standard Examiner 5 July 1904, “Abraham Chadwick, an Old Resident, dies in that village We are again called upon to chronicle another death in our midst this time one of our most aged and highly respected citizens, Abraham Chadwick.

“He was born of Samuel Chadwick and Esther Consterdine in Blakley, Lancashire, England, March 10, 1821, and therefore had reached the ripe old age of 83 years, three months and four days. The days of his youth were spent in a dyeworks up to the age of 15, when he changed to an apprenticeship in the tailoring trade, working at that trade until his marriage in December, 1840, to Mary Burton.

“They both embraced the gospel and on February 5, 1842, set sail for America in the ship “Hope,” in the company of 270 souls under the direction of Elder Burnham, and arrived at New Orleans, April 1, and 10 days later boarded the steam vessel “La” from St. Louis, where he took up his adopted trade, remaining there and keeping headquarters for the elders for a number of years. During that time he was favored with the privilege of entertaining Apostle Orson Hyde on his return from Jerusalem, whither he had gone to dedicate that land for the return of the Jews. September 4, 1848, they resumed their journey Zionward, purchasing land and locating for a while in Council Bluffs. Here his wife, Mary Burton, fell a victim to the ravages of cholera, July 14, 1850. December 15 of the same year he was married to Mary Foxall by Orson Hyde and continued their journey to the valley and arrived in Salt Lake City, October 11, 1851, where they remained three years. April 6, 1853, Mr. Chadwick played in the band at the laying of the corner stone of the Salt Lake Temple

“October 14, 1853, he accepted a settling mission to the Fort Bridger country, returning August 9, 1854. Soon after his return one of his children died from scarlet fever.

“Mr. Chadwick and his wife continued their journey northward, stopping for a while in Bingham Fort, and arrived in North Ogden April 4, 1855, where he has resided up to the time of his death an honored and highly respected citizen.

”He was also a member of the band that made music for the celebration at Big Cottonwood July 24, 1857. When tidings of the approach of Johnson’s army was made known.

“During his forty years sojourn in North Ogden he has done much towards its up building as canal president and home builder in the bishopric of the ward.

“He leaves a host of relatives and friends, numbering 26 children, hundreds of grand and great grand children to emulate his example.”