

*Daughters of Elijah Fordham*

A SKETCH OF ANNA MARIA FORDHAM'S LIFE

I am placing here a sketch of Anna Maria Fordham's life. Which she gave to me. My name is Anna Maria Fordham. I was born at Nauvoo, Ill. May 21, 1844. My parents were endowed in the Nauvoo Temple, before I was born, and sealed in the prophet's private office by the Prophet Joseph Smith. We left Nauvoo with the Saints, and went to Iowa, and from there we went to Rainsville, where my sister, Toersa died, with the colera. We then prepared to come to Utah. With other Saints, we all came independent. We had two wagons, three yoke of oxen, and four cows. The best thing I tasted on the plains was a potatoe. Oh how good it was. The express was going from Utah to the States. They gave each one of us a potatoe as our appetites were so keen for any kind of vegetable. We had quite a lot of buffaloes on the road. As the brethren would kill one, once in a while. Then any one could go and get what they wanted. And hang it on the wagon bows to dry. We gathered native currants and buffalo berries. They being a red berry, rather tart in taste. But made very good pies. I remember when we was in Iowa, father found a wild honey bee hive. and he and three other men went with tuvs, and buckets, and brought them back full of honey in the comb. Father used to tap the sugar maple trees, and get the sap, and mother would boil it, and make sugar out of it. My mother used to go to the stream of water, and spear cat fish, this also in Iowa. Well when we arrived in Utah we felt it was the nearest to heaven we had ever been, although there was very few houses in Salt Lake City at that time. The first winter in Utah we lived in the old fort. Where the City and County building now stand. Yes we had pretty hard times. When the grasshoppers destroyed the crops. Then we had to move south. When Johnson's army came to Salt Lake City. After the Brethren had kept them East of Echo canyon all winter. The brethren worked hard to keep them from coming into the city. We felt they sure intended to kill us all off. But when at last the governer came and promised the soldiers, would go through the city peacefully. But President Brigham Young would not trust them. So he had all families move down to Utah County, before going men were left, who played straw in the home. So if the soldiers started to destroy our homes. They would set fire to them. But the soldiers passed through peacefully and camped on the West side of the Jordan River and did not bother anything. We all came back into our homes. Mother had left us had gone to California. In 1861 my father Elijah Fordham was called to go to Dixie.

To help to build that part of Utah up. I went with him to cook, we traveled a little in head. Went on the West side of Utah lake. And when we got to Parowan, and met many people, who Brigham Young had also sent. Angus M. Cannon as captain, and my father Elijah Fordham as chaplain. My father and I and my brothers would start a little before the rest of them to try and remove some of the large rocks, so the next train would have better roads to travel on. The only accident we had was one evening while father was feeding our cattle some ears of corn, one of them through back its head and broke fathers arm. It did not seem to set right. Father suffered with it the rest of his days. When we went in to camp the first night some men of the church met us there, and it was decided that they would build the city of St. George right here. The elder who came were Erastus Snow, and Jacob Gates. They laid out the city, and began to build it up. When we got into camp of where the town of St. George was to be, Dec. 4. 1861. The people from the settlement below sent us a wagon load of mellons. My how good they was. The thickest ice I saw there that winter was no thicker than a window pane. And the most snow was gone before 10 o'clock in the morning. In the spring my father got some cotton seed, to raise. To ~~xxix~~ raise cotton they told him to soak it before planting it so he put it in a bucket of water, and in two hours he went to look at it and it had sprouted half as long as his finger. He came running to me to help him plant it. I never saw anything grow as fast as they grew. In the winter there came down the Santa Clara River, a great flood carrying everything before it. On the lands below St. George. It was one mile wide after it had dried up. People came hunting their lost properties, and the roads were washed out so we could not get to the grist mill for three months. And we had to grind wheat all that time in a coffee mill, and we wore it out. When the flood came my father and brother Joseph were down by the Santa Clara River getting a load of willow stakes to make a fence. And came away so fast they forgot the dog. A very valuable one. As he lay asleep. They felt so sorry they went down the next three days and tried to coax him over. He would start in and then go back, afraid to cross that terrible raging torrent of water. What the third day he started in and then they cheered him on until they got him entirely fogged out. Another instance of the flood is where a woman had just been confined and they barely had time to get them out of the house, when the flood carried it away, leaving them destitute: She did not even have a diaper for her baby. In 1862 we



came back to Salt Lake City and on the 7th of March 1863 I was married and sealed to John Pepper for time and eternity. In the endowment house in Salt Lake City. While here Heber C Kimball came to me and taking hold of my arm, ask me if I was the baby who was born on the Hill in Nauvoo Ill. I told him, I believed I was, He said whom are you being married to, I told him John Pepper, he said be sure and have ~~lots~~ lots of little species. In less than a month my husband went as a teamster for Henry Laurence a cross the plains to bring merchandise for the store and as they were bringing the goods, they lost some cattle and the captain went to huntthem, but he did not return. They hunted for him but could not be found them. They thought the indians must of got him as John Pepper was hunting for him two Indians chased him, but he got away. He took control of the wagon train and brought it into the city all right. Mr. Laurence gave us the cooking outfit, and a sheetiron stove, a small keg of molasses, a lot of dried appled, a lot of tea and many many articles which helped us materially, as when we was married, all we had to cook with was a frying pan and a sheetiron kettle, but we worked hard together. And we appreciate what we had. On Dec 1863 we came to Wellsville getting a small piece of ground and building a two room log house. In April ~~1864~~ 1865 my husband went to Omaha Nebraska to take William B. Preston and William Budge and others that were going on a mission and had to go that far by team. In Sept. 7th 1864 our first baby a girl Anna Maria was born. And our second child a girl came on Sept 15, 1866 and the following on the 10 1867 my husband John Pepper died with a paraletic stroke he was a hard working man and a good provider. I thought I would never marry again. But on 9 may 1868 I was married to William Price Deakin for time. Having 10 children by him.