

HISTORY OF THOMAS HENRY NOTT, SR. (1846)
and SARAH ANN BROWN (1845)

TOM'S CHILDHOOD:

Thomas Henry Nott was born on 6 December 1846, the 3rd and last child of Thomas Henry Nott (1811) and Maria Seaborn Alloway. He and his two older sisters were born at Bristol, Gloucester\Somerset County, England.

His first sister, Emma Seaborn Nott, was born in 1841, but lived only seven years.

His older sister, Maria Seaborn, was born almost three years before him on 5 January 1844.

In 1849, a year after Emma's death, Tom's mother Maria converted to the LDS faith. Apparently his father never converted. However, Tom and sister Maria were baptized in 1856 and 1856, respectively.

When Maria was 19 she emigrated to America. She sailed on the ss "Gen. McLelland" in 1864 and crossed the plains with J.S.Rawlins Co, arriving in Salt Lake City on Sept. 20, 1864. She later married a Canadian, John Dennison Campbell Hamilton, in 1866 and they parented seven children.

A year after Maria's marriage, Tom's father died (April 13, 1867) at age 55.

Then his mother Maria became a pioneer and sailed alone to America on the ss "General McClellan." Upon arrival in Salt Lake she stayed with daughter Maria and son-in-law John at their home in Millcreek.

Tom was busy that same year, also. Because he had met and fallen in love with a young girl from Fownhope named Sarah Ann Brown. On August 25, 1868, they were married at Fownhope Church, Herefordshire, England.

SARAH'S CHILDHOOD:

Sarah Ann Brown was born 3 June 1845 at Fownhope, Herefordshire, England, the daughter of William and Sarah Apperley Brown. She was the oldest of eight children. Three of them died young. But five children (including Sarah Ann) and mother Sarah Apperley eventually emigrated to Utah.

Her father was a farmer and since they lived on the river he often took her when he fished in his little boat for their supper. They weren't well-to-do; her mother worked as a midwife to help provide for the family.

When Sarah Ann was in her teens she went to London to work as head housekeeper in a large palacial home. She worked in the same home for years overseeing all the maids and cooks and because of this training, she became a meticulous housekeeper.

She met and fell in love with a young man from Bristol, Gloucester County, Thomas Henry Nott. Tom was a member of the LDS faith, but his fiance was not. A history of their marriage follows:

MARRIAGE OF THOMAS HENRY NOTT (1846-1922)
and SARAH ANN BROWN (1845-1934)

Tom and Sarah were married on 25 August 1868 in the village church of Fownhope. Unfortunately, Tom's father had died in April of 1867 and his sister Maria and mother (at different times) had emigrated to Utah, so none of his family was able to join the marriage festivities. But the story is told that Tom led his beautiful young bride out after the ceremony as her cousin tolled the church bells. The villagers, hearing the glad tidings, came out to their gates with flowers to give the newlyweds as they passed, but Sarah was too shy and pulled him off through the turnstyle and across the fields.

They raised nine children, seven of which lived to maturity. A short synopsis of their family follows:

THOS. HENRY, JR. born 1869 at Bristol, Eng.; married AGNES KILPATRICK McDONALD in 1891; 7 children
Henry William (Harry) born 1871 at Bristol, Eng.; married Zina Cosgrove Mousley in 1901; 2 children
Sarah Ann Seaborn born 1873 at SLC, Utah; married George David Roper in 1882; 4 children
Wm. Archibald Apperley born 1875 at SLC; lived 1 year
Wm. Mark born 1877 at SLC; married Lilly May Bills in 1900 (5 kids) then married (2) Cleo King in 1939; (3) Alice Dollhard in 1944; and Margaret Foutz Sims in 1956
Albert Ernest (Bert) born 1880 at SLC; married May Grover in 1908; one adopted child
Florence Blanche born 1882 at SLC; married Harold Ristinna Amens in 1905; 2 children
Violetta Maria born 1884 at SLC; married Joseph Harold Felt (3 children); then married George Clark in 1935
Olive Gertrude born 1887 at SLC; lived only 9 months

Tom worked as a candlemaker and saved as best he could in order to emigrate to America. Sarah gave birth to two sons, Thomas Henry, Jr. and Henry William, (called Harry) before they journeyed across the ocean. They were finally able to leave on July 31, 1872 from Liverpool on the steamship "Wisconsin" which sailed with 179

Saints. They arrived in New York on August 12th and after a long train journey with the George P. Ward Company, arrived in Salt Lake City, Utah on August 21, 1872. (During the journey Sarah broke her leg at Fort Harriman and always limped thereafter.) Upon arrival, they were joined by Tom's sister Maria and husband John Hamilton who took them into their small house in Mill Creek.

They stayed with the Hamiltons for some time until Tom finally went in the grocery business with S. P. Teasdale. He later had a store with William Langston on Richards Street between South Temple and 1st South. Subsequently he started his own business, the T.H. Nott & Sons Grocery at 44 East First South. Their slogan, printed on the wrapping paper, was "If we please you, tell others; if not, tell Nott!"

The family lived for several years in a little white cottage on 5th Avenue and D Street until 1889, when they purchased a new home on 10th East between 1st and 2nd South. They remained there until their deaths. Business was good and Tom and Sarah Ann owned their home on 10th East, a cottage on the avenues, an apartment house next to the cottage, and a farm out in Riverton. The family would frequently ride in a horse and wagon out to the farm. Tom would load the wagon with food, especially fruit and candy, which they would give to various families and children along the way. In the summer the children would live at the farm, assisting in the hard work of raising potatoes, wheat, oats, sugar beets, and three cuttings of alfalfa hay.

He did well in the grocery business, but was generous to the extent of folly. He allowed so much credit to anyone who seemed to be in bad financial circumstances that at the time of his death at age 77 there were several thousands of dollars on the books that could never be collected. Z.C.M.I. (and others from whom he had purchased his merchandise) seized his farm at Riverton and the property on Tenth East, but allowed Sarah to remain as long as she lived. Upon her death the Mormon Church used the home for several years until it was finally torn down and the lot became a parking space for the 11th Ward Chapel.

Tom had a flair for elegance and was a sight to behold walking to and from church on Sunday morning, all dolled up in his Sunday best, wearing his stove-pipe hat, gloves, and always carrying his gold headed walking cane. He was extremely fond of that cane since it had been given to him by his fellow workmen at S.P. Teasdel's store where he worked for 20 years. He was kind hearted to everyone and spent many Sunday afternoons calling on sick friends. Friends said they had never heard him cuss, swear or even say a mean thing of anyone. When a boy back in England, he took a pledge never to smoke, drink intoxicating liquor, or to shave and all his life he kept those pledges. He had a beard of long whiskers (of which he was most proud) which was never shaved. He was also quite athletic -- a fast runner -- and he could jump over a bar to the height of six feet in the air.

Being a Nott, Tom loved to relate the following pun: It seems a duel was once fought in Texas by Victor Shott and John Nott. Nott was shot. Shott was not. In this case it is better to be Shott than Nott. Rumor says that the shot Shott shot at Nott was not shot or that Nott was shot: Either the shot Shott shot shot Nott or, as accidents are frequent, maybe the shot Shott shot shot Shott himself. Then Shott would be shot and Nott would not. It appears, however, that the shot Shott shot shot not Shott, but Nott. So Shott is still victor... But then later his wife half shot him to death. How you say? It seems he came home half shot and she finished the job!

Tom and Sarah gave birth to Sarah Ann on 12 April 1873. In September of that year Sarah converted to the LDS faith and was baptized in City Creek Canyon, but the couple did not become sealed until 1881. Their next child William Archibald, was born in May of 1875, but died one year later. Their next son, William Mark joined the family in October of 1877, and Albert Ernest arrived next, in February of 1880, followed by two girls Florence (born 27 April 1882) and Violetta (born 13 December 1884). Their last child, Olive, was born in January of 1887, but lived only nine months.

Sarah was extremely industrious. She raised chickens for Holy Cross Hospital; sold eggs, and always cared for those needing help. She was like magic in a sick room and many nights she lay on the floor beside a sick bed in order to wake on the dot to give medicine at the needed hour. She saved many souls after the doctor had given up.

She was also an excellent cook. Her gifts of plum pudding at Christmastime were treasured by many. Each day she baked loaves of golden crusted bread for ravenous young appetites to break open from the oven after school and eat dripping with newly churned butter. Her Sunday dinners were works of art, after which the family would take a nice ride in the surry with the fringe on top, pulled by their dappled grey horse named Pet. Frequently they would ride in a horse and wagon to the farm in Riverton. Tom would load the wagon with food, especially fruit and candy, which they would give to various families and children along the way.

Sarah was kind and friendly with everyone -- even the old Indian squaws who used to call at the house regularly, gayly dressed in bright colored blankets and beaded moccasins. Sarah never turned them away without giving them bread, sugar, soap or tea. They weren't allowed to come in the front door or parlor, but Sarah would invite them into the kitchen. One day one of the squaws took quite a fancy to Sarah's small daughter Sarah Ann. Tom was home at the time and said in jest to the squaw, "Oh, you can have her if you want!" No more was said, but when they got ready to leave, one of the Indians grabbed Sarah Ann up and made for the front gate with the child tightly clasped in her arms. It was only by the combined efforts of both parents that Sarah Ann was wrestled from the Indian Squaw's clutches. Tom never made a remark like that again!

Tom Sr. played the flute and all the family loved music. Tom, Jr. and all the girls played the piano and Harry played guitar. Will played the piccolo, but his major claim to fame was that he could blow a tune on a harmonica not only with his mouth -- but also his nostrils! He and Albert also became quite proficient at whistling. The family gathered around the piano nearly every night and sang together, learning different parts and harmonizing their voices while Tom Jr. or Vi accompanied on the piano.

In 1893 the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated. For years the Nott children had gone to the temple grounds to watch the masons carve and chisel the great granite slabs. Each one had to be cut perfectly to fit into its allotted place. Just before its dedication, Tom's family went with thousands of others to watch or participate in climbing up a rickety old wooden scaffolding built around the spire that led to the top of the statue of Angel Moroni, several hundred feet above the ground. Those with the most courage were able to touch Moroni's gold-leafed feet. Dedicatory prayer sessions were held twice a day throughout the month of April 1893 as groups of Mormons traveled for miles around to celebrate and view the temple which had taken 40 years to build. The Nott family attended one such session and remembered it as a very special occasion.

When Sarah and Tom were 55 and 56 years old (1901), their son Tom, Jr.'s wife (Agnes Kilpatrick McDonald) died shortly after giving birth to daughter Agnes Sarah, leaving four motherless children plus a new baby. Sarah immediately came to their rescue and took son Tom Jr., Elsie (age 9), twin boys Don and Thomas Henry (age 7), Alta (age 1-1/2) and baby Agnes into their home. She still had three unmarried children of her own at home (Bert, Florence and Vi), making 11 around her table every day. She and daughter Vi sewed clothes for all the children, but never complained about such an overwhelming burden added to their lives.

She was a faithful Latter-Day Saint and daily showed that she truly loved her neighbor. She had a burning testimony of the Gospel and in the evenings when the family was waiting for Tom Sr. to return home from closing the store, she would relate many faith promoting stories to all the children. Her motto, quoted many times, was:

"Supposing that today were your last day on earth;
The last mile of the journey you've tread:
After all of your struggles, how much are you worth?
How much can you take home to God?
Don't count as possessions your silver and gold.
Tomorrow you leave these behind.
And all that is yours to have and to hold
Is the service you've rendered mankind."

Tom Sr. lived to age 77 and died on September 30, 1922. Sarah Ann lived on 11 years after his death and died at home on 21 January 1934 at the age of 88.