

SILAS P. BARNES.

Biography from the Lehi Centennial History

Silas Parker Barnes was born in Deering, New Hampshire, March 7, 1805. His parents were natives of that state. His father having a large family to support, Silas, at the age of seventeen, decided to cope with life's battles alone; so bidding his family farewell, he made his way to Boston. With only a single dollar in his possession, he began what proved to be almost a fruitless search for work. Finally, at the great grain and coal wharves, he found a job shoveling coal, which he gratefully accepted. Being active, energetic, and willing, he succeeded in a few years, by untiring industry, in winning a partnership in the business and finally owned it himself.

With the advent of prosperity, Barnes decided to share his life, so on May 7, 1832, he married Miss Olive Chapman, then of Boston, but a native of Saco, Maine. From this union were born nine children, three daughters and six sons, of whom only three are now living: Ferdinand of Rhode Island, and Richard G. and Watson of California. The other children are Freeman, Sarah E. Garners, Marcellus, Pamela, Leander, and Harriet.

In 1851 Mr. Barnes settled up his business and with a number of others who, like himself, had embraced the doctrines taught by Joseph Smith, started west-Traveling first by railway to New York and then by canal boat and steam boat, they finally reached Council Bluffs, Iowa.

After a stay of six weeks here in preparation for the arduous journey ahead of them, the company finally set out. The party, consisted of sixty wagons, two hundred men, and almost that many women and children. The journey through the trackless prairies, among ever-present dangers from the untamed elements and wild savages, was a noteworthy one.

After two and one-half months, the company reached Salt Lake City. Here the Barnes family remained a year, during which the father bought five acres of land and improved it and built a house and small barn. These preparations enabled the family to withstand with comparative comfort the severe winter which followed. Next spring Silas planted the five acres with peach pits, which later grew into a thriving orchard. The lot was situated near the present business center of Salt Lake City.

In the summer of 1852 the family again moved, this time to Dry Creek, where Barnes purchased a farm about three-quarters of a mile outside of the fort. He was quite successful in farming because of available irrigation water. After one year, the family was ordered to move into the fort because of threatened danger from the Indians. They had seen the redmen only once, when about three hundred of them camped a little distance from the farm, and stole some cattle belonging to the settlers.

In 1853 Silas P. Barnes was elected mayor of Lehi. He was the first incumbent of that office and filled it most successfully. Becoming dissatisfied with conditions in general in Utah, Mr. Barnes decided to remove, so in April, 1854, he started with his family to California. After a three months' journey they reached the Golden State, and settled in Yolo County. Here Silas followed farming until his death, in April, 1888, Mrs. Barnes having passed to the Great Beyond April 5, 1885.

During his later years, Silas became an adherent of the Adventist faith, and having been from his boyhood an earnest student of the Bible, but few men were so conversant with its teachings as he. Of strong religious convictions, imbued with, to him, right principles, energetic, active, stern, though just in all his dealings with his fellows, he built up not only a large worldly fortune, but also made for himself a place in the hearts of the people of the community as a good man and earnest friend to the interests of the public. May the good and charitable deeds of "Daddy" Barnes, as he was familiarly called, ever be remembered.