Canute Peterson was born in Eidsfjord, Hardanger, Norway, May 13, 1824. The farm owned by his father is called Maurset, and is now visited by the tourists who go to view the picturesque waterfall called Voringsfors, which is only a few miles distant.

His parents emigrated to America in 1837, taking Canute with them, but leaving two older sons, John and Jacob, who preferred to remain in Norway. His parents settled in La Salle County, Illinois. The father died in 1838. Canute's mother lived some ten years after her husband's death, but was afflicted with rheumatism and confined to her bed during these many years.

Sister Jacobs, a benevolent and faithful Latter-day Saint, gave her the care and the love as of a devoted sister. Sister Jacobs afterwards came to Lehi, where she was known to Brother Peterson's children as Grandma Jacobs, and spent her last years there. Young Canute had to take work among the farmers.

Sometimes he would be miles away from his mother; but when through his work Saturday night, he would walk all the way home, though it took most of the night to reach it and most of the following night to return, in order to spend Sunday with his beloved mother.

As he grew older he tried to buy a few luxuries for her. Before he left the state, he had paid the debt which his father had incurred through his and his wife's sickness. This act shows how dearly he cherished the memory of his parents. No one could have made a claim on him for the debt. Money was scarce and wages low, but he was determined that none should lose through having loaned money to his father, and after years of toil he succeeded in paying it in full.
When Canute was 18 years of age, his mother and he joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was baptized August 12, 1842. There was a large number of Scandinavians living in La Salle County, Illinois, and a large branch of the Church was raised up there.

He visited Nauvoo in 1844 and was ordained a seventy. The same year he was called to take a mission to Wisconsin. Here he baptized quite a number and organized a branch of the Church. A few miles from Ottawa lived Widow Nelson, who had a number of sons and daughters. She was kind to the poor and even the tramp was never turned away from her hospitable home.

Here Canute Peterson was always a welcome guest. One of the daughters, Sarah Ann, a couple of years younger than he, had also joined the Church, and thus they were thrown much into each other's company, attending meetings and other gatherings of the Saints. She was a lovely girl and a most lovable woman.

When the Saints were advised to gather with the Church in Utah, she showed her integrity to the gospel by leaving her good home and those she loved so highly. A number of the Saints left La Salle for Utah in 1849; among them was Canute Peterson and Sarah A. Nelson.

In crossing Iowa their camp was attacked with cholera, and Miss Nelson came down with it. Canute Peterson felt deep anxiety on her account. Should she die what would her mother and relatives say? The thought was agonizing to him. He went into a little grove by the creek and plead with the Lord to spare her life. When he arose from his knees he felt endowed with heavenly power and went to her wagon and placing his hand on her head he commanded her to arise and be healed. She felt a miraculous power pervade her and was healed immediately.

When they came to Mt. Pisgah, they met Elder Orson Hyde. He performed the marriage ceremony, making Canute and Sarah husband and wife. They reached Utah in the fall and settled in Salt Lake City. Next year he was called to go and help settle Lehi.
In the fall of 1850, in company with Jesse W. Fox, Nelson Empey, and Henry Royle, he went out to the present site of Lehi and helped to survey the townsite. He did not move his family to Lehi until the middle of March, 1851. He helped make water ditches and commenced breaking his farm when he was called to go to Scandinavia on a mission.

His wife was left with the care of two children, and though it was a time of Indian troubles and grasshoppers, she felt the Lord had richly blessed her. When the grasshoppers had swept the fields clean, her little patch of wheat was spared and she raised sixty bushels of treasured breadstuff. She helped many who had lost their whole crop.

Canute Peterson returned in 1856, bringing a large company of immigrants with him, whom he inspired with a deep love for him. He became counselor to Bishop Evans. In 1867 he was called to go to Ephraim to preside over that ward as bishop. In 1870 he was called to take a mission to Scandinavia to preside over that mission. He returned in 1872.

When President Brigham Young organized the Sanpete Stake, Canute Peterson was chosen as its president. He held this position until the stake was divided and then he continued to preside over the South Sanpete Stake, until his death, which occurred October 14, 1902. He held the office of stake president more than twenty-five years. He was generally loved and esteemed by the Saints.

He was a good gospel preacher. The Bible and the book of Doctrine and Covenants were his favorite books, and few were so well versed in the Scriptures as he. He loved Lehi and its people, among whom were many of his dearest friends, and he never tired of relating his experiences during the seventeen years he sojourned there.

His wife Sarah died in May, 1896. Two wives, Mariah and Charlotte, and fifteen children survived him.