

History of Ester Barnes Mudd
by Shirley M. Holder

Esther Barnes was born the 28th of August 1845 in Manchester, Lancashire, England. She was the fourth child and third daughter of George Barnes and Jane Howard Barnes. Esther's father, George Barnes, worked as a machine grinder in a textile mill and later as a carter. According to census records, Esther lived with her parents, George and Jane in the London Road District of Manchester. At the age of ten she immigrated with her family to the United States. In 1856 the LDS Perpetual Emigration fund offered a means to assist her family to make their trek to Zion. Esther and her family sailed on the sailing ship "Horizon".

Elizabeth Horrocks Kingsford's journal states that the Saints embarked for Boston on the sailing ship "Horizon" on the 22nd of May 1856. According to Elizabeth Kingsford, there were about 700 passengers on board. Her account relates that they arrived in Boston, Massachusetts on June 30, 1856. After a short stay in Boston they continued on to Iowa by train, arriving there on July 8th. Finding the handcarts still in the making, the overland journey was delayed. It was during this time that Esther's mother, Jane, gave birth to a sister Mary Jane, on July 24, 1856, in a tent near the banks of the Iowa River.

Just outside Florence, Nebraska on the 27th of August 1856, pushing and pulling all of their belongings plus the younger children in the handcart, Esther and her parents started the perilous journey with the Martin Handcart Company to Zion. The company made their way to Fort Laramie about the first part of October. After leaving Fort Laramie the weather had become rapidly colder and with this increasingly bitter weather the suffering and death began. Esther's father, George Barnes died, according to journal history, on October 7, 1856, from exposure. His death occurred after being assigned guard duty for two consecutive nights by Captain Daniel Tyler, this penalty was imposed upon him for being absent from his post. An account written by Margaret, Esther's daughter, tells us that illness overcame Esther's mother, Jane after the childbirth. Esther's father, George, went for "brandy for his wife and baby and did not ask the Captain's leave, so he put him on guard two nights instead of one and it was too much for his strength and he died. The Elders, John D. McAllister and Dunbar were returning from their mission, and they were singing just outside the tent, as they heard the crying of the baby and moans of the woman. They came in the tent and they blessed Mrs. Barnes and the baby and told her that she would live and get into Salt Lake City. " George Barnes and the bodies of several others were wrapped in blankets and left on the frozen ground in a common grave. Esther's toes were frozen.

Surmounting hunger, fatigue, illness, bitter cold, and the anguish of harrowing tragedy, Esther, her mother Jane, and the rest of her family endured and continued the journey, arriving in Salt Lake City on the 30th of November 1856. This account was abstracted from the "JOURNAL OF WILLIAM BARNES", Esther's uncle, her father George's brother, who later became her stepfather. "I sent for my Brother and family but they did not leave England until the eighteen hundred and fifty six they left Liverpool[r] in the spring and landed at Boston United States they then traveled to Omaha and lay over in camp until they got ready to start on their journey across the plains they trav[]led with hand Carts across the plains and over the Rocky Mountains My Brother George died on the way [three] Hundred miles from Salt Lake City and left a wife and six Children the youngest only two month old having been born on the journey they arrived in Salt Lake about the last of November in a peril[]s condition suffering great hardship in their travels across the plains they were mere skeleton when they arrived in Salt Lake City one of the daughters had her toes [froze] [of] both feet I had got a ho[] ready for their arrival and every thing comfortable for them [n] their [arrival] by the Blessing of God I employ[e]d a doctor to attend to the girl whose toes were froze [He had] to [cut] the toes all off in time she [got] well that you could scarcely notice her lameness." Esther's daughter Margaret also wrote that, "Esther Barnes, her mother, had her toes on both feet so badly frozen crossing the plains, they had to be removed when they arrived in Salt Lake Valley. Dr. Anderson did the amputating, and she always stuffed the toes of her shoes with cotton or rags."

Esther's mother married George's brother William Barnes on March 12, 1857. Esther's stepfather, William worked as a carpenter in Salt Lake City until 1861. In 1861, Esther's stepfather, William was called to Dixie to act as an assistant to Miles Romney, a church architect sent to help build the St. George Tabernacle and temple.

Margaret (Maggie), Esther's daughter, in a letter to a niece in law, Hazel J. Clegg, said that "John Mudd and Esther Barnes were the first couple married in St George in early days. My father came as a teamster and my mother as hired help for the women, they were working for brother Moon. When John Mudd first moved to St George mother and father became acquainted as young people and were married. They were camped on the old doby yard. Robert Gardner performed the ceremony. Then when they came back to Salt Lake City, they went to the Endowment House and had their endowments and were sealed for time and all eternity." Later research in the James G. Bleak's manuscript revealed that John Mudd and Esther Barnes were indeed the first couple to be married by Erastus Snow in December 1861 on the ground where the St George Temple would later stand. She and John received their endowments on the 30th of

January 1864. Esther and John had five children, four daughters and one son. Esther, their oldest daughter was born on the 8th of December 1862/1863 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. She was endowed on 11 Jun 1879. She died on the 2nd of May 1886 probably in St George, Washington County, Utah. She and her sister Margaret were living with their grandmother, Jane Howard Barnes, after the death of her mother and father. She may be buried in the St George City Cemetery. Jane, their second daughter was born on the 15th of June 1864 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, UT. She died about the 23rd of May 1879 in St George, Washington, Utah and is buried there. Margaret, their third daughter was born on the 3rd of June 1867 in St George, Washington County, Utah or Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. After her parents death, she lived with her Grandmother, Jane Howard Barnes, in St George, Washington County, Utah. She married Asa Stanley Calkin on 27 December 1888. They lived in Pine Valley Utah and also owned property in St George, Utah. They had no children. She died on 23 Nov 1956 in Pine Valley, Washington, Utah and is buried in the St. George Cemetery, St. George, Washington, Utah in the Calkin family plot. Their fourth child, a son John was born in November 1868 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. He died as an infant on the 30th of September 1869 and is buried with his parents in the Salt Lake City Cemetery. Their fifth child, my grandmother, Mary Elizabeth was born on the 22nd of December 1869 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. John and Esther Mudd and their family are listed living in Salt Lake City as per the 1870 census. John is listed as age 30, no occupation, born England. Esther, his wife is listed as age 25, keeping house, and born in England. His children are listed as Jane, age 6 born in Utah, Margret, age 5 born in Utah, and Mary, age 4 born in Utah. Esther, their daughter is not listed with them in this census. Esther's husband, John, died on the 4th of February 1872 in Little Cotton Wood Canyon, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah, after getting caught in a snow slide. His body was recovered in the spring after the thaw and he was buried on the 21st of May 1872 in the Salt Lake City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah.

Esther married William Mudd, John's brother, after John died. They had a daughter named Annie. She was born on 12 Feb 1873 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. Esther died shortly after Annie's birth on the 3rd of March 1873 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. She is buried in the Salt Lake City Cemetery.