

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF CHARLES BIRD

Charles Bird, son of Benjamin Freeman and Marabe Reeves Bird, was born at Flanders, Morris County, New Jersey, September 19, 1803. He was married to Mary Ann Kennedy March 22, 1826. They lived for a while at Elmire, Tompkins County, New Jersey then moved to Hector. They lived there until 1838, then moved to Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri.

He joined the Church soon after it was organized. He was one of the Prophet Joseph Smith's bodyguards. The men took turns on guard; when it was Charles' turn to go on guard, the man on guard before him would ride to the top of a hill close to the Bird home, take off his hat and wave it. Charles would wave back; that was his signal to take over.

The day the Prophet was killed was the day for Charles to go on guard. The man rode to the top of the hill, got off his horse, knelt on the ground with his head bowed. Charles knew then that the Prophet was dead.

He was ordained January, 1839 to the First quorum of Seventies, by Joseph Young. Sunday, December 22, 1844, the Thirteenth Quorum of Seventies was organized in Nauvoo, with Charles Bird senior President.

They suffered hardships along with the Saints. Their home was burned several times, and they would have to start over again. On February 3, 1846, he was the first person to cross the Missouri River on the ice. President Brigham Young had him cross to see if the ice would hold the wagon up. He was ready to come west with the first company of Saints, but President Brigham Young requested him to remain and help the saints sell their property and get teams and wagons to emigrate to Utah. He and his family came to Utah with the Milo Andrus Company in 1850. They left the Missouri River June 3, 1850. The company consisted of 206 persons and 51 wagons.

He settled at Springville, Utah, then moved to St. George to help with the Settlement; lived there a short time and then came back and lived at Cottonwood, Salt Lake County, near Salt Lake City. While living there he married Sarah Ann Dunsdon, an English girl, February 15, 1853, by President Brigham Young. He served as Counselor to Bishop Smoot for four years.

In the Spring of 1859, he and his family moved to Cache Valley and settled in Mendon. He was among the first family to settle there. They lived in a fort in their wagons until they could build dugouts and log houses. His home was always open to them until they could get a place to live. His team, with son Bradford, as driver, crossed the plains five times with immigrants.

This is taken from his daughter Adelia's diary-----

"At the time, places of Cache Valley were named and Bishops elected. The meeting was held in our house, it being the largest house in town. It was a log mansion with dirt roof and floor. Andrew Shumway was chosen Bishop. President of Stake, Peter Maughn and Orson Hyde attended the meeting. Mendon was named in remembrance of Mendon City, New York, a place where President Brigham Young once lived. Charles helped start the first woolen mills in Utah. He was director and clerk in the first store in Mendon.

He held the office of city mayor from 1872 until 1876 and was a member of the school board."

The first apple trees in Mendon, as told by Joseph T. Wood, were started by Charles Bird, Sr., while the people were living in the old Fort between the years 1859 and 1863. Mr. Bird started a seed bed, the apples being purchased at Salt Lake City. The following year the young plants were planted into permanent places, his cabin being in a position where he did not have to move when the people moved out of the Fort. As near as was able to find out Charles Bird Sr., was the first man to plant fruit trees in Mendon.

He was the father of 25 children, a true Latter-Day Saint, a good father, farmer, merchant and clothier. He died September 29, 1884 at Mendon, and was buried in the Mendon City Cemetary.

Children of Charles Bird

Mary Ann Kennedy

Sarah Ann Dunsdon

John K. P.
Betsy Ann
Benjamin F.
Henrietta
Amanda
Kelsey
Charles 1st
Bradford
Charles 2nd
Eliza June
William
Martin D.
George A.
Mary Ann

Mormon
Delop Parley
James Dunsdon
Mary Jane
Phineas Reeves
Jeddiah M. Grant
Anna Adilia
Hester Mariah
Amanda
Sarah Ann
Heber Charles