

Clarissa Elvira Taylor Redd Biography



January 17, 1834 Allen Taylor arrived at the home of William and Elizabeth Patrick Taylor in Bowling Green, Warren County, Kentucky. To this union were born twelve more children to make their family circle number 16. What a blessing it was to Allen to be born of a good, strong and hard working family. Both of his parents became sincere devout members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints. Allen married Sarah Lovisa Allred September 5, 1833 in Kentucky. On September 9, 1839 Allen's father died leaving a family of fourteen children, seven sons and seven daughters. His father William was a good provider but with twelve younger siblings and a widowed mother as well as a wife and three children of his own Allen would have more responsibilities.



At this point of time Allen Taylor was closely associated with the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. Because of Allen's loyalty to the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. he was entrusted with many important errands. On that memorable day when so many were so ruthlessly slain in Hays Mill, Allen Taylor was commissioned by the Prophet to mount a horse and notify the saints who lived a distance from Far West to move into town immediately. He would often guard the Prophets home and was close to Brigham Young. He was chosen to lead a group of 597 people to Utah.



When the group reached Fort Bridger, Wyoming Sarah Louisa Allred Taylor gave birth to her seventh child, Clarissa Elvira Taylor on 3 October, 1849. Her father was Captain Allen Taylor, (this baby is my great-grandmother, and sometime, I shall personally thank my dear great-great-grandmother, Sarah Louisa Allred Taylor for carrying my great-grandmother from Winter Quarters, for sharing the great hardships with the other 596 pioneers in 190 wagons as they plodded across the plains and the mountains for the great love and devotion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ).¹ Allen and Sarah had four more children.

They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on 15 October 1849. The family settled at the mouth of Mill Creek Canyon. Then they were called to Kaysville where Allen Taylor served as Bishop in 1854. They were there from 1850-1862. They were next called to move to St. George. Her father spent 21 years dividing his time between St. George and New Harmony.

There is no mention of Clarissa's childhood but I would imagine that she played as children do but would have varied responsibilities being the seventh child in a family of eleven children, learning how to make soap, cook, sew, washing, garden work and basic chores.



Clarissa caught Benjamin Redd's eye and they were married on 20 June 1865 on Benjamin's 23rd birthday in New Harmony by William Pace, though she was not yet sixteen years old. Benjamin bought a lot and built a log house on the lower street on the south side and at the west end of the street.

Sarah Elizabeth Redd, their first child was born on 12 May 1866 (my grandmother)².

They along with other settlers were in constant fear of raging Indians who proved to be dangerous enemies at that time. Men had to sit up night to guard their loved ones and their belongings. The Indians would slip in and steal cattle, horses and anything they could get. Some of the settlers hobbled and staked their animals so the Indians couldn't steal them. There was a violent cloud burst that hit in the mountains to the west outside New Harmony July 29, 1866. The flood damaged nearly every farm for a distance of about three miles on Ash Creek. The little log house that Benjamin Redd had built for his wife Clarissa and their two-month-old daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, was nearly destroyed and subsequently was abandoned.



Benjamin and Clarissa then moved to the center of town as their log house had been destroyed during the big flood. At the new home Benjamin Franklin was born on April 6, 1868, and was affectionately called "Benny."

On the 29th of August 1868, Benjamin and Clarissa were endowed and children Sarah and Benny were sealed in the SLC Endowment house. The journey by wagon and oxen team took three weeks each way.

Benny was a very loved and cared for baby, however, he contracted measles and died at the age of two years. This was a difficult time for Clarissa and her family with his death.

Shortly thereafter, Benjamin purchased a farm north of town in order to be close to his work and built a house and moved his family into it. On July 22, 1871 their third child was born, Mary Catherine. Farm life was difficult in those days and dangerous. Oftentimes because of Indian unrest and Clarissa lived in constant fear for her family. She learned to shoot a gun so she could protect herself and her children. On one occasion she killed a wildcat and another time she slew a skunk. Life was hard and because of her fear of the Indians caused Benjamin to buy a house in town.

Clarissa Redd's greatest fear of Indians stemmed not from the sight of Indians or even the threat of raids but rather from a personal experience in which she nearly lost her daughter. Sarah Redd was a sweet, happy child who was said to have the jolliest laugh around. One day an Indian who had become enamored with Sarah entered the Redd house, threw down some money on the table, and grabbed little Sarah by the hand. "Me pay for papoose," he exclaimed, "take white papoose to wickiup." The Indian was nearly to the door with Sarah in tow with Clarissa screaming at him when Benjamin came to the rescue, gave the money back, and pushed the Indian out of the house.³

To make bread Clarissa would grind cornmeal between two rocks and then the flour was milled at Kanarraville. There were vegetables, fresh and dried, corned beef, fresh and cured pork and part of the time, milk, butter and eggs and always molasses for desert made from sugar cane raised by Benjamin. She had to card and spun the thread on a spinning wheel to make jean pants and hickory shirts for her

husband stitched very small and close together by hand, as well as clothing for herself and the children. Clarissa taught Sarah to sew and Sarah had pieced together a quilt before she was seven years of age.

Their third home was an adobe house on the upper street in town. The house was unfinished so Benjamin fixed and plastered it then moved his family in before it was thoroughly dried. Clarissa wasn't strong and the cold she contracted in the damp house weakened her.

On August 3, 1873 Clarissa gave birth to her fourth child, a baby girl, Anna Maria Vilate. Clarissa wasn't strong enough to take care of her baby. Mrs. Ella Sawyer took the baby and cared for her until little Anna Maria Vilate's death at the age of four months, the second death in the family.

Clarissa never recovered and on January 18, 1874 she passed through the veil back into the presence of a loving Heavenly Father and to be reunited with her little two year old son Benny and infant daughter Anna Maria, at 25 years of age, leaving behind her eternal family, her loving husband Benjamin and two daughters, Sarah age seven and Mary (Polly), two years of age. Clarissa is buried in the New Harmony Cemetery, New Harmony, Utah.

ADDENDUM

My grandmother, Sarah Elizabeth Redd Prince Davis related that. "I was seven years old and my sister Mary Catherine was two years old our mother Clarissa Elvira Taylor died and we were left in the care of my father Benjamin Jones Redd. There were many times their father Benjamin could not be with them so they lived in the home of their maternal grandparents, Allen and Sarah Lovisa Allred Taylor."



Grandmother Sarah felt a blanket of security around her through their tenderness and loving care as the emptiness of her mother's love and care was conveyed by loving grandparents.

1. *Sketch of the Life of Captain Allen Taylor* by Juanita Davis Williams Kossen (my mother)
2. Juana Williams Blackburn, granddaughter of Sarah Elizabeth Redd Prince Davis.
3. From Juanita Davis Williams Kossen's History.
Sketch of the Life of Captain Allen Taylor by Juanita Davis Williams Kossen
Gathering In Harmony by Stephen L. Prince
The Utah Redds and their Progenitors by Lura Redd
History of Clarissa Elvira Taylor Redd by Berdean Hall Schlosser
Family Group Records (owned)

Written and submitted by Juana Williams Blackburn, daughter of Juanita Davis Williams Kossen, Sarah Elizabeth Redd Prince Davis granddaughter and Clarissa Elvira Taylor Redd's great-granddaughter.

