

# Samuel Pollock (1824-1891)

## Biographical Sketch

### Early Years in Ireland

Samuel Pollock was born in County Tyrone in Ulster (North) Ireland.

### Immigration to America and on to Illinois

He joined the Mormon Church, emigrated from Ireland to America and traveled to Nauvoo, Illinois, the main church center.

### Migration to Utah

In 1846, Pollock and other family members joined the Mormon exodus from western Illinois. Around 1847, he married Elizabeth Reeves (1829-1864) of Shropshire, England and their first child was born while they resided in Nebraska territory.

By 1850, they had collected the means to equip and provision an outfit for the western trek. They joined the William Snow-Joseph Young Company at the outfitting post at Kanesville (present-day Council Bluffs), Iowa. This company was organized near the Missouri River and departed in late June. In the Pollock family were Samuel, 26, Elizabeth, 21, and Hyrum Reeves, 2.

### The Mormon Trail

They passed the usual milestones on the trail: Fort Kearney, the South Fork of the Platte River, Chimney Rock, Fort Laramie, the Sweetwater River, Independence Rock, Devil's Gate, Green River, Fort Bridger, Bear River, and Weber River. After suffering the usual hardships of overland trail they arrived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake in mid-September.

Almost immediately, Pollock went to work as a laborer.

### Settling in Utah County

By 1852, they had moved south to Utah County and pioneered in Spanish Fork (or nearby Palmyra, another new settlement), on the Spanish Fork River, which flowed west into Utah Lake. The settlement was organized that year and Pollock was appointed as the first secretary or recorder of the fledgling community.

The Walker War erupted in summer 1853 and the area surrounding Utah Lake was an active zone of the conflict. Ute Indians raided livestock and settlers rode out to recover their stock. They fortified their settlements and guarded them closely. Presumably, Pollock helped guard life and property during the conflict which lasted until late summer 1854. Evidently, Pollock took Elizabeth Brockbank (1838-1926) of Lancashire, England as a polygamous wife during this time, but this marriage was of short duration.

The conflict with the Ute Indians was especially intense in Utah Valley. Did Pollock's concern for future conflict with the Utes prompt him to leave their traditional lands? That is unclear but what is certain is that moving to southern Utah, he moved beyond the traditional lands of both the Utes and Pauvant Utes.

## **To Cedar City and the Ironworks**

### The Early Ironworks in Cedar City (The Deseret Iron Company)

By 1855, Pollock and his first wife, Elizabeth, moved to Cedar City in southern Utah where several more children were born. In moving to Cedar City, Pollock was settling in an area dominated by the Deseret Iron Company, known more familiarly as the Ironworks. See Summary of Deseret Iron Company for a brief summary of its early development.

### The Ironworks in 1857

In April 1857, the delivery of a new steam engine from Great Salt Lake City seemed to breathe new life for the Ironworks. Working from April to June they installed the steam engine and completed the new engine house. In the first week of July, they were ready to begin smelting. They “put on the blast” and had a modicum of success. But they continued to be plagued with problems ranging from poor quality raw materials to smelting equipment that lacked technical sophistication. When in late July the steam engine seized with sand from the dirty creek water, they speedily dug a reservoir to store a supply of clean water for the boiler. They continued making smelting runs through August. All the while crews at the ironworks manned all the necessary functions there, while other crews, mainly miners and teamsters, gathered the raw materials – iron ore, coal, limestone, and wood – necessary to sustain smelting.

The smelting continued until September 13. In other words, around September 3, when a dispute arose between some settlers and several men in the passing Arkansas company, the blast furnace was running nonstop. And when Cedar City militiamen, many of them ironworkers, mustered to Mountain Meadows where they were involved in the massacre on September 11, other ironworkers in Cedar City continued the smelting runs night and day. For additional details, see Smelting at the Ironworks in 1857.

### Role of the Ironworkers

From late April to September, those working up the canyon in mining or hauling wood, coal, limestone, rock, sand or “adobies” to the ironworks were Isaac C. Haight, James Williamson, George Hunter, Joseph H. Smith, Ira Allen, Elliott Wilden, Swen Jacobs, Alex Loveridge, Joel White, Ezra Curtis, Samuel McMurdie, Samuel Pollock, John Jacobs, John M. Higbee, John M. Macfarlane, Samuel Jewkes, Nephi Johnson, Thomas Cartwright, William Bateman, Elias Morris, Benjamin Arthur, Joseph H. Smith, Robert Wiley, and Philip Klingensmith. Those working at the ironworks on the furnace, engine, coke ovens or blacksmith shop included Elias Morris, John Humphries, Ira Allen, John Urie, Benjamin Arthur, James Williamson, Joseph H. Smith, Samuel Jewkes, Joseph Clews, Richard Harrison, William C. Stewart, William Bateman, John M Macfarlane, John M. Higbee, John Jacobs, George Hunter, Samuel Pollock, William S. Riggs, Alex Loveridge, Elliott Wilden, Ezra Curtis, Eliezar Edwards, Swen Jacobs, Joel White, and Thomas Cartwright. (The two lists overlap because some worked both in the canyon and at the Ironworks.) Other prominent figures at the ironworks who

were not later involved at Mountain Meadows were Samuel Leigh, George Horton, James H. Haslem, Laban Morrell, John Chatterley, Thomas Gower, Thomas Crowther and others.

Samuel Pollock was only an occasional worker for the ironworks. According to the Ironworks account book, in 1857 the only work Pollock did all year was to help construct the reservoir in early August to provide a water supply to the steam engine.

In the Iron Military District: Sergeant Samuel Pollock, Company E, Isaac Haight's 2nd Battalion

In 1857, the Iron Military District consisted of four battalions led by regimental commander Col. William H. Dame. The platoons and companies in the first battalion drew on men in and around Parowan. (It had no involvement at Mountain Meadows.) Major Isaac Haight commanded the 2nd Battalion whose personnel in its many platoons and two companies came from Cedar City and outer-lying communities to the north such as Fort Johnson. Major John Higbee headed the 3rd Battalion whose many platoons and two companies were drawn from Cedar City and outer-lying communities to the southwest such as Fort Hamilton. Major John D. Lee of Fort Harmony headed the 4th Battalion whose platoons and companies drew on its militia personnel from Fort Harmony, the Southerners at the newly-founded settlement in Washington, the Indian interpreters at Fort Clara, and the new settlers at Pinto.

In September, Samuel Pollock was a sergeant in one of the platoons under Elias Morris, captain of Company E in Major Isaac C. Haight's 2nd Battalion. See A Basic Account for a full description of the massacre.

Pollock, 33, was among the militia contingent who arrived at the Meadows during the week. Pollock went in company of Robert Wiley, William Bateman, Charles Hopkins, Ezra Curtis, Thomas Cartwright and others. They arrived several days before the massacre.

On Thursday evening, September 10, according to John D. Lee, Pollock and many others from Cedar City attended the war council on the grounds of Mountain Meadows.

On Friday the 11th, Pollock later testified, he was sick and observed the massacre from one of the militia camps where he heard the volleys of shots and saw the pall of smoke rising from the field.

Pollock was listed in Judge John Cradlebaugh's 1859 arrest warrant. In 1875, he testified in the first trial of John D. Lee. Besides testifying concerning John D. Lee, John M. Higbee, Philip Klingensmith and William Stewart, he also identified Robert Wiley, William Bateman, Charles Hopkins, Ezra Curtis and Thomas Cartwright.

## **Leaving Cedar City for Toquerville**

In 1858, Samuel Pollock and his family were among those who departed Cedar City.

Pollock, John M. Higbee, and others traveled to lower Ash Creek, below Fort Harmony and near the encampment of the Paiute headman Toquer. There they founded the new settlement of Toquerville, 20 miles east of modern-day St. George.

Reportedly, Pollack and one Palmer tilled the first ground in Toquerville, using a plow they had made "from old wagon tires at their shop in Cedar [City]." (Bradshaw, ed., *Under Dixie Sun*, 256-57.) The Pollacks remained there for several years.

## **Setting Down Roots in Kanarraville**

By 1862, the Pollocks had moved to Kanarraville where Pollock remained for the next three decades. In 1864, his wife Elizabeth died, having bore Pollock eight children. The following year, the 40-year-old Pollock married twenty-nine-year-old Welsh emigrant Ann Meredith Mathews (1836-1889) who became step-mother to his children and also bore him three other children.

In 1866, following the outbreak of the Black Hawk War, Lorenzo Roundy, the new bishop in Kanarra, relocated the settlement and rebuilt it in the configuration of a square fort. This provided increased protection and security from depredations of raiding parties of Navajos or Paiutes. However, in fall 1869, an Indian raiding party succeeded in driving off a number of horses. This unrest was finally resolved by a Mormon-Navajo peace treaty in 1872.

Samuel Pollock served as the ward clerk and had a large store of personal and community records. However, a girl identified as his step-daughter set fire to the meetinghouse, destroying the building and its contents including Pollock's records.

## **Testifying in Lee's First Trial**

John D. Lee at trial.

During the summer of 1875, Pollock traveled to Beaver where he testified as both a prosecution and defense witness in the first trial of John D. Lee. He testified concerning the muster in Cedar City, the march to Mountain Meadows, and the massacre itself. Contrary to the myth that militia witnesses never identified anyone at the massacre other than John D. Lee, Pollock named eight other militiamen at the Meadows besides himself and Lee.

## **Later Years**

According to census records, Pollock was blacksmithing in 1870 and farming in 1880. Pollock and his wife Ann and children lived on in Kanarraville.

Ann died in 1889 and Pollock died two years later. At least seven of his children survived into the twentieth century.

Note: A Samuel Pollock was appointed county commissioner in Garfield County, but it is unclear whether this is the Samuel Pollock (1824-1891).