

Sketch of the Life of Walter Granger

Walter Granger the son of Robert Granger, was born August 4 1821, in the city of Edinburgh, Midlothian County Scotland. When Walter was nine years old his father died. He had been a soldier in the British Army and had served in the War of 1812 against the United States under the Command of General Brock. He was wounded in the Battle of New Orleans and lost a leg. He was taken prisoner but later was exchanged and returned home to his family a cripple. He was pensioned by the British Government. He had no love for anything connected with America.

Walters mother Catherine McDonald Granger was left a widow with six children, namely: Peter Isabella, Walter, Alexander, Catherine and John.

When Walter was fifteen yrs. of age he left the city of Edinburgh and went to Paisley, in the County of Renfrewshire, to learn the trade of shawl making. He bound himself for four years as an apprentice to Edward Howe. It was in the last year of his apprenticeship that he first heard two Elders of the Latter Day Saint Church, Elder Samuel Mulliner and Alexander Wright. After some investigation he became convinced they were true servants of God, and had authority to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel. He was baptized by Alexander Wright on April 15, 1840, some six or seven months after hearing the gospel. He was confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints by Elder S Samuel Mulliner April 19 1840. Up to this time there was no regularly organized Branch of the Church in Scotland but one was organized in Paisley by Orson Pratt on May 9 1840.

Mr. Howe, to whom Walter was apprenticed, had always been very friendly but after Walter was baptized and began to bear his testimony and defend the doctrines of the Church Mr. Howe turned against him and became his bitterest enemy. He told Walter if he continued doing this he would have to find work elsewhere. So the young man was turned out without a friend or anyone to sympathize with him and had to endure the taunts and jeers of those who had been his friends and companions. This did not hinder him from bearing his testimony to the restoration of the true Gospel and the organization of the Church with its gifts and blessings.

Catherine Guthrie, a young lady who joined the Church before Walter did, was driven from home and her life threatened if she persisted going to the Latter Day Saints Church. She was shamefully abused and turned to Walter for sympathy. This association resulted in their marriage. He felt he could shield her and she could comfort him. On March 11. 1841 according to the laws of the land, Elder Thomas Joap married them. They resolved to be true to each other and , putting their trust in the Lord to aid them in the journey thru life. He says of his wife that she was a faithful and true helpmate, always ready and willing to assist him in performing his duties in the Church. They resolved to be true to each other and to the belief of the Restored Church.

Soon after being baptized he was ordained a teacher and had a profitable experience in performing the duties of that position. A little later he was ordained an Elder and had an interesting and varied experience in doing missionary work in the nearby towns.

Later he was called to preside over the Paisley Branch where he served six years.

In 1855 he was called to preside over the Glasgow Conference which at that time embraced fourteen branches and over eleven hundred baptized members.

The next year, 1856, they left their native land to make their home in the land of Zion. They crossed the ocean in the good ship "Enoch Train" and landed in Boston, May 1, 1856. From there they went to Iowa City, traveling by steamboat and railroad. This was their last stop before the long trek across the plains. The day after they reached Iowa City a baby was born to this couple but it died at birth.

Their family now consisted of the father, mother, Robert, Alexander, Catherine, Walter and John. They were organized into the Daniel D. McArthur's hand cart company. They endured many hardships which Brother Granger expressed himself as wanting to forget. To understand the reasons for wanting to erase these memories one must know a little of the hardships they endured in the trek by handcart over the one thousand mile trip from Florence, Nebraska on the banks of the Missouri River to Salt Lake Valley.

The Captain McArthur's company consisted of four hundred ninety-seven souls, one hundred handcarts equipped with twenty-five tents and a few by teams with wagons. The company started out June 11th and arrived in the valley Sept. 26, 1856, having spent one hundred and seven days of hardships. They were advised by the authorities to go out into the surrounding country and make new homes for themselves.

Walter Granger and family stayed in the city until after the October Conference then packed their belongings into the handcart and went south to Spanish Fork to try by the help of the Lord to establish a home. They were comparatively successful and concluded to make that their permanent abiding place. But such was not to be for four years from the time of their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley they were called to Utah's Dixie to raise cotton. They knew nothing about raising cotton but the call had come and they did not hesitate to respond to it. By Christmas they were on the camp ground in Dixie.

When the town was laid out and surveyed Walter Granger was allotted a lot in the southwest part of the city. ^{His was} ~~His~~ was a very forbidding tract but they moved on to it and all knelt down by the wagon tongue and earnestly prayed that the blessings of the Lord would attend them in their endeavors to to reclaim it and that it would become fruitful and desirable as their future home. They were again called on to endure many hardships but since every one was in the same condition they shared their troubles and their successes.

The town was organized into three wards and the Granger family was located in the third ward with Daniel D. McArthur as bishop. Walter Granger was made head of the teachers and president of the Elders Quorum of the St. George Stake. It was not long before it was necessary to make a change and Walter Granger was made bishop of the second ward. He was set apart for that calling by Wilford Woodruff and he selected Stephen R. Wells and Joseph Orton as his counselors.

When the Temple was built he was appointed to oversee the grading of the temple block and did this until it was necessary to employ a landscape gardner to select the trees and shrubs most desirable for the grounds. While working on the building he got some lime in

of his eyes and lost the sight in that eye.

In the building and growth of the Dixie Mission, Walter Granger took an active part. He was one of the prosperous farmers of the St. George Clara Field, having received a United States patent to what was known as the Granger entry, a large tract of ground. He with other farmers of that field were often called upon to furnish seed grain to growers whose land was in other fields where crops had failed because of washed out dams or broken canals, leaving them without enough grain to seed their land for another year. Or it may have been he had cleaner, nicer grain for seed. This grain was furnished or loaned to be paid back when the borrower had a harvest.

He built his home on lot 4 block 20 St. George City survey and it is still standing today. He had also a good granery from which he extended relief freely to those in need.

During the building of the St. George Temple when all the resources of the Church were used to meet the expenses of building, Walter Granger assisted Alex F. McDonald in the St. George Tithing Office in dispensing and paying out such supplies as were available to the hundreds of workmen employed on the work of building that beautiful structure.

For thirteen years Walter Granger was an ordinance worker in the Temple and much work for his ancestors was done.

As practiced and approved by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at that time Walter Granger entered into what was then called "Plural Marriage". On October 19, 1885 he married Anna Keil. Of this union was born three children namely: Nellie Catherine, Emma Keil, and Walter Keil.

Walter Granger died May 6, 1904 at the age of eighty three. Forty three years of his eventful life was spent in the Dixie Mission. He like others of that group of pioneers left a lasting monument in the Court House, Tabernacle and the St. George Temple, all of which are standing today as good as the day they were built. They are the evidence of their religious faith, thrift and industry. As requested by that great leader, Brigham Young when the call to the Dixie Mission was made he told them to build an ornament to their city, and the evidence of that counsel remains for future generations to behold.