



JAMES GALE (1829-1915) **Utah Pioneer**

James Gale was born 14 May 1829 in Warminster, Wiltshire, England to James Gale and Sarah Tavinder. He was the fourth child of five children of this family. His father was a carpenter and builder and a good practical mechanic. As a small boy James loved to carve wood and he would spend many hours polishing the pieces he carved to bring out the fine grain. It is little wonder that he grew up to be a maker of fine furniture and cabinets.

By the time young James was ten years old he was able from his earnings as a carpenter to pay his father's rent and otherwise assist his parents. When he was 17 years old he went to London and remained there working about two years. He then returned to Warminster to spend Christmas with his parents and relatives. While visiting home his father broke his leg, which detained James until he recovered.

On 19 September 1848, at the age of 18 years, James Gale married Emma Blake in Warminster, Wiltshire, England. She and James had 13 children. Shortly after their marriage, James and Emma moved to London and took contracts to build a number of cottages in Rochester Road in which he was assisted by his father.

In the early spring of 1850 James heard the principles of Mormonism preached by Elder Williams and H. E. Bowring. Shortly afterwards he was baptized on 28 March 1849 into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

James left London with his wife and small son Charles on 1 January 1851 and went to Liverpool to begin their emigration to America. On 29 January 1851, at the cost of \$3.00, they left for the United States on board the ship "George W. Bourne," traveling with 281 people under the direction of W. Gibson. After a passage of ten weeks they arrived in New Orleans on 27 March 1851. Within three days of their destination, while on the Gulf of Mexico, Emma gave birth to their second son.

Subsequently James settled his family in St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri, arriving there 12 April 1851. While living in St. Louis they lost their two sons by death, Charles on 28 May and Lorenzo on 23 July 1851. After working and saving their money for a year, on 12 May 1852 James and his family were able to leave St. Louis for Utah. They joined up with the James J. Jepson Company and James drove an ox team. When at Elm Creek, Buffalo, Nebraska, on 19 June 1852 Emma gave birth to their daughter Emeline.

After three months on the plains they arrived in Great Salt Lake City, Utah on 10 September 1852. James then went to work for the Public Works. He also built a house and provided his family with a comfortable home.

Emma Blake Gale made fancy gloves and trousers from buckskin, which she sold.

In the fall of 1852 James Gale was ordained a member of the 18th Quorum of the Seventy.

James was married to Mary Ann Shepherd Derrick in Great Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah on 1 January 1854. Mary Ann was the daughter of Zachariah Wise Derrick and Mary Shepherd, pioneers of 1851 also from England. Mary Ann and James had nine children. All but two died while children.

James received his Patriarchal Blessing in Great Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah on 5 January 1853 under the hands of John Smith. James Gale and his two wives, Emma Blake and Mary Ann Derrick, were endowed and sealed on 2 October 1857 in the Endowment House.

In 1855 James moved his two families to Ogden, Weber, Utah to work on building the Ogden Tabernacle. He became prominent among the early settlers of Ogden. For seven years he kept in repair the old flour mill of President John Taylor and superintended the construction of the new one. He walked to and from work all during this time--about six miles per day. James Gale made the first new wagon that was made in Utah. He assisted in the erection of the buildings in the early history of Ogden.

James Gale also made the first coffin that was made in Weber County. Before the undertaker's profession was established in Weber County, carpenters made coffins or caskets from native pine. In those days the body was measured and the casket was made to fit.

In 1857 James Gale became Ogden's first undertaker. His business was located at 2740 Washington Boulevard, serving the community for about 25 years. In 1885 George W. Larkin, Sr. and Charles J. A. Lindquist purchased James Gale's business and became partners, later each establishing their own business. James continued making caskets and furniture. One of his hearses was reported in a contemporary account to be "the finest and best finished of any that have been imported to Utah."

James served as a Sunday School teacher for 12 years and for 15 years he was a teacher in the Bishop's ward.

After the advent of the railroad and during the rapid growth of Corinne, in 1870 he was sent for especially to build the chapel window in the Episcopal Church in that place. While in Corinne he was suddenly summoned to the death bed of his wife Mary Ann Derrick Gale. She passed away on 3 November 1870 at Ogden, Weber, Utah just one month after the birth of their ninth child. The baby died seven months later. Mary Ann was buried in the Ogden City Cemetery.

On 13 August 1871 James went on a brief visit to England. That same year he formed a partnership with W. H. Pidcock in the furniture trade. In 1872 a fire occurred in the establishment destroying property to the amount of \$1,400. Shortly after this event the partnership was dissolved and James continued the business alone.

On 7 October 1874 James Gale was sworn in as a Citizen of the United States of America in the Territory of Utah.

In 1876 James was the victim of another fire in which his losses amounted to \$7,000.

An advertisement of 1878 in Ogden read: "James Gale. Household furniture. Shoninger organs, rustic window shades, mattresses, made to order, chromos and picture frames, window curtains, wardrobes, parlor sets, bedroom sets, sideboards, bureaus, bedsteads, sofas, chairs, whatnots."

In 1881 James purchased a large two-story brick building adjoining Boyle & Company where he continued in the furniture trade until 1884.

James lost his wife Emma Blake Gale on 4 October 1888 in Ogden, Weber, Utah. Emma was buried in the Ogden City Cemetery.

James married Lilly Bentley Crossley Sutcliffe on 20 March 1889 and was sealed to her the same day in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake, Utah. Together they had one son who died at the age of nine years.

At the age of 85 years, James Gale passed away of paralysis and general debility on 24 March 1915 in Ogden, Weber, Utah. He was the father of 23 children, many of whom died in childhood. He was survived by a large posterity, including his third wife Lilly and many grandchildren.

Lilly Sutcliffe Gale passed away 1 May 1941 at the age of 80 years at Ogden, Weber, Utah. James and his three wives are all buried in the Ogden City Cemetery in the James Gale family plot.

James Gale was a prominent figure in the history of Ogden. A biographical sketch of him appeared in Tullidge's History of Utah.

Source: Brent J. Belnap