

JAMES BUTLER and daughter,
Charlotte Elizabeth

*Butler Wilson
by Grace Wilson
Johnson*

My grandfather, James Butler, although born in a covered wagon on the plains and reared under pioneer surroundings, had a natural thirst for further education and culture. His wife, my grandmother, Charlotte Elizabeth Topham, was sickly, due to very bad teeth, many of which were broken off, leaving only the embedded roots. Mama said that she remembered, as a child, her mother always smelling like cloves which she chewed to deaden the pain. Consequently, she was unable to travel with James to pursue his desires.

Charlotte Elizabeth Butler, my mother, was the eldest child and the beneficiary of her mother's illness, in that James would take her, as soon as she was old enough, to Salt Lake City, to, among other necessary errands, pursue his longings for cultural outlets.

Thus, she had an early introduction to the benefits Salt Lake City had to offer in the late 1880's and 90's. They would travel by wagon, staying with relatives along the way, or camping and sleeping in the wagon. It was almost a week's trip from their home in Richfield to Salt Lake City. This situation created a special kinship between father and daughter. She also loved her mother dearly and being the eldest of six children, learned early to help around the home and to do the things which would ease her Mother's painful tasks. Lizzie (as my mother was called) learned very young how to make the bread for the whole family. And, in my childhood, I soon learned that no one could make bread like hers. (To come home from school to the smell of fresh, hot bread--wafting its odor down the street, brought me and my friends home all the faster. I can smell it yet).

Mama's outstanding memory, as a little girl, was ironing heavy flannel diapers dry with an old "sqdiron"--this was a set of several flat irons which were heated on the wood stove. The interchangeable handle was clamped on each flat iron as it heated and was released from the other one in use,

as it cooled. (Gordy Romney has one of her irons today). Over the hot stove was created a vivid childhood memory, so due to her position in the family, she was also the beneficiary of a great deal of responsibility.

James had gone to Richfield as a very early settler, so his location was choice. Years ago, I visited the location of their home, of which only the bits of wood were remaining. It was directly across the road from the natural spring, which was the area's water supply, and still is the city of Richfield's supply, although more modern growth has destroyed its beauty, by building the necessary pumps and outbuildings.

Her father taught her to use a gun, although the only time she spoke of using it was to reiterate the wonder of being in the house alone, when a big-horned buck came for water there. She walked out on the big porch surrounding the house, and with one shaky shot, felled the animal. "When Pa came home, he and the boys simply raised it up on a nearby tree and skinned it out", she said. She was very proud of being able to bring home a supply of meat, although they raised cattle and pigs. I remember of her practicing another early learning or two. These memories I cherish, as living in a modern city, there was not too much opportunity for these activities. My brother-in-law, Gordon Romney, brought home a wild hog from a hunting trip. Mama could waste nothing, so she made the most delicious "head cheese" from the head meat.

She saved all grease to make soap; two grades of soap: one from the finest white grease and a more heavy-duty type from the darker grease. She was convinced that soap as good as hers could not be purchased. She loved to put out a blue-white wash. Every white item was boiled in lye water before being placed in the washing machine and hung on the line to dry. Although she had help for cleaning and some ironing, no one could "put out a good wash". Neither could she consent for the choice ironing to be done by anyone else. She taught me to iron beautifully even before I attended school. It seems my reading and early

painting and drawing was done as I played under the ironing board. As the youngest child, I was home alone with her a great deal. Also, she kept me home from school a year longer, for she could not stand to be without a child in the house, having helped so much in raising her mother's family also.

Her father wanted "everything" for her. At age 13, he took her to the one lady in town who knew Morse code and had her taught the code in order to be relief girl when she was needed. He supplied her with many books, which she studied earnestly until she became an extremely well-versed lady. When she went to Mexico, what was found in her trunk? Not lots of fancy clothing-- *and a good corset!* but books! An entire set of Unabridged Encyclopedia Britannica and a set of Ridpath's History of the World. There were many books of poetry (she loved poetry). Her favorite book was "Beautiful Gems" from which she recited lengthy poems to her dying day. She knew and quoted the scriptures well.

When in Salt Lake City, her father shopped with her and dressed her well. There is a picture of her taken there, at age 13, in a beautiful be-buttoned tailored suit. He was so proud of her. He took her to the old theatre built *(opera house)* by Brigham Young, where, in a box seat, they viewed many of the early traveling artists, such as Shuman, Heink and Pavlova.

He had a friend, Will Neal, from a prominent Salt Lake family, who could always obtain good seats. They stayed in his home while there. She loved to tell the stories of the great people she had heard and had seen on that fine stage.

They also went to the temple dedications in the same manner. She had a lovely white handkerchief with which she had waved "Hallelujah" at 5 temple dedications, the last being the Arizona Temple.

James sent her to the Brigham Young Academy when it was only one building. Here, she met and became friendly with many people who later became

in 1934, I had an Education professor whom she knew well, a Professor Boyle. I was endowed in the Manti Temple in 1935, when Brother and Sister Young were Temple President and wife, her friends. The above were getting older at the time. She attended the Academy only long enough to be able to become a teacher. Her use of the English language was impeccable. Her knowledge of words, the spelling of, and their meaning was unsurpassed. She taught 4 years in Utah, at Richfield and Spanish Fork, before having to go to Mexico.

Before she attended B.Y. Academy, her father saw to it that she attended a school for ladies for a season. I wish I could recall the name of it. There, she met many of the "finest" or "best" folks in Salt Lake. These women were in touch with her for many years. She had three outstandingly beautiful and refined friends, two of whom were later wives of President John Taylor. My mother could never condone polygamy. Her father was not a polygamist. When she went to Mexico and met these fine ladies, there, of necessity, because of the Manifesto, her first words to them were "What have you done?" Polygamy had, by then, been without the law.

While at this school, she was introduced to and learned many of the "niceties", of ladies' ^{manners} actions and activities. This word was forever used as her referral to the "better" behavior and manners of the day. This was a great privilege for her, as this was still pioneer times in southern Utah. She carried with her and taught these principles in school and church all of her life. She was always considered somewhat of an authority on her "niceties" of life. She was looked up to by the people of the "colonies", whom she so often had visiting in our home as they would travel back and forth from Mexico to Utah.

Mama had not wanted to go to Mexico at all, but when her father died of Typhus Fever, after being there only 4 months, and her mother died six months later of Mexican dysentery, it became necessary for her to go down there, as the youngest child was only twelve years old.

Her father had acquired his fatal illness while awaiting admission and transportation at the border in Juarez, Mexico, for him and his two carloads of Morgan horses. He had to stay in the corral with his beloved horses, and was bitten with an infected flea, became immediately ill to the point that he could not pursue his journey. His sons came to him, taking him on into the colonies. Due to severe delirium, having no doctor near, no one knew what his illness was. They subsequently took him back to Utah where he died at the home of my mother's best friend, Mrs. Brown. Mama lived in Spanish Fork but he had been taken to Provo for diagnosis and treatment.

After Jame's death, her beloved sister Caroline, who had stayed with her in Utah, returned to Mexico with her brothers. When it became necessary for her to go to Mexico, Lizzie had no plans to stay. However, in the nine months that they had been there, the horses had somehow become depleted and she had no means to enable her to return the children to Utah.

In desperation, as she was walking down the street, Brother Anthony W. Ivins, who had been sent to Colonial Juarez, to manage the church's affairs there, came up to her, saying: "Miss Butler, You are an answer to my prayer. School starts next week, and we need a teacher".