

# James Page and Louisa Graves



A Family History

by Shelley Dawson Davies

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# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1

<b>BIRMINGHAM BACKGROUND</b> .....	4
James and Louisa .....	4
Working on the Railroad .....	6
Woman's Work .....	8
No Idle Hands .....	9

## CHAPTER 2

<b>ZION</b> .....	12
Immigration.....	12
Across the Sea.....	13
Onward to Zion .....	16
In the Valley.....	17
Life and Death.....	18

## CHAPTER 3

<b>FALLING AWAY</b> .....	22
Remarriage .....	22
Sealing the Family.....	24
Returning to Utah.....	25
Passing Away .....	26

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	30
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<b>INDEX</b> .....	33
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dwelling was through a narrow tunnel from the street, where individual residences were accessed from a shared courtyard. Also shared was an uneven heat from central chimneys and a limited number of cesspits located in the courtyard.

The Birmingham back-to-backs were one room deep and three stories tall. Martha Page<sup>4</sup> and her daughters prepared meals on the first floor where a sink, fireplace and small wooden table served as a kitchen. The two cramped upper rooms, reached by steep, narrow stairs, held a single bed, wash stand and tin trunk for keeping the few items of clothing the family could afford. There was so little space in the dark, smelly dwelling that young James often sought relief and company in the streets or local pubs where he could banter about local affairs over a pint of cheap beer.

The Page family was probably acquainted with brass worker John Glaves,<sup>5</sup> his wife Mary<sup>6</sup> and their seven children, who lived only a few blocks down Windsor Street. James gradually became particularly interested in pretty Louisa,<sup>7</sup> a Birmingham native five years his junior. It wasn't long before banns were announced by the local curate, who married the pair at the church of St. Peter and St. Paul in mid-October, 1837.<sup>8</sup> At the age of seventeen, Louisa was a bit young to become a wife, but she was skilled at homemaking and anxious to begin a new life.



*Robert and Louisa Page*



*The Birmingham Railroad in 1840.*

## Working on the Railroad

With the opening of rail lines in the early 1830s, Birmingham became a central hub Britain's rail system. With Vauxhall, the first rail station in Birmingham, within walking distance of the Page's residence on Windsor Street, it was easy for James to find work as a plate layer<sup>9</sup> for the London and Birmingham Railway. James was one of thousands of strong young men who worked fastening metal pads between wooden ties and the rails themselves, following the tracks as they expanded through the country. In 1840, he was most likely working on the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway, a line eventually running through King's Norton, King's Heath, Balsall Heath, Bordesley and Duddeston and Nechells, all locations where the family lived over the years. Several of the roads listed as their residences roughly followed the railway line, including Sandy Lane, Watery Lane and Lawley Street. It seems that James moved his family along the rail line as the work progressed.<sup>10</sup>

James developed partial deafness from constant exposure to the loud pounding of metal-against-metal,<sup>11</sup> which led to his eventual transfer from physical labor to various managerial positions. He was listed as a railway time keeper while in his early forties,<sup>12</sup> logging in by hand the hours men spent on the job and forwarding the records to the payroll department. Later, James was employed as a railway inspector, receiving timber as it was unloaded from ships and transferred to rail cars.<sup>13</sup>



*Above: Back-to-back housing along Birmingham's Windsor Street. Below: The rear court showing the common area shared by building residents.*



*Louisa was employed making intricate watch chains like this one.*

## Women's Work

Louisa contributed toward the household accounts, as well. She worked as a watch guard and chain maker in one of Birmingham's small jewelry shops, and at one point kept a small grocery store,<sup>14</sup> but her main occupation was giving birth and caring for her children.

James and Louisa wasted no time in beginning their family. Their first child, William,<sup>15</sup> was born just ten months after their marriage on 5 August, 1838, in their home on Lawley Street in Birmingham.<sup>16</sup> Eleven more children followed, and with each baby arriving less than two years after the previous child, Louisa was either pregnant or caring for an infant for the next twenty years. She was also forced to pack up her family and move from house to house at least five different times during her first ten years of marriage, as James' position with the rail line required. From Lawley Street, the Pages moved to Vauxhall Lane in 1839,<sup>17</sup> then to Kings Norton in Worcestershire, where little Martha<sup>18</sup> was born in June, 1840.<sup>19</sup> Maria<sup>20</sup> followed in March, 1842, at a house on Watery Lane in the Aston parish of Deritend and Bordesley, Warwickshire (an early Birmingham suburb);<sup>21</sup> by the time Thomas<sup>22</sup> was born, two weeks before Christmas, 1843,<sup>23</sup> the family was living in Bordesley on Sandy Lane.<sup>24</sup> The Pages had moved to Garrison Lane, also in Bordesley, by the time Louisa gave birth to a daughter, Louisa,<sup>25</sup> in January, 1847,<sup>26</sup> and it was here where the Pages finally settled for a few years, in yet another crowded back-to-back.<sup>27</sup>

In the meantime, James and Louisa suffered the loss of three of their children: Samuel,<sup>28</sup> born April 8, 1845, died at the age of seven months, followed by eleven-month old Louisa in 1848.<sup>29</sup> Another baby named Louisa,<sup>30</sup> died when she was only five months old, in July of 1849. Five more children were added to the family over the next eight years, all of them boys: Hyrum,<sup>31</sup> (1850), Alma,<sup>32</sup> (1852), Cyrus,<sup>33</sup> (1854), Orson<sup>34</sup> (1856) and Lorenzo,<sup>35</sup> (1858).

## No Idle Hands

Children often meant poverty for their parents in Victorian England, but due to Birmingham's booming job market, this was not the case for local families with a desire to better their situations. There were various employments available for children, who were often sent out to supplement the family income as early as five or six years of age.

James was a firm believer in putting his children to work. William earned money as an errand boy when he was twelve years old,<sup>36</sup> and later worked in a gun factory.<sup>37</sup> At the age of ten, Martha polished pans and kettles in a tin factory for a year.<sup>38</sup> Martha, Maria and one of their younger brothers were employed in a nearby factory where they carded hooks and eyes, a three step process in which the eyes were first fastened to the card before linking the hooks, then stitching the hooks down by hand. It was a tedious and tiresome job requiring the children to sit on high stools to reach the table. If they failed to produce their daily allotment, they were sent to bed without their supper. This was a serious punishment, as the children often worked twelve-hour days, and sometimes more.<sup>39</sup> Working conditions for children were appalling. Crowded, unventilated workrooms and filthy privies were common. Often the children were supervised by women overseers who struck them with canes during their twelve- to fourteen-hour workday. Wages were low, especially for those who carded hooks and eyes, generally acknowledged as "one of the worst paid sweated trades."<sup>40</sup>

Martha was later "sent out for service" as she grew older, which meant being on call in a well-to-do home where most of her work consisted of child care and household chores. Martha continued working in other people's homes except when she was needed at home for the birth of a brother or sister. She then cared for her mother as well as her brothers and sisters while Louisa recovered her strength.<sup>41</sup>

With the combined income of James, Louisa and the older children, the Page family probably fared better than many of their neighbors, but their industry left little time for schooling. Most of the Page children received little or no education as children, with the possible exception of Thomas, who was literate enough to keep a journal. Martha had enough schooling to read a little, but both William and James Jr. were unable to read or write until they were taught as adults by their wives.<sup>42</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Page (1783-1843), #L89C-M4T, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) where verification of all vital dates can be found. Also see family group sheets at [www.DaviesDawsonHistory.weebly.com](http://www.DaviesDawsonHistory.weebly.com)

<sup>2</sup> James Page (1815-1892), #K2H3-Z9Z, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>3</sup> Page-Glaves marriage, 16 October, 1837, Parish Church of Aston, Warwick, England. Certified copy given 9 July, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> Martha (Lain) Howes Page (1784-1830), #L62T-MVC, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>5</sup> John Glaves (1794-1841), #LC3D-N6S, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) Occupation from Page-Glaves marriage, 16 October, 1837, Parish Church of Aston, Warwick, England.

<sup>6</sup> Mary (Allen) Glaves (1794-1831), #LCRQ-VYY, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>7</sup> Louisa (Graves or Glaves) Page (1820-1864), #KWJX-56J, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>8</sup> Page-Glaves marriage, 16 October, 1837, Parish Church of Aston, Warwick, England.

<sup>9</sup> William Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #249256, County of Warwick, Birmingham, given 4 June, 1980, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.

<sup>10</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family" (typescript, 1981), page 8. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

<sup>11</sup> James Page, 1851 England census, Bordesley, Warwickshire, Aston, St. Andrew, Class: HO107; Piece: 2060; Folio: 683; Page: 9; GSU roll: 87315-87316.

<sup>12</sup> Orson Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/10/65, County of Warwick, Deritend, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.

<sup>13</sup> "History of Louisa Graves Page" (undated manuscript, written by an unidentified grandchild). Original held by Shelley Dawson Davies.

<sup>14</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 9.

<sup>15</sup> William Page (1838-1863), #KWNV-F66, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>16</sup> William Page, certified copy of entry of birth, 249256 (1838), County of Warwick, Birmingham, England.

<sup>17</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 2.

<sup>18</sup> Martha (Page) Waddoups (1849-1912), #KWJ8-DBC, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>19</sup> Martha Page, certified copy of entry of birth #119155/65/F/2, County of Worcestershire, Kings Norton, given 28 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.

<sup>20</sup> Maria (Page) Tingey (1819-1896), #KWJ8-DBC, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

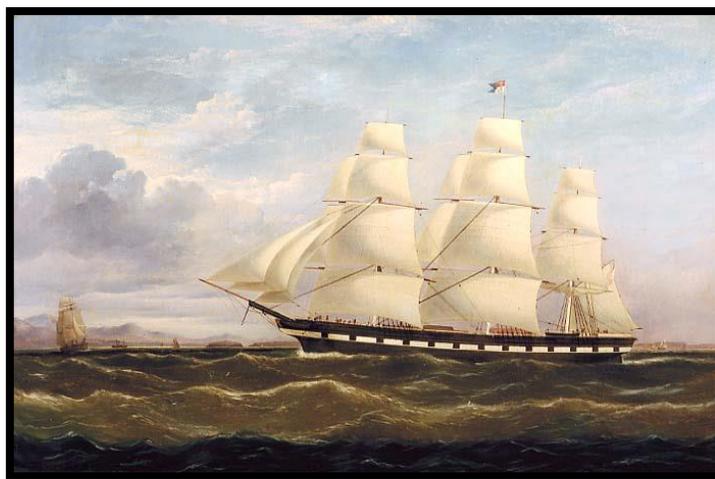
- 
- <sup>21</sup> Maria Page, Baptisms solemnized in the parish of St. Martin in Birmingham, Warwickshire, page 512, entry 3. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>22</sup> Thomas John Page (1843-1912), #KWNK-R84, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>23</sup> Thomas Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/F/4/65, County of Warwick, Deritend Bordesley, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>24</sup> Thomas Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/F/4/65, County of Warwick, Deritend Bordesley, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>25</sup> Louisa Page (1847-1848), #L8SK-JKQ, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>26</sup> Louisa Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/6, County of Warwick, Deritend Bordesley given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>27</sup> The Pages moved one more time sometime before 1860, when the British Mission emigration record listed them living at 58 Albion Street, Birmingham. Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 4.
- <sup>28</sup> Samuel Page (1845-1847), #LZV2-HFV, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>29</sup> Louisa Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/6, County of Warwick, Deritend Bordesley given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>30</sup> Louisa Page (1849-1849), #L8SP-XCZ, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>31</sup> Hyrum Page (1850-1910), #KWNV-3JM, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>32</sup> Alma Page (1852-1912). See Alma Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/8, County of Warwick, Deritend, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>32</sup> Cyrus Page (1854-1929), #KWN2-1BH, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>33</sup> Cyrus Page (1854-1929). See Cyrus Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/9, County of Warwick, Deritend, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>33</sup> Orson Page 91856-1934), #KWJF-SZD, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>34</sup> Orson Page 91856-1934). See Orson Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/10/65, County of Warwick, Deritend, given 29 October, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>35</sup> Lorenzo Page (1858-1919), #LZVT-D1M, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) Lorenzo's birth certificate incorrectly identifies him as a female named Lorenza. See Lorenza Page, certified copy of entry of birth, #119155/65/F/12, County of Warwick, Deritend, given 5 November, 1965, at the General Register Office, Somerset House, London, England.
- <sup>36</sup> James Page, 1851 England census, Bordesley, Warwickshire, Aston, St. Andrew, Class: HO107; Piece: 2060; Folio: 683; Page: 9; GSU roll: 87315-87316.
- <sup>37</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 11.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family" (typescript, 1981), page 10. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 11.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter 2

# Zion

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## Immigration



*The William Tapscott was one of several ships which regularly transported Mormon immigrants across the Atlantic.*

**M**issionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been preaching in England for nine years by the time James heard their message at a Birmingham street meeting in 1848. He and Louisa were baptized on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June that year, followed by their children, one after the other, beginning with eight-year old Martha a few weeks later.<sup>43</sup>

The Page family stood out among the growing congregation of over 1,500 members. They were committed to the gospel and proved it by their good works. James was ordained as a “travelling Elder,” who “went among the sick, blessing them under the power of God.”<sup>44</sup> He also “blessed, baptized and confirmed many individuals.”<sup>45</sup> Louisa’s door was always open to members and missionaries alike. She was known as a generous woman who “always had a shilling on her hip and a good bed and meal for the Elders,” according to one of the missionaries who benefited from her hospitality.<sup>46</sup>

As much as James and Louisa worked to support the church in Birmingham, they were among the majority of members committed to Brigham Young's request to build up the kingdom of God in Salt Lake City. Passage across the Atlantic would cost a small fortune for the Page's family of ten, but giving up family and friends in England would be their greatest sacrifice. Still, they all looked forward to the day when they could join the Saints in Zion.

The first member of the family to immigrate was William. Although the Pages had planned to travel together, James and Louisa sent seventeen-year old William on ahead in the spring of 1856, when the possibility of his being conscripted into the military was becoming greater every day. In the meantime, the Pages continued to save and plan for the day when the rest of the family could board a ship for America.

There was talk of little else among British congregations at the time, as "gathering in Zion was a subject very dear to the Saints in the Old World," recalled one of Louisa's grandchildren. "One day when Sister Howard, Sister Clark and Grandmother were together they were discussing going to Zion. One of them laughingly suggested that the one who reached Zion first should put the kettle on to greet the others." Unfortunately, by the time Louisa was ready to depart, she was left alone with the kettle, as Sister Howard died in England and Sister Clark died on the trail west.<sup>47</sup>

## Across the Sea

Faith and commitment were required of every Saint who traded their homeland for the hard journey west, but Louisa, who was nine months pregnant when she boarded the *William Tapscott*<sup>48</sup> in May, 1860, demonstrated more dedication than most. She knew she would give birth on the open sea, but she had been looking forward to this departure for twelve years, and nothing would stop her now. James made his wife as comfortable as possible in their steerage accommodations,<sup>49</sup> and after three days on the rolling, rocking ship, Louisa gave birth to her thirteenth child, Louisa,<sup>50</sup> during a "somewhat stormy and foggy" night.<sup>51</sup>

Mother and child received limited assistance during their ordeal. Almost everyone around them was suffering from sea sickness as the ship passed through stormy waters, with "tin pans, bottles, boxes, etc., rattling and flying in all directions," recalled fellow passenger Francis Astle. "We not only see luggage and cooking utensils flying about, but we see breakfast and dinner doing the same thing; and the people

falling and tumbling in all directions.”<sup>52</sup> Martha and Maria, by then twenty and eighteen years old, did what they could to keep their mother comfortable while James and seventeen-year old Thomas made trips to the cook’s galley when they were able to tend to the younger children.

Eventually the seas smoothed and the voyage took on a clam routine occasionally broken by porpoise sightings and sailors’ songs. “We were diverted by watching the sailors and hearing them sing, ‘Haul, haul away. Haul away Jo,’ and then upon reaching the word ‘Jo’ all pulling together with many other sailor rhymes,” said immigrant George Isom.<sup>53</sup>

The image shows a handwritten passenger list for the ship "New York" from New York, dated 1850. The list is organized into columns for Name, Age, Sex, Profession, and other details. The James Page family is listed at the bottom of the page, including James Page, Maria, and Thomas.

Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Other
James Page	40	Male	Seaman	
Maria	18	Female		
Thomas	17	Male		

**Members of the James Page family appear at the bottom of page 168 of the William Tapscott passenger list**

While there was an outbreak of smallpox among some of the Scandinavian Saints, causing the entire ship's population to be vaccinated upon arrival in New York City, the five-week passage ended as did other voyages, with immigrants crowding into Manhattan's Castle Garden for inspection and baggage retrieval. Church representatives helped their fellow members make arrangements for the last leg of their journey, or find temporary lodging employment in New York if they were financially unable to continue.

The Page family were among those Saints forced to earn the remainder of their passage to Utah. They spent the winter of 1860-61 in Brooklyn's Williamsburg section,<sup>54</sup> where Martha worked as a housekeeper for a wealthy family and James contracted to work on a suspension bridge. Due to his skill level and position on the project, he was able to give jobs to other Mormons needing extra cash.<sup>55</sup>



*New York harbor from the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn in 1860.*

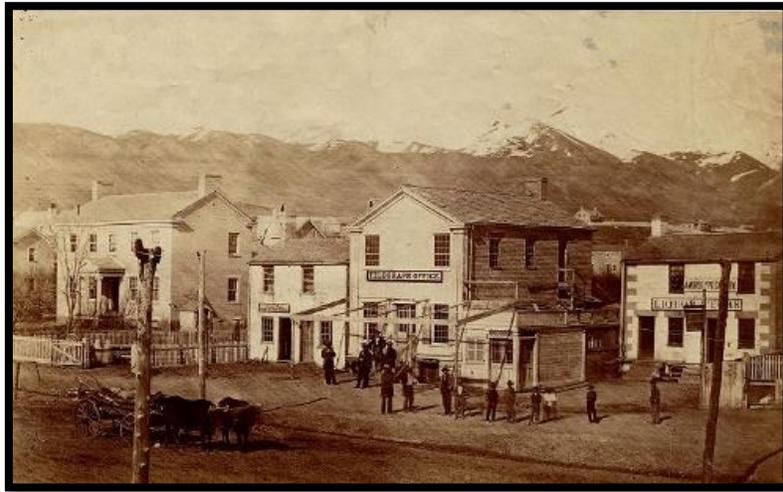
## Onward to Zion

By the spring of 1861, the family<sup>56</sup> had earned enough money to join a church-sponsored wagon train. They made arrangements to head west to Winter Quarters, Nebraska, where they planned on meeting their oldest son, William, who had signed on as a driver for Captain Joseph Horne's company that season.<sup>57</sup> After a joyful reunion, the entire Page clan loaded up what few belongings they had and began their thousand mile walk across the plains on the first of July. By this time, the daily morning nausea signaled Louisa that she was pregnant with her fourteenth child.

There were sixty-two wagons in the Horne Company, but little room for passengers. Only the sick were allowed to ride, but even when Martha came down with chills and fever along the way, James refused to find his daughter a place in the wagon, insisting she continue on foot until she became completely exhausted. Martha recalled one kind wagon driver who not only gave her a ride from time to time, but who also provided a bit of tea to help in her recovery. Maria either did not own shoes or was saving her only pair, as she reportedly walked the entire distance barefooted. Every evening she sat near the campfire, pulling stickers and thorns from her swollen feet.<sup>58</sup>

Although Thomas later described the trip as "tedious,"<sup>59</sup> his fellow pioneers were intrigued with the vast new landscape stretching out before them, and found camping under the "starry heavens above" an interesting novelty. They were thrilled to encounter a band of Sioux Indians dressed in war paint and feathers,<sup>60</sup> and alternately frightened by rattlesnakes and terrific Midwestern thunderstorms which ripped apart their camp. Company members were also witness to the advance of technology as they passed by telegraph construction crews setting up wires along trail.<sup>61</sup>

Before they neared Emigration Canyon in September, the Horne Company was overtaken by an early snowstorm, forcing the pioneers to shove snow before arranging their bedrolls on the ground. "With the cold nights, and the howling of packs of wolves or coyotes, it was difficult for us to get the rest we needed," recalled Eliza England.<sup>62</sup> The company finally rolled into Salt Lake City on 13 September, with everyone happy to be in their new home at last.



*Salt Lake City's Main Street at it appeared in 1860.*

## In the Valley

Housing could be difficult to come by in the late fall when numerous wagon trains spilled thousands of immigrants into the valley. James thought himself fortunate to have found an Indian lodge for his family's temporary shelter before moving them into a log cabin on William Muir's Bountiful farm.<sup>63</sup> It was quite a change from the comfortable lifestyle they had known in Birmingham.

Louisa, an attractive woman with dark brown eyes and jet black hair, was a "happy, social sort and had many dear friends." She wasted no time in seeking out acquaintances in her new home. The day after the Pages arrived in Bountiful, Louisa, with Martha and Maria in tow, called on her dear friend Jane Finch Argyle, who had accompanied William part way across the plains in 1856. Mrs. Ann Ashby, a neighbor and future mother-in-law of Alma and Cyrus, said she would never forget seeing Louisa and her daughters as they passed her home on their way to the Argyles. She remembered them as "very proud English ladies" with the largest hoop skirts she had ever seen.<sup>64</sup>

Once the housing problem had been solved, every able-bodied member of the family pitched in to make ends meet. William and Thomas were hired by William Muir to help harvest crops that fall and clear land "infested with large black willows" for spring sowing.<sup>65</sup> Louisa relied on Martha and Maria to help run the household as she prepared for the birth of James Junior,<sup>66</sup> who arrived

on 12 February, 1862. Louisa's health was never the same afterwards, but she tried to keep up with her six children under the age of twelve.<sup>67</sup> Maria married in June, 1862, followed by William in 1863, leaving Martha in charge at home as her mother's health continued to fail.

Adding to the strain on Louisa was James' decision to try farming fifty miles farther north at Three Mile Creek,<sup>68</sup> not long after William's marriage. The settlement was little more than a collection of log cabins and farmer's fields strung along a small rivulet of snow melt. A lack of sufficient irrigation water and occasional Indian unrest had kept the village small, and after a meager harvest that year, the Page family returned to Bountiful, walking the entire distance.<sup>69</sup>

## Life and Death

Bearing so many children coupled with the rough pioneer life took its toll on Louisa. She was no longer able to keep house upon her return to Bountiful, and accepted William and Mary Ann's<sup>70</sup> invitation to share their one-room home so Mary Ann could help care for her. Louisa was only forty-four years old when she became bedridden. When she realized she would never recover, Louisa's thoughts were of her children, asking Martha to promise she would always take care of her little brother James, who was only two years of age.

Louisa died on the night of 22 March, 1864. A few hours later that night in the same room, Mary Ann gave birth to her first child, a girl who was named Louisa Clark Page<sup>71</sup> in honor of her grandmother. Louisa was buried in the Bountiful City Cemetery<sup>72</sup> under a beautifully carved stone that reads:

*Louisa Page  
Wife of  
James Page  
Born  
Dec 28, 1820  
in Burningham, England  
Died March 23, 1864*

*Kind angels watch her sleeping dust,  
Till Jesus Comes to raise the just:  
Then may she wake with Sweet Surprise,  
And in her Savior's Image Rise.*

James had always been a temperamental, inflexible man, but he became even more difficult to live with after his wife's death. Martha continued to keep house for her father and seven brothers until she could no longer stand her father's crossness. One Sunday morning, she dressed herself and little James and walked to church as usual. At the close of the service she went to her brother William's home, refusing to ever live with her father again. Martha supported herself and little James by working as a housemaid for William S. Muir until she married in November of 1864. Martha kept her promise continued to care for James Jr. until he was ready to leave home.<sup>73</sup>



*Louisa's grave in the Bountiful City Cemetery.*

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>43</sup> William was baptized at the age of twelve (29 Mar 1850), eleven-year old Maria in 1851, and Thomas, also at eleven, in 1854. Birmingham Branch Records 1847-1910 (GS 086,981). Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>44</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript. Mrs. Nelson was a granddaughter of James Page. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>45</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," typescript, 1981, page 12. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>46</sup> Elder William Muir of Bountiful, as quoted in "History of Louisa Graves Page" undated manuscript, written by an unidentified grandchild. Original held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>47</sup> "History of Louisa Graves Page" undated manuscript, written by an unidentified grandchild.
- <sup>48</sup> Passenger list, William Tapscott, Liverpool to New York, 11 May 1860-16 June, 1860, [http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM\\_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page](http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page)
- <sup>49</sup> According to family tradition, because the captain's wife "took Louisa into her own cabin and cared for her," the infant was named Hannah Bell Page, after the good woman. However, according to National Archives passenger list, film #175,557, the infant's name was Louisa Page. See Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 15.
- <sup>50</sup> Louisa Page (1860-1860), #LZVT-D1M, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>51</sup> The infant's birth was recorded as 14 May, 1860, by fellow passenger Niels Christensen. "Diary of Niels Christian Christensen," [http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM\\_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page](http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page).
- <sup>52</sup> "Diary of Francis Astle," [http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM\\_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page](http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page)
- <sup>53</sup> "Memories of George Isom," [http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM\\_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page](http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu/Search/showDetails/db:MM_MII/t:voyage/id:434/keywords:james+page)
- <sup>54</sup> Thomas John Page, "History of Thomas John Page and His Father, James Page" (undated typescript). Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>55</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 18.
- <sup>56</sup> Louisa, the infant born aboard ship, had died by this time. Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 15.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, page 18.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, page 19.
- <sup>59</sup> Thomas John Page, "History of Thomas John Page and His Father, James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>60</sup> Eliza Seamons England, "Pioneer Sketch" (Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City, Utah), <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&companyId=158&sourceId=21188>
- <sup>61</sup> Thomas Cott Griggs, "Journals, 1861-1903," <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&companyId=158&sourceId=5369>
- <sup>62</sup> Eliza Seamons England, "Pioneer Sketch" (Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake City, Utah), <http://history.lds.org/overlandtravels/trailExcerptMulti?lang=eng&companyId=158&sourceId=21188>

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- <sup>63</sup> Thomas John Page, "History of Thomas John Page and His Father, James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>64</sup> "History of Louisa Graves Page" undated manuscript, written by an unidentified grandchild.
- <sup>65</sup> Thomas John Page, "History of Thomas John Page and His Father, James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>66</sup> James Page (1862-1921), #KWCB-R9R, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>67</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>68</sup> Now Perry, five miles south of Brigham City.
- <sup>69</sup> George A Page, "The Life Story of William Page," undated typescript. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>70</sup> Mary Ann (Clark) Page (1841-1925), #KWNV-F6X, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>71</sup> Louisa Clark (Page) Bartlett (1864-1921), KWVS-RR1, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>72</sup> Lot B-8-31-5.
- <sup>73</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 19-20.

## Chapter 3

# Falling Away

## Remarriage

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*James Page and his second wife Louise Bridges.*

**W**ith Martha's departure, James was left with a household of boys to support, ranging in age from twenty to six years old. He managed on his own for a year and half before marrying Louise Bridges,<sup>74</sup> a fifty-year old English convert from Gloucester, in September, 1865.<sup>75</sup> James continued to work his farm, raising crops which included carrots sold as mule feed for Army troops stationed in Salt Lake's Fort Douglas.<sup>76</sup>

Exactly what happened to James' faith during the next few years has been lost, but his growing dissatisfaction may have been triggered by contact with missionaries from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a splinter group claiming to be "untainted by the mistakes found in Utah,"<sup>77</sup> specifically the practice of plural

marriage. Whatever it was that led James to abandon the church, his family, farm and eventually his adopted country, he stood by his decision with characteristic stubbornness.<sup>78</sup> In April, 1865, he and his second wife packed up the two younger boys, nine-year old Orson and seven-year old Lorenzo, and severed their ties with Utah. They accompanied Thomas, who had been called by the church to drive supplies to Wyoming, Nebraska, as far as the Missouri River.<sup>79</sup> James and Louisa continued on to Ottumwa, Iowa, where they booked passage back to England in October.<sup>80</sup>

James seemed determined to return to his previous life, moving into Kings Norton, one of Birmingham's suburbs.<sup>81</sup> He worked for a short time in a factory making guns, sewing machines and gas fixtures,<sup>82</sup> but soon went back to his old job as a plate layer with the Midland Railroad Company.<sup>83</sup> Louise found employment as a "tailoress," and James wasted no time in putting the boys out to work.<sup>84</sup>

James and Louise formalized their break with the LDS church three years later when they were baptized into the Reorganized church.<sup>85</sup> They spent the next sixteen years as active members of the RLDS branch in Birmingham. The boys, however, remained loyal to their Utah connections, returning as soon as they were able, Orson leaving England in October, 1879, followed by Lorenzo three years later.<sup>86</sup>



*James and Louise returned to the Kings Norton area of Birmingham.*



*The Page Boys. Standing (left to right): Lorenzo, James Jr., Cyrus, Orson. Seated: Alma, Hyrum, Thomas, William.*

## Sealing the Family

*There was some bitterness toward James among the Page children, thanks to the treatment they received as children. One of James' granddaughters, Alvira Rawlins Larson, was told how James "gave one, maybe two boys away to a family. He didn't want to be bothered with him. This boy, either Lorenzo or Orson, was so hurt by his father that he would never call him father. The son would explain, 'I'm not his son; he gave me away. I don't claim him as my father.' He would visit his brothers and sisters, but he didn't want to see his father." (See Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 21)*

*Lorenzo was baptized into the LDS church the summer after his return to Utah in 1883, and joined the other Page children in being sealed to their parents during a 1905 temple ceremony. Absent from the sealing were Orson, who was not baptized until shortly before his death in 1932, and Hyrum, who was sealed after his death by descendants.*



*Salt Lake City was a humming metropolis when James returned in 1884.*

## Return to Utah

As cantankerous as James could be, he had no trouble finding a younger wife when Louise died unexpectedly in 1882.<sup>87</sup> James and forty-one year old Sarah Hughes<sup>88</sup> were married only two months after his second wife's death. Sarah joined the Reorganized congregation later that year,<sup>89</sup> where sermons stressed the importance of helping family and friends see the error of their spiritual ways. Religious fervor, coupled with a desire to be near his now distant family, motivated James to once again cross both ocean and plains in 1884.<sup>90</sup>

Much had changed in the twenty years since James had last made the journey. Now, instead a five week sailing ship voyage across the ocean, modern steam ships covered the same distance in eleven days. Traveling from New York to Salt Lake City by rail took only four days. James and Sarah arrived in Utah to find a bustling, modern city with rows of stone buildings crowded along Main Street.

The Pages initially lived west of Salt Lake City's train depot<sup>91</sup> where James likely worked on the rails, but before long, James decided to try his hand at farming once again. He purchased a ten and a half acre farm in South Bountiful in the spring of 1885<sup>92</sup> and moved his very English wife into the countryside. Sarah, who according to at least one Bountiful resident, "wasn't a very agreeable person,"<sup>93</sup> never did like Utah and found it particularly difficult to get along with James' family. Three years of listening to Sarah's complaints finally drove James to once again abandon his family and farm.



*Farmer's fields near Lamoni, Iowa.*

## Passing Away

At the age of seventy-three, James was not looking forward to starting over yet again, but he sold his property in May, 1888, and packed for the trip back east.<sup>94</sup> Having been outsiders in Mormon dominated Bountiful, James and Sarah decided to find religious support in the new RLDS community of Lamoni, Iowa, where their fellow members were gathering for spiritual strength. The Pages bought a modest home and four acres of land near Lamoni<sup>95</sup> where they tended a garden, orchard, a few chickens and a cow.<sup>96</sup>

Sarah may have been happier living in the Midwest, but James found it difficult to be so far from his children and grandchildren. He eventually wrote to Orson,<sup>97</sup> hoping a visit from his unmarried son would help fill the void. Hyrum, now married and the father of six, decided to accompany Orson to Lamoni, but the brothers did not receive the warm welcome they anticipated. As irritable as James had always been, his temperament seems to have worsened with age. James was furious to discover Hyrum had left his family and chastised him for not remaining in Utah to take care of his wife and children. James eventually softened his feelings and gave in to the pangs of homesickness. He began making plans to return with his two sons to Utah when the time came, but Sarah was so opposed to the idea that James reluctantly remained in Lamoni when Orson and Hyrum departed after a two-month visit.<sup>98</sup>

James' health was failing, and he knew it was only a matter of time before the liver complaint<sup>99</sup> he suffered from would overcome him. Under pressure from Sarah, who felt threatened by her husband's posterity, James sold his Lamoni property to his wife in June, 1891.<sup>100</sup> James died six months later on 6 January 1892, at the age of seventy six.<sup>101</sup> Sarah arranged for a funeral service in Lamoni's brick church, with a sermon given by R. M. Elvin. "He was ever faithful, and willing to give a reason for the hope he had in the gospel," reported his obituary in *The Saint's Herald*.<sup>102</sup> His body was laid to rest in the Rosehill Cemetery.<sup>103</sup>

Sarah remarried later the same year,<sup>104</sup> accepting the proposal of Irish immigrant Michael O'Connell,<sup>105</sup> whose farm was nearby in Fayette. She found shelter and comfort for herself and granddaughter Ellen Hughes,<sup>106</sup> with her new husband until her own death nine years later. She was buried next to James in Lamoni's Rosehill Cemetery.<sup>107</sup>



*James' grave in Lamoni, Iowa.*

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>74</sup> Louise (Bridges) Page (1815-1882), #LZKD-QH2, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>75</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saints Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48. James himself recorded most of the facts contained in his obituary.
- <sup>76</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript). Mrs. Nelson was a granddaughter of James Page. Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>77</sup> Paul M. Edwards, *Our Legacy of Faith: A Brief History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Independence, Missouri, Herald Publishing, 1991), page 136.
- <sup>78</sup> "The descendants of James have handed down from generation to generation the advice, 'Never let what anyone says or does destroy your faith in the Church.' James did this and as a result left the Church." Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family" (typescript, 1981), page 23.
- <sup>79</sup> Thomas John Page, "History of Thomas John Page and His Father, James Page" (undated typescript). Copy held by Shelley Dawson Davies.
- <sup>80</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saints Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48.
- <sup>81</sup> James Page household, 1871 England census, Kings Norton, Worcestershire, Class: RG10; Piece: 3080; Folio: 134; Page: 45; GSU roll: 838892.
- <sup>82</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>83</sup> James Page household, 1871 England census, Kings Norton, Worcestershire.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>85</sup> Susan Easton Black, compiler, *Early Members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, volume IV L-P* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1993), page 704-705.
- <sup>86</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith suggests both Orson and Lorenzo were aided in their return to Bountiful by their older brothers and sisters, since their passage was provided by church funds. Since neither one of the young men were members of the LDS church in England and would not have come through regular Mormon emigration channels, had it not been for the influence of the Pages in Bountiful. See Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 21.
- <sup>87</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saints Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48. See also: Harvey B. Black, *Early Members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Provo, Utah, Infobases, 1996), James Page entry. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- <sup>88</sup> Sarah (Hughes) Page (1815-), #LCM9-6MJ, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- <sup>89</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 20, 28.
- <sup>90</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saints Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48.
- <sup>91</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>92</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 22.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>95</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 23.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>97</sup> Mary Page Nelson, "Life Sketch of James Page," undated typescript.
- <sup>98</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 23.
- <sup>99</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saint's Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48.
- <sup>100</sup> Marilyn Austin Smith, "James Page and His Family," page 23.
- <sup>101</sup> "James Page-Louisa Graves family group sheet," supplied in 1979 by Cleo (Hales) Page. This sheet offers list of well researched original documents.
- <sup>102</sup> James Page, obituary, *The Saint's Herald*, 16 January, 1892, page 48.
- <sup>103</sup> Lot 203-2, Rosehill Cemetery, Lamoni, Iowa.

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<sup>104</sup> Michael O'Connell household, 1900 U.S. census, Decatur County, Iowa, population schedule, town of Fayette, enumeration district 44, page 13A. FHL microfilm: 1240428, Roll: 428. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

<sup>105</sup> Michael O'Connell (1832-), #LK66-1HX, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

<sup>106</sup> Ellen Hughes (1883-). Ellen had emigrated from England in 1892 at the age of eight. Michael O'Connell household, 1900 U.S. census, Decatur County, Iowa, population schedule, town of Fayette, enumeration district 44, page 13A. FHL microfilm: 1240428, Roll: 428. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

<sup>107</sup> "Grave Stone Records of Decatur County, Iowa," page 102. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

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# INDEX

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This index lists the names of people related to James Page, Louisa (Graves) Page, Louise (Bridges) Page and Sarah (Hughes) Page. Women are listed under both their maiden names (in parentheses) and married names [in brackets].

## A

### ALLEN

Mary [Glaves], 5.

## B

### BARTLETT

Louisa Clark (Page), 18.

### BRIDGES

Louise [Page], 22-23, 25.

## C

### CLARK

Mary Ann [Page], 18.

## G

### GLAVES/GRAVES

John, 5.

Louisa [Page], 5, 8-10, 12-14, 17-19.

Mary (Allen), 5.

## H

### HOWES

Martha (Lain) [Page], 5.

### HUGHS

Ellen, 27.

Sarah [Page] [O'Connell], 25-27.

## L

### LAIN

Martha [Howes] [Page], 4.

## O

### O'CONNELL

Michael, 27.

Sarah (Hughes) [Page], 25-27.

## P

### PAGE

Alma, 9, 24.

Cyrus, 9, 24.

Hyrum, 9, 24, 26.

James (1815-1892), 4-6, 10, 12-19, 22-23, 25-27.

James (1862-1921), 17, 19, 24.

Lorenzo, 9, 23-24.

Louisa (1847-1848), 8.

Louisa (1849-1849), 9.

Louisa (1860-1860), 13.

Louisa Clark [Bartlett], 18.

Louisa (Graves), 5, 8-10, 12-14, 17-19.

Louise (Bridges), 22-23, 25.

Mary Ann (Clark), 18.

Maria [Tingey], 8-9, 14, 16-18.

Martha (Lain) [Howes], 5.

Martha [Waddoups], 8-10, 12-19, 22.

Orson, 9, 23-24, 26.

Robert, 4.

Samuel, 9.

Sarah (Hughes) [O'Connell], 25-27.

Thomas John, 8, 10, 16-17, 24.

William, 6, 9-10, 13, 17-19, 24.

## **T**

### **TINGEY**

Maria (Page), 8-9, 14, 16-18.

## **W**

### **WADDOUPS**

Martha (Page), 8-10, 12-19, 22.