

# Caroline Elvira Hardy

9 March 1840 – 7 October 1931



Caroline Elvira Hardy was born on March 9, 1840, in St. George, Augusta County, Maine. She was the daughter of Zachariah Hardy and Elvira Philbrook Hardy. Caroline was only a small child of about three when her folks joined with other members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the long trek to Nauvoo, Illinois. They endured many hardships, as did everyone in those perilous times. Caroline Elvira Hardy Dayley

Caroline and her family crossed the plains as members of the Heber C. Kimball Company. She said that she walked all the way and that her feet would get sore and bleed.

Caroline had a hard life and a sad one in many ways. When she was a small child she had a disease of the scalp called salt rheum [eczema] that caused her to lose her hair. To a young girl, this was a great loss. She was always self conscious and would not go out and mingle with the young folks of her age. And because of the loss of her hair, she never went to school. Her mother taught her at home.

She was only a young girl of sixteen when Isabelle McBride Dayley, who was in very bad health, hired Caroline to work for her. Caroline had great affection for Sister Dayley, and she called her "Aunt Isabelle." After Caroline had worked in the Dayley home for a long time, Isabelle realized that she would not get well, and she was worried about her five children being without a mother. This being the days of polygamy, Isabelle Dayley asked her husband to marry Caroline in order to help him raise their children. She knew that Caroline was a good girl and a hard worker and that she was spotlessly clean in her grooming and her work.

Caroline did not love James Dayley, but she had great respect for him. He was a good

man, but he was twenty-nine years older than she. James Dayley talked with Caroline's mother, and she consented to the marriage. Caroline said that her mother advised her to marry James because he was such an honest, upright, prince of a man who would make a good husband. They were married on March 18, 1857.

Isabelle McBride Dayley lived only four years after Caroline and James were married. Caroline was only five years older than Isabel's oldest son, so it made it difficult for both Caroline and the boys to adjust to her new role as their mother.

Caroline helped raise Aunt Isabel's five children, and she had fourteen children of her own, raising eight of them to maturity. Caroline said that one of the saddest times in her life was when she lost two of her children in December of 1868, just one week apart. Then again in the spring of 1881 she lost two more, just four days apart, from diphtheria. At that same time, they did not expect my mother to live. She was only four. Several years later, one of Caroline's daughters, a twin, died and left three children for Caroline to raise.

It was in the year 1879 that James Dayley moved his family from Grantsville, Tooele County, Utah, to Basin, Cassia County, Idaho. The Church sent him to Idaho to settle that part of the country. He and his older sons first came in 1877, but the Indians drove them out.

Caroline said that when she had to leave her home in Grantsville, it almost broke her heart, but they had been asked to go, so they brought what they could with them — all kinds of fruit trees and berries and plenty of shade trees. I well remember the large mulberry trees and the grove of poplar trees and the wind sighing in them. Nestled in bed by Caroline, I could hear the old clock tick-tock and the trees sighing. I thought it was wonderful.

I loved to hear her tell me stories about the Indians and the part they played in her life in Idaho. At one time her brother had gone to town for supplies in Oakley, seven miles from their place. He asked Caroline to keep an eye on their place. It wasn't long before she saw an Indian go into the house, so up the road she went alone, and as she crossed the yard, she picked up a shovel and went on into the house. There was the Indian, practically standing on his head, trying to get flour out of the flour bin. She said, "I spanked him good with the

shovel, and he came out of there and ran as fast as he could, and I was right behind him."

She was never afraid of anyone or anything. She was a hard worker and a true pioneer. She had a one horse black top buggy and a bucskin horse that she used to drive to church and to Oakley to do her shopping, trading butter and eggs for groceries and supplies. Many times I've gone with her to her son's home in Burley, Idaho. It was quite an event when she would allow me to drive old Buck.

I well remember the drying racks, or scaffles [scaffolds], on the sunny side of the house where she dried her fruit, and how happy I was when I could help (that is, if I had given my hands a good scrubbing). Then I was allowed to help cut and spread the fruit, being very careful to get it even. Then it had to be covered with mosquito netting, well anchored down so it wouldn't blow off. That was to keep the flies off.

I remember her old spinning wheel, and in my mind's eye, I can see her working at it, spinning yarn, and carding wool for bats to make quilts. She used to knit wool gloves and also the warmest stockings that went clean above our knees. She did beautiful cross-stitch aprons. But it was rather frightening to watch Caroline pluck geese to make her feather beds and pillows.

Although Caroline suffered many hardships, to me she always seemed happy, and she often laughed. I remember that if I did not mind when spoken to, she would tell me to mind or she would give me some "thimble pie," (*thimble pie: a sharp tap from a finger with a thimble on it*) and believe me, I knew what she meant. So many little things she taught me, I'll never forget. When something needed mending she would say, "Remember, a stitch in time saves nine " She was such a humble person and always had me kneel in prayer with her, night and morning.

It was fun for us children when she housecleaned. My mother always helped her. When they covered the parlor floor with new straw and then covered the straw with the new rag carpet Caroline had woven, we would roll on it. It was so much fun!

She was alone then. Her husband James had died, her married children had moved away, and even the grandchildren she had raised had grown up and moved away. So she sold

the old homestead in 1918 and bought a comfortable home in Oakley near her oldest son. There she was close to church and town.

It was later, when Caroline's health failed her and her children didn't think it was good for her to be alone, that my mother, who was a widow, moved in with Caroline to take care of her. c Dayley passed away on October 7, 1931, in Oakley at the age of ninety years and seven months."

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*This account was written by Mary Edith Fairchild Gavin, a granddaughter of Caroline Elvira Hardy Dayley, who was one of the first settlers of Basin.*