

*Little Gold Pieces*

The Story of My Mormon Mother's Life

by

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## Preface

What set me writing the story of my Mormon mother's life? My mother, who, when a girl, drove an ox-team across the plains, who married at sixteen, who knew poverty and loneliness in a log cabin and cooked on a flat red rock for eight years before she had a stove, who made a layette for her first daughter out of the backs of cast-off shirts of a school-teacher boarder, who gave birth to thirteen children, and who then entered the profession of midwife and brought into a wild and sparsely settled country some seven hundred babies, who travelled in all kinds of weather in all kinds of conveyances, a woman who after sixteen years of married life consented to her husband's taking a second wife in polygamy, who endured the trials of her husband's exile into the Underground and eventual imprisonment, and who emerged from all of this a great woman, still sweet and lovable, even though a bit sad, one who deserves a place in the history of the West which she helped to build.

But this is not the main reason why I have had an "itch, a sting to write, a tang" to set down in simple language my mother's unpretentious but beautiful and courageous life.

In many of the books I had read on the early life in Utah, and particularly in those that dealt with polygamy, I could not find my parents, nor the life they lived. I felt that I must some day write that life with all its hardships, mistakes, and its tragic events, but also with its beauty, sincerity, and religious devotion. I began gathering material over a period of years, but I did little writing. I was held back by fear of my ability to do justice to the subject. Then a severe illness that brought me close to death, roused me to a sense of my duty. I must write our story even though I did it inadequately; there was no one left who would remember it as I do.