

Mary Hancock Butler

**Written by Beulah Spencer from Family Records
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International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers**

Mary Hancock Butler was born Jan. 9, 1872 in Leeds, Washington Co., Utah, the ninth child of Mosiah Lyman Reed Hancock and Margaret McCleve. Her father was the son of Levi Ward Hancock and Clarissa Reed and had come to Utah from Nauvoo when just a young boy. Her mother was the daughter of John McCleve and Nancy Jane McFerrin and had come to Utah from Ireland when she was sixteen years old.

Their home was in Leeds and their home was near the Silver Reef Mines there was a boom when money was plentiful. Her mother took in boarders and roomers, and Mary sold flowers for 50 cents a bunch to the miners. Her father was a carpenter. He had a good orchards and garden, and her parents operated a small store. Mary's first teacher was her oldest sister, Clarissa. The school was held in the upstairs of their home, the teacher being paid by the parents.

The family was getting fairly well fixed in Leeds when they were called to help settle Arizona. They moved to Taylor, Arizona in the fall of 1879, arriving there in January. They had been a long time on the road, and it was a bitter cold winter. Feed was scarce for the animals. The horses got along better than the cattle did. Many of the cattle had to be left along the road. Sometimes her mother would be missing and they would find her gathering a few weesds and something greed for the old cow they could have to leave behind.

Mosiah's youngest brother, Joseph smith Hancock went with them to Arizona. They all though they had plenty of feed with them, but the trip was so long and hard that they ran out of grain and had to feed the horses a few handful of flour. Mosiah had gone on ahead to start getting settled. His brother and his sons had to take care of everything. Mosiah met them near Tuba City. They found an empty one-room house and were glad to find it. They spent several days there before going on to Taylor.

When they arrived at Taylor, they made a dugout to live in. They had a fireplace, but it smoke very bad. They couldn't buy flour, but they could buy corn meal, but it was musty most of the time. Everything had to be hauled by team and wagon from Albuquerque, New Mexico, so food was very high. They went to their neighbors for a start of fie, or if they got theirs going first, the neighbor children would come with their shovels for coals to start their own fire with. They did this because matches were so scarce and expensive. When the river froze over in th winter, the children would go skating, and it would get so cold they would build a fire right on top of the ice. About a year after they arrived in Taylor, her sister Annie was born.

They didn't live in the dugout very long, until Mary's brothers hewed out logs and built them a log house. This house still stands. They had a nice garden and her brothers fished some. They just had one cow left when they arrived in Taylor. They got a few acres of land from Pres. Jesse N. Smith who had the supervision of the land in charge. They later had to pay for the land. The young people's activities swimming, fishing, dancing, skating and other such things.

In the fall of 1888, Mary met Frank butler at a dance in Taylor. When he found out who she was, he told his friend that he was going to marry that Hancock girl. They were married November 5, 1888 in the St. George Temple.. They had left Taylor on Oct 16 and it had taken them 2 weeks to get to St. George.

After their marriage, they lived for a while in the Gila Valley and then back to Taylor, and then back to Hubbard, along the Gila River.

They became the parents of nine children. Two of them John and Addie, died in their early teens of typhoid fever and it was a sad time for them. Frank went on two missions for the church to the Central States. Shortly after his return from his second mission in late 1919, the family gathered for Christmas and the holidays. On Jan 2, 1920, they all were together for a family picture. On Jan 13, 1920, Frank passed away of a heart attack. Four of the children, Will, Margaret, Sadie and Amy, were married, but Mary was left with 3 younger children, Joe, Lester and Lena to finish raising. After the children were all married except Lester, she kept house for him for some time, then visited a great deal with her children. In her later years, after Lester was married and settled, Lester and Joe and Will built her a small home across from the Mesa Temple and she spent the last few years of her life working in the Temple.

Mary passed away October 2, 1943 at Mesa, Arizona, and was buried by the side of her husband, at the Hubbard Cemetery.

She left a large posterity.