

A Short History of Ernest Beech

Ernest, the oldest of a family of five children, was born May 2, 1871 in Leek, Staffordshire, England to George Henry and Mary Sherratt Beech. Ernest was christened in St. Luke's Church on 4 June 1871 in Leek, Staffordshire, England.

When Ernest was 11 years old he moved with his parents to Bedford, Lancashire, England. His father was a station engineer, and as was the custom in that country in those days the boys were put out as apprentices to learn a trade to help the family finances. Ernest apprenticed in a bakery for 10 months, then as a rope maker for 18 months. Ernest also worked in a coal mine as a mule door boy for \$.60 a day. On this job the boy would pull a rope attached to a door to open it for a mule to come through with a load of coal. Ernest learned the boiler making business which he was working at when he came to America and which he worked at for a living after he arrived in Ogden, Utah.

In England, the law required every man to serve seven years in the armed services. So Ernest joined the Army when he was but 15 years old. He was to have fought in the Boer War which was between England and Africa, but was accidentally shot in the thigh and the not able to serve longer. So he was honorably discharged after three years in service. He remembers the coronation of Queen Victoria, which he witnessed.

Ernest was a great singer, and made part of his living by singing in hotels and other public places. At the time of his conversion to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he was leading a choir of 25 members. Because of his love for singing, he joined the choir in Ogden, Utah and sang with the 12th Ward choir for years. He also had the privilege of singing in the great Tabernacle Choir. After moving to Sunnyside, he sang in their choir also.

When our Latter-day Saint missionaries went to Bedford, Lancashire, England, there were no converties at that place. When the Beech family was converted, they took the missionaries in and cared for them while they were preaching in that town.

Ernest was 31 when he joined the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He came to America nine days later. His parents and family preceded him to America.

Ernest set sail from Liverpool to America on the SS Romanic on 19 November 1903. After eight days on the Atlantic Ocean, he landed in Boston Massachusetts with 26 other saints. He immediately took the train for Ogden where he joined his family. Here he worked in his old trade, boiler making.

He started working in the coal mines in Carbon County, Utah at Sunnyside, Winterquarters, and Castle Gate where he retired because of his poor health.

He with his family moved to Wellington, Utah in 1936 where he resided until death.

Ernest married at 24 to Annie Aldred on 22 February 1896 in Leigh, Lancashire, England. She died of pneumonia 29 days after she gave birth to their daughter, Annie Aldred Beech. The baby died when she was 8 1/2 months old.

Ernest did not marry again until he was living in Ogden, Utah. There he met and married Annie Hoggan on 28 June 1905. She had a stillborn baby son 8 1/2 months later, and a little less than six months later she left him and filed for divorce.

He married Edith Preston, also known as Edith Francis Preston, 15 February 1919 in Sunnyside, Carbon, Utah. Later, 12 November 1952, their marriage was solemnized in the Salt

Lake Temple. He is survived by his wife and one son and four daughters: Henry of Salt Lake City; Edith Slaugh, Lois Peters of Wellington; Dorothy Quinn of Price; and Margaret Pfeiffer of Oregon; and 13 grandchildren. Also one brother in Salt Lake, one sister in England, and one brother in Ogden.

Ernest Beech has hosts of friends who will mourn the loss of this good man. He will ever be remembered for the good he has done during his rich, full life of 86 years.

Ernest was a hard worker and his younger years, and of late years he worried because he was not able to help when there was so much to be done. He was very particular about keeping his yards neat and clean. Even until he became bedfast he could be seen out putting things in their place and straightening anything that might have gotten out of order. He was very solicitous of his friends and neighbors and when able he made daily calls around the neighborhood inquiring after their health, and offering his assistance if needed. He never forgot those who moved away always sending them best wishes. At Christmas time he was the first to send Seasons Greetings and little remembrances to his neighbors.

Family get-togethers and dinners were his greatest joy, where he could mingle freely with his children and grandchildren. The grandchildren loves their granddad as they called him, and went to him for that extra special affection that only grandparents can give. He always carried a pocket full of peppermint candy to give the little ones. It was a much better cure for a skinned little knees than was mother's merthiolate. All the neighborhood children would gather around looking hungry for peppermint candy when they saw Brother Beech coming to make his daily calls.

Sports of all kinds were of great interest to Ernest. He delighted to show a medal that was awarded him in his youth for outstanding football playing before he left England. His whole week was highlighted as he looked forward to Friday night fights broadcasted over the radio. After television came to Carbon County, his son-in-law, Billy Peters, would take him up to his home to watch the fights he so enjoyed.

He kept posted on the stars in the athletic field, and can usually tell you who held athletic records and how they were won, even of athletic heroes of the past.

Ernest did a great deal of reading. Each day he read both the Tribune and Deseret Newspapers, besides magazines.

Labor Day was anxiously looked forward to each year. He was always given the honor of Flag Bearer to lead the Labor Union Parade. When he could no longer walk and carry the flag, he was provided a ride and continued to be in the parade.

Ernest loved to attend Church, but because of his hard hearing, he preferred to stay home and read.

We all know he has earned a crown in our Father's House because of his efforts while on this earth.

May his posterity appreciate the heritage he has left them. "A Man of Honor."