

## Sidsel Pedersen Nielson



Sidsel Pedersen was born at Egelev, Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark, 2 March 1826. Her parents were Peder Mikklesen, born 12 September 1786 at Onslev, Eskilstrup, Maribo, Denmark and Bertha Jensdatter, born 20 December 1802, in Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark.

Her brothers and sisters were:

Hans Pedersen born 10 Nov 1824 in Vaalse, Vaalse Parish, Maribo, Denmark.

Ane Pedersen born 22 Jun 1829 in Egelev, Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark.

Jens Peder Pedersen born 25 Feb 1836 in Egelev, Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark.

Hans Pedersen born 17 Mar 1847 in Egelev, Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark.

Her parents belonged to the Lutheran Church. She was taken to that church at Norre Vedby and given the name Sidsel, for her mother's sister, who was her father's first wife. This wife had died when a bride of three months. Her name and memory were kept alive in her little niece, Sidsel.

There were no surnames in Denmark at this time so the child was recorded in the Church records and census as Sidsel Pedersdatter. (Peder's daughter)

The family moved often, as the father's work was away from home much of the time, helping farmers with their cows. Sidsel worked very hard, helping her parents all she could. She told her children that as soon as she was old enough, she went to work for people who had lots of cows. She had a stick across her back with a kettle on each end. She carried such heavy loads it made her round shouldered.

Denmark had a law requiring all children to attend school until they reached a certain goal. This was attained at about fourteen years of age. It is assumed that Sidsel had the required education. She was always a retiring, hardworking, thoughtful child and woman.

She married Lars Nielson, 18 May 1853, at Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark. The couple's first home was in Ulsev, where their eldest child, Niels Peder was born, 19 June 1854. They moved to Tingsted where Jens Christian was born 8 Feb 1856.

Sidsel's health was very poor after the birth of her second child, so her mother took Peder home with her. This grandmother, her sister and Peder came to visit after a month's time. This aunt and her husband had a nice home, money and land but no children. She pleaded with the sick mother to let them take Niels Peder and keep him as their own. They could give him many advantages his parents could not give him at this time. The mother was sick so she gave Peder to her aunt. She worried about what she had done from that time, and vowed that she would never again give one of her children away, no matter what the trial or sacrifice.

The family moved to Stubberup, not far from Tingsted, where Ane Margrethe was born 20 Mar 1858.

Lars had heard the Mormon Elders preach twice before his marriage, but Sidsel had not heard the gospel until one day two men came to their home. It was toward evening. One of the men asked if they would look at some tracts they had. Lars asked, "Are you two Mormon Elders?" When they said they were, Lars, knowing the bitterness of the people, asked his wife to get them something to eat. She was glad to do this and listen to what they had to say. Lars showed them their beautiful little garden.

It was decided to hold a meeting in their home that night. They had a lovely meeting and Elder Nessen and Elder P. C. Nielson spoke with power and inspiration.

The missionaries were invited to stay in the Nielson home that night, which they did. After a good breakfast, they prepared to leave, when Elder Nessen said, "You and your wife will be Mormons and you can't help it, the way you have received us."

Many meetings were held in their home after that. They were always glad to feed and care for the Elders. Lars and Sidsel were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints 30 Mar 1860 by Elder P. C. Nielson. It was not long until there were sixteen members of the church in that town. Lars felt that he and his wife had been sent to Stubberup to open the door for the Elders. Hard times were the lot of the Nielson's because they were the first to join the hated Mormons. People would not give Lars their tailoring work to do. August was born 6 Aug 1860.

Their great desire was to come to Utah and join the Saints. They made arrangements to immigrate with their friends, the Hans Westenscows. They wanted to take all their children with them, but Peder's foster parents refused to give him up.

One day Sidsel walked eight miles to her aunt's home to see her son. When she was ready to go home she asked if Peter could walk a ways with her. Permission was given. The mother took Peter home with her. The foster parents went to court to get the boy back. The decision of the court was, "The father did not give his boy away, the law cannot take the boy from his father." What joy filled the mother's heart, to have her son again.

Preparations were made for the journey to Utah. The Nielsen's were blamed for bringing the gospel to Stubberup, so no one would buy their home or anything they had. Their good friends, the Hans Westenscows, could sell all they had so offered to help them go to Utah with them. They left their homes the latter part of April. They went to Copenhagen, then by rail to Hamburg. They crossed the North Sea to Grimsby, England. They went by rail through England to Liverpool, where they boarded a big sailing vessel, the "B. S. Kimball" on 3 May 1863.

Sidsel was not well and Peter was sick all the time they were on the water. His health improved when they landed in America.

In Florence, Nebraska, Sidsel helped sew the Nielsen's, Westenscow's and Madsen's linen sheets together for a tent. All three families slept in this tent until they reached Utah, when each family took the sheets belonging to them. Sidsel gave birth to a baby girl, Bertha Marie, on 8 Aug 1863, about a month before they arrived in Salt Lake City 5 Sept. 1863.

They stayed at the emigrant campgrounds for a month, and nursed Christian tenderly. He passed away 5 Oct. 1863. The emigrants were ready to go south, so the Nielsen's had to go with them, leaving Christian to be buried by others.

They went to Parowan where they had a joyful reunion with Lars' sister Ann Mikklesen, her husband Rasmus, and their children.

The winter of 1863-64 was spent in Parowan. When spring came they went over the mountain to Panguitch and settled on the Sevier River. Indians were troublesome and the weather was bad, so they traded their home for a yoke of oxen and an old wagon.

They moved to Circleville in the fall of 1865. The first winter they lived in a dugout. One night they were snowed in, when the wind packed their doorway with snow. They had to stay in until neighbors came to their rescue and shoveled the snow out.

The ground was frozen and Sidsel slipped and fell on the slope to the door of the dugout. Soon after this she gave birth to a stillborn baby boy. Sorrow again came to them when little two and one half year old Bertha Marie passed away.

A log house was built the next spring. Their light was a homemade tallow candle. They had no candle molds so Sidsel cut string into correct lengths and fastened them to a piece of wood. The tallow was melted and the strings dipped into it. They were hung up to dry, then redipped. This was repeated until the candles were as large as desired.

They had plenty of wheat, also milk and some butter from their two cows. The men went to mill in groups because of the Indians. Part of the time Sidsel boiled wheat over the fireplace to feed her family. When they had flour for bread, she often gave her children what they called "bread and scrape." They said she was such an expert she got as much butter off the bread as she put on, counting the crumbs.

The Indians made a raid one day while Peter was out hunting their oxen. Lars took his old musket and ran. Sidsel took her two children and stood on a knoll near their home and watched and waited. Was she to part with another child so soon? What a joyful reunion when Peter returned unharmed. His friend was killed by the Indians. The boy's mother gave Sidsel her son's shirt for Peter. Nothing could be wasted and clothes were hard to get. Mixed feelings of sorrow and thanksgiving filled Sidsel's heart as she put a patch over the hole the bullet had made.

Trouble with the Indians grew worse and the people feared for their lives. They moved out in the summer of 1866. The Nielsen's went to Manti where their friends, the Westenscows, were living. Lars did some work as tailor and stood Indian guard on Temple Hill. Another son, Louis, was born to them 18 April 1867.

It was not long until the family moved again, this time to Scipio, Millard County, Utah. While here they went to Salt Lake City, by wagon, to the Endowment House where they received their endowments and were sealed to each other 20 Sept. 1869.

Their next home was in Oak City. They lived in a dugout one half block east of the church. It was not long until they moved back on the Sevier River. This time to Monroe, where their youngest child Joseph Hyrum was born 18 Oct. 1871. They lived in Richfield a short time before moving back to Oak City. Their home was one block east and two blocks north of the church on the west side of the street. They had a garden and nice melon patch south of their home.

Peter was freighting to Pioche, Nevada. One trip he took his younger brother, August, with him. When they came home their horses gave out a number of miles south of Oak City. The boys walked home. They went through the melon patch, picked one, and sat down to enjoy it. Sidsel came out of the house and saw them. She was very excited as she cried out "My boys! My Boys! Niels Peter! August! Here you have been gone six weeks with no word. Then you sit down to eat a melon and not tell your old mother you are home safe."

Their last move was to Leamington, Utah. Their first home was a post house, made of cedar posts. Lars was on the Sevier River again, making ditches, breaking up land and planting crops. Sidsel told her husband, "This is my home, and here I am going to stay. If you move again, you will know I will be here waiting for you to come back."

Lars filed on a homestead and became the first Bishop of the Leamington Ward. Sidsel was a Bishop's wife for seventeen years. She entertained General Authorities in her home and made everyone welcome.

They built a log house, a large room, a lean-to kitchen, and a boarded in porch where the younger boys slept. Their post house was used for a granary.

The grandchildren were always welcome. They were given cubes of sugar, sweet soup and other Danish dishes to eat. Card games were played during the Christmas holiday season but no other time of the year. Sidsel baked tiny little squares of hard bread, marked the table into squares and had the grandchildren play a game with dice. Why the center square, a "7" was called the tithing was something no one could explain.

Sidsel's health failed while her eldest son, Niels Peter, was on a mission. She was heart broken when he came home ill in 1899 and passed away ten months later. She had a dream that was a great comfort and blessing to her. She thought she was at her home looking toward the railroad track. She saw Peter walk down the track and turn down their path. He went around the house to the kitchen door. He was dressed in his best suit, had his missionary hat on and was carrying a small suitcase. She hurried to meet him and said, "Peter where are you going?"

He answered, "I am going on my mission."

She woke up. Her heart was comforted and her mind was at peace. A year and a half later she departed this life 1 Nov. 1901, at Leamington, Millard County, Utah. Sidsel Nielsen was one of our noble pioneers.

Sidsel Pedersen born Egelev, Norre Vedby, Maribo, Denmark, 2 Mar 1826.

Married Lars Nielsen 18 May 1853.

Arrived in Utah 5 Sept. 1863 with Saunder's Company.

Died 1 Nov. 1901, Leamington, Millard County, Utah.

This history was written by Zella N. Lovell.