

History of Joshua Parker Chidester and Juliette Burgess

By grand-daughter, Elsie Luella Chidester Powell

Joshua Parker Chidester was born 1 Feb 1843 at Nauvoo, Illinois, the 6th child of John Madison Chidester and Mary Parker. At the age of 8 he came with his family to Utah with one of the companies that left from Kanessville, Iowa in June of 1850. The family was sent to help colonize several settlements in Utah and Idaho. They finally settled in Spanish Fork, Utah.

Joshua's father was a wainwright and carpenter, and Joshua learned to make shoes and harnesses and was a good carpenter. By studying and reading he educated himself so that he was able to teach school. He taught in Provo and in Sevier and Wayne Counties in Utah. In 1880 and 1882, he was known as one of the best mathematicians in the state at that time.

At the age of 18, he married Juliette Burgess in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was born at Winter Quarters, Nebraska, coming to Utah as a child with her family. Her father was William Burgess and her mother was Mariah Pulsipher. Her grandfather, Zera Pulsipher, was a member of the First council of Seventies and one of the first Patriarchs in the church.

After their marriage in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake city in 1861, they lived at Desert Springs in Iron County, Utah then moved to Pine Valley in Washington County, Utah. Here their first three children were born, John William in 1864, Josephine Mary in 1866 and Alfred Gideon in 1869. they were sent to these places by Brigham Young to help settle them and to help the settlers build their homes. Joshua was then sent to help settle Bloomington, Bear Lake, Idaho, and carried the first mail and supplies on snow shoes over a dangerous and rugged mountain trail that was known as the Shoshone Indian Trail which ran from Cache Valley, Utah to Bear lake Valley, Idaho. Here three more children were born, my father, Lafayette Chidester who was born 25 September 1871, Joshua parker in 1873, and Juliette, who was born in 1875 and died a year later.

The family later moved back to Utah, living in Panguitch, Garfield County, Thurber in Wayne County, Annabelle in Sevier County, Kanosh in Millard County and Manti. Grandfather died in Manti at the age of 53. He had lost the fingers on one hand in a sawmill accident and it was after this that he started to teach school in Wayne and Sevier counties.

Grandmother was a practical nurse and a midwife and was kept busy in all the towns that she pioneered and helped to settle, along with raising 11 children of her own. After grandfather's death, she moved to Huntington, in Emery County, where three of her sons and their families lived. She made a living as a midwife and nurse and later married a man named Zenuh Wing Dodge.

When three of her sons and a daughter, with their families, came to the Uintah Indian Reservation to homestead in 1906, they came with them and settled in Altonah, which was then in Wasatch County. Her sons built a small cabin home for her near her daughter's home. Although she was in her sixties, she still kept active as a midwife. She raised a big vegetable garden with one corner she called a herb garden from which she made homemade medicine, tonics and poultices. She also had one of the prettiest flower gardens for miles around, and also did all kinds of beautiful needlework.

Grandmother was about 75 years old when we moved to Altonah. I don't believe she ever wasted a minute of her time. She was always busy making quilt ops. Knitting mittens and socks or baby shawls for someone. She died at our home at the age of 77 and was buried at Altonah, Utah.