



## **SADIE HOWARTH PARKER**

### **1906-1987**

Sadie Howarth Parker was born to Elveretta Olson and John Joseph Howarth on 15 November 1906, in Park City, Summit, Utah. Her grandparents on her father's side of the family joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and came to America from England to join the pioneers on the trek west. Sadie and her siblings never knew the names of her mother's parents.

Elveretta Olson Howarth died 16 November 1914, the day after Sadie's 8<sup>th</sup> birthday. Two months later, her baby brother died. Sadie's older sister, Reba married and moved to Richfield, Utah. The family moved to Richfield two years later so Reba could help with the children and their home. Two years later, Reba died, leaving three children. Another sister, Nettie married, and in approximately two years she also died, leaving three children. Sadie was left to keep house for the family from the time she was ten years old.

Sadie loved music and sang her first solo in 1923 to fill a requirement for her Mutual class. She had learned not to say no to any thing she was asked to do. The following winter she sang the lead in the school play, "The Marriage of Nannette." She also sang the lead in the school play, "The Charm School." She took vocal lessons from Helen Poulson, whom she worked for in order to pay for her lessons. During the summer she sang with a dance orchestra.

Sadie had a desire to further her education at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. She was able to accomplish this goal with the help of her older brother, Vard, who sent her \$50 a month. While studying music at BYU she was hired by N. W. Christensen, in Logan, to sing the lead in the operetta, "Sweethearts," by Victor Herbert. She received \$50 for each performance. The work was later made famous by the duo of Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy.

Cast in the male lead of "Sweethearts" was an energetic young singer named Henry R. Parker. It was to be a storybook courtship. After the first theatrical season, they corresponded by letter and the next summer, they were again selected for lead roles in a musical production, "Fortune Teller." (Ogden Standard Examiner, July 1981) Sadie and Henry were married 10 June 1926.

The couple made their home in Wellsville, Utah, where four of their six children were born. This was the time of the Great Depression, and they had a farm and a herd of cows to pay for. To make matters worse, 40 head of their cattle were poisoned by grasshopper bait. Also, Henry was involved in a truck accident, in which he was seriously injured and Sadie's father, John Joseph Howarth, was killed. The doctors said Henry would never walk again.

However, in three months he was not only walking, but went to a dance and enjoyed the evening dancing.

The Parkers left the farm in Wellsville and moved to Logan, where Sadie boarded students attending Utah State College for \$15 a month. They bought a home and Henry went back to school. However, he only lasted six weeks and quit. His heart was in trading cattle. Their fifth child was born in Logan.

Because Henry did most of his cattle trading in Paris, Idaho, the family moved there in June 1936. Sadie worked in every organization of the ward. When they moved, the ward gave them a big party. She said, "It would have been an ideal time to have had my funeral, they said so many nice things about me."

They moved to Ogden in 1938, and lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> Ward. Elaine was born in Ogden. Their children attended Lorin Farr School. They all studied music: Max played the violin, Stewart the trumpet, Dean the guitar, Ila the violin, Maurine played the flute and piano, and later Elaine played the vibraharp and the piano. They all learned to play the piano, and they all sang. The family gave many musical programs throughout Weber County.

The Parker children were accomplished in many aspects of their lives. Max was in the Navy during world War II. He spent his entire time in school. Stewart fulfilled a mission to South Africa, and Dean served a mission in Hawaii. Henry and Sadie took Maurine and Elaine and spent the last two weeks in Hawaii while Dean finished his mission.

The family moved to Harrisville in 1943. The two older boys married. Ila was one of the finalists in the Miss Utah contest, when Colleen Hutchins won the title to go on to win Miss America.

In 1954, Maurine won Miss Weber High School, Miss Ogden, and then Miss Utah. It was a busy summer as Sadie and Henry followed Maurine in her activities. They went to the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Sadie mentioned that it was a wonderful experience, even though it was hectic.

While living in Harrisville, Henry shipped bulls all over the country. Sadie kept the books, raised the family, and was known throughout the greater Ogden area. Her main hobby was music, and she performed in numerous concerts. Along with her family musical group, for 30 years she directed a double trio called the "Madratones." In the mid 1960s she went on a trip to Europe with the LDS Relief Society "Singing Mothers."

Active in church and community, Sadie served 25 years as both ward and stake Relief Society president. She also served in various positions in the Primary and Young Women's programs. Throughout her life, she served in many church positions. She was also president of several school PTAs. She was a volunteer for 20 years at the old Dee Hospital on 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Harrison Boulevard and the newer McKay Dee Hospital located on 37<sup>th</sup> Street and Harrison Boulevard. She gave 10,000 hours of service and served two terms as president of the Dee Hospital auxiliary.

Sadie was an active member of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers and served two terms as president of the county organization. She also served on the local DUP board for about 10 years. In 1981, she was chosen as the Ogden Pioneer Days Queen. She was involved in many of the activities with the 24<sup>th</sup> of July celebration.

The family lived in Harrisville for 35 years. For many years, while in Harrisville, Sadie's brother, Joseph Howarth, lived with the family, helping with the yard and farm work. In 1978, heart trouble forced Henry to retire. The couple then moved to South Ogden. After spending 55 years together, Sadie's husband, Henry R. Parker, died 5 December 1981.

Sadie's fondest memories through the years came from watching her children develop and her musical experiences. After a very active and interesting life, she spent the twilight of her years doing all types of sewing and needlework at her home in Emerald Hills, South Ogden. She died in July 1987, at the age of 81.

**SOURCE:**

Parker, Sadie H. "Autobiography of Sadie H. Parker." Unpublished manuscript as recorded in the Harrisville Relief Society History, 1955.

*Ogden Standard Examiner*. "Sadie H. Parker: Ogden Pioneer Days Queen 1981," July 1981.

Christensen, N.W.	Parker, Dean
Eddy, Nelson	Parker, Elaine
Herbert, Victor	Parker, Henry R.
Howarth, Elveretta Olson	Parker, Ila
Howarth, John Joseph	Parker, Maurine
Howarth, Nettie	Parker, Max
Howarth, Reba	Parker, Sadie Howarth
Howarth, Sadie	Parker, Stewart
Howarth, Vard	Poulson, Henen
McDonald, Jeanette	Madratonos