

# Samuel William & Adelia Estella (Terry) Mackelprang

## Samuel William Mackelprang

**Born:** October 1, 1849 in Rodby, Denmark

**Died:** March 22, 1889

**Parents:** Peder Mathiasen Mackelprang and Sofie Margarethe Sorenson

**Married:** Adelia Estella Terry on October 5, 1869

## Adelia Estella (Terry) Mackelprang

**Born:** February 16, 1853

**Died:** January 7, 1930

**Parents:** Thomas Sirls and Mary Ann Pulsipher Terry

**Married:** Samuel William Mackelprang on October 5, 1869

## Samuel's early years and move from Denmark to Cedar City

Samuel William Mackelprang, (who went by William), was christened Soren Vilhelm Mackelprang in his native land of Denmark. He was one of seven children born to Peder Mathiasen Mackelprang and Sofie Margarethe Sorenson. In 1854, the family joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At the time, William's father, Peder, owned a successful shoe shop in Rodby, and the family was well-off enough to employ servants in their home.<sup>1</sup> They lived in a nice house on a large farm until 1855, when they sold their home and possessions and emigrated to the United States so as to be with others of their faith, William was six years old at the time. First they traveled to Copenhagen, where Sofie gave birth to their seventh child. From there they went to Liverpool, England and on Dec. 12, 1855, set sail aboard the *John J. Boyd* in company with Franklin D. Richards and other Mormon converts.<sup>2</sup> After reaching the States, the family crossed the plains in the Canute Petersen Ox Train, and reached the Salt Lake Valley September 20, 1856. From there, they journeyed southward to settle in Cedar City, Utah.

## Adelia's Growing-up years

Adelia Estella Terry Mackelprang was the second of twelve children born to Thomas Sirls Terry and Mary Ann Pulsipher. At the time of her birth, Adelia's family resided in the Little Cottonwood area of Salt Lake City, but when Adelia was nine years old they moved to Southern Utah. They built a ranch six miles outside the settlement of Hebron, and for eighteen years her father served as a bishop in Hebron.<sup>3</sup>

Adelia enjoyed working outside with her family taking care of the family's farm and animals. She was robust and beautiful, with curly blond hair and blue eyes. Her mother taught her how to card wool, spin yarn and weave cloth, skills that became particularly useful to her later in life when she was left widowed with ten children to care for.<sup>4</sup>

## Courtship and Marriage

As a young man, William decided upon the carpenter trade, and apprenticed himself to Charles Pulsipher, a master carpenter who lived in Hebron (now Enterprise), Utah.

Pulsipher's niece, Adelia Estella Terry, caught the eye of young William Mackelprang, and the two were sealed in the Salt Lake Endowment House on October 5, 1869. She was sixteen years old, with naturally curly blond hair and blue eyes; he was nineteen, tall, with brown hair and blue eyes.<sup>5</sup> After their marriage they moved back to Cedar City and set up house in an adobe home on the property of William's parents. It was there that their first child, Samuel William, was born. During the next nine years, four more Mackelprang children were born. Two were born in Hebron, near to Adelia's family, and two back in Cedar City, where William and Adelia had finally acquired their own home.<sup>6</sup> About this time, the religious leaders in Iron County decided that the region would begin to practice a communal-type living standard called the United Order. Though somewhat disheartened by the idea, William and Adelia decided they would accept and obey the counsel of their priesthood leaders, no matter the personal cost to them. Shortly thereafter, however, they were called to be part of the San Juan Mission, so they never actually participated in the United Order.

### **Hole-in-the-Rock**

When the Mackelprangs were called to be members of the San Juan Mission, they accepted the assignment without question. . Later in life, Adelia recalled feeling a little disheartened at the call, but she and William obediently agreed to "give everything along with their talents to their beloved church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."<sup>7</sup> William's daughter, Mary Ann Cook, wrote that her father "never disobeyed counsel" from his religious leaders. "At great sacrifice," he traded the family's home for items needed on the journey – wagons, wheat, corn, and some cash.<sup>8</sup> He loaded the family's possessions into two wagons, and he and Adelia each drove one all the way to Bluff. Thankfully, William had the foresight to also nail an old wheat grinder to the side of one wagon box. This proved to be an invaluable asset to the Mackelprangs and others along the journey when their supplies of ground flour and corn gave out.<sup>9</sup>

William's skill as a carpenter was another unique way he contributed to the Hole-in-the-Rock expedition. While most of the men worked at building and blasting out a road down the "hole," a few men, including William, were lowered by rope down the cliff edge to the riverbed below. There they cut timber and assembled a large raft that would ferry the wagons across the roaring Colorado River once they had made their descent down through the Hole-in-the-Rock. The raft had been pre-built, to some extent, by Charles Hall and his sons back in Escalante, and upon being fully assembled on the banks of the Colorado, could fit two wagons at a time.<sup>10</sup> According to Mackelprang family tradition, Adelia Mackelprang and Sarah Cox boiled the hooves of dead cows in order to make the glue that held the raft together.<sup>11</sup>

The Mackelprangs endured much hardship and trial, as did the other Hole-in-the-Rock pioneers, as they navigated their way to what became the settlement of Bluff. William's wife, Adelia, was expecting their sixth child and also suffering from neuralgia throughout the journey. One night she even had William pull several of her teeth in order to alleviate some of her pain.<sup>12</sup>

After their arrival in Bluff, William began building a small shelter for his family on the lot he had drawn. In one corner, under a greasewood bush, he placed a wagon box where Adelia gave birth to little Thomas Peter eight weeks later. Two other children also joined the family during the family's few years in Bluff.

Adelia possessed a strong character that not only gave her strength to endure hardship, but also drew people to her. She made friends with some of the Indians who visited Bluff, particularly an Indian-raised white man known as Old Charley. Using her weaving and sewing skills, Adelia made three hundred suits of velvet brought to her by Old Charley that the Indians wore while performing their war dances. As payment she was given beef and mutton.<sup>13</sup>

One day when Adelia was away from home, a more troublesome Indian called Sleepy Jack tried to enter the family's house by taking out the back window. Six members of the family were lying ill inside with the measles at the time. Adelia happened to look up from where she was at work sewing down the street and saw Sleepy Jack attempting to climb inside her house. She rushed home as fast as she could and scared him off, though the fright of the experience never left some of her children's memories.<sup>14</sup>

Farming was difficult in the Bluff soil, so William worked hauling freight between Bluff and Durango, Colorado. One time his foot was severely broken by his team as the animals started to run away, and he was laid up in bed for several weeks until it healed sufficiently. In 1884 William accepted the release given the San Juan settlers by Church leaders, and decided to move his family to Huntington, Utah.

### **Move to Huntington, Utah**

After giving their all to the settlement of Bluff, Adelia and William accepted the release extended to them in 1884 by Church leaders. They moved to Huntington, Utah, where William established himself again as a carpenter, and Adelia did what she could to help support the family. William purchased a lot on Main Street and began building a small two-room home with a dirt roof on one corner of the lot near some willow trees. In the spring, sego lillies and dandelions bloomed from the soil roof. The northern room was used as the kitchen, and the southern room as a bedroom for the younger children. The older children slept either in the kitchen on a cot, or outdoors in a wagon box when the weather was warm.

Adequately sheltered for the time being, William then built a furniture and cabinet shop and began again to work as a carpenter. His oldest son Sam helped him haul wood from the mountains, and Adelia and the other children aided in sanding and polishing the wood. William was a kind and loving father and husband. In the evenings he took pleasure in teaching his children to count in Danish as they carded and spun wool, and also taught them to dance in the front room by firelight.<sup>15</sup>

During their second winter there, Adelia's brother-in-law, Oliver Harman had become ill with rheumatism, so Adelia and William brought the entire Harman household (which

consisted of six people) to Huntington to live with them until Oliver recovered. Though this was many ways a test of patience for Adelia (who gave birth to a daughter in January, shortly after the Harman's arrived), it also exemplifies the greatness of her character. She would reportedly say that "where there is heart room, there is house room."<sup>16</sup>

### **Premature Passing**

Eventually, he also began to building a much larger, and fancier two-story home for his family on the east side of his lot. The children aided him in making adobe bricks for the house. There were six rooms – three upstairs and three down – and two closets in the home, making it quite a change from the tight quarters in which the family had been living for many years. But unfortunately it remained unfinished at the time of William's death. He passed away on March 22, 1889, just six months shy of his fortieth birthday.

Adelia was thus left with ten children to provide for and an unfinished house to live in. The fruit trees the family had planted were not yet bearing fruit, though the bees they kept were providing good honey that they harvested with the honey extractor William had invented. Adelia cared for the bees in the summer, brought in laundry to wash at a rate between thirty-five and fifty-cents a day, and relied heavily on her skills of carding wool, spinning thread and weaving cloth in order to provide for her family. As the children grew, they contributed what they could to the family's welfare. But it was not easy, and for many years they faced hard times. One daughter recalled having to do eighty large loads of laundry for J. B. Meeks, whose cow the family was milking. When the cow died of bloat, the family had to pay Brother Meeks for the loss by washing clothes.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout her life Adelia remained active in the Church and faithful to its teachings. She was the Huntington Primary President for nearly a dozen years, and also served as a Relief Society teacher for several decades.<sup>18</sup> She participated on the Relief Society committee that helped to fund and support the building of the Relief Society Hall in Huntington, and also assisted with the burial needs and arrangements of those who had died. One year, when diphtheria swept through the region like wildfire, she helped to sew thirteen burial suits within a single week.<sup>19</sup>

Her own loneliness during the decades after William's death was occasionally comforted by dreams she had of him visiting her from beyond the grave. One night, she woke her daughter Minerva, who had been sleeping next to her, at two o'clock in the morning and told her to quickly write down the words William had spoken to her in her dream. They were as follows:

Are you lonely in your cottage,  
That little home so dear to you?  
Was built for two.  
Now in death we two have parted,  
And have left the cottage here,  
For one alone to love and cherish,

Thinking of her mate elsewhere.

Lonely heart, someday you'll meet him  
On a distant silvery shore.  
Lonely heart, when you shall meet him  
He shall greet his love once more.  
He will take you to a cottage  
He is building there for you,  
Built of gold and precious jewels.

In the solemn twilight hours  
When the day's long work is done,  
Do you sit down by the fireside,  
Thinking of the days now gone?  
How you stood there in the doorway  
Holding out your hands to one  
Who came so gay and joyous  
When his own day's work is done.

Lonely heart, your days of longing  
For the tender, thoughtful care,  
Will be met in fullest measure  
When you meet him over there.  
He is eagerly awaiting  
For that glorious, happy time,  
When his arms can close enfold you  
In that perfect heavenly chime.<sup>20</sup>

Adelia Estella Terry Mackelprang passed away January 7, 1940, after patiently suffering from a broken femur for two months. Though she was in great pain and discomfort during the final weeks of her life, Adelia "was ever patient and never complained."<sup>21</sup> She had endured much in her life that might have merited complaint, but she characteristically chose not to, even at the end.

*Researched and written for the Hole-in-the-Rock Foundation by:  
C.S. M. Jones LLC, Family Heritage Consulting.*

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<sup>1</sup> Maurine G. Nielson, "Samuel William Mackelprang," in *Generations of Montell and Minerva Guymon* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press), 53.

<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Halverson, "Samuel William Mackelprang," 1.

<sup>3</sup> Minerva M. Guymon, "Adelia Estella Terry Mackelprang," in *Generations of Montell and Minerva Guymon* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press), 57.

<sup>4</sup> Maurine G. Nielson, editor, "Samuel William Mackelprang," *Generations of Montell and Minerva Mackelprang* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press), 53; Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Mackelprang, Pioneers of 1855," Daughters of Utah Pioneers files, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>6</sup> Maurine G. Nielson, 53.

<sup>7</sup> Minerva M. Guymon, 58.

<sup>8</sup> Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Terry Mackelprang," Daughters of Utah Pioneers files, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Maurine G. Nielson, 54; Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Terry Mackelprang," 1.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Ann Cook, "The Move South," Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Terry Mackelprang," 3; Cook, "The Move South," 1. (Mary Ann Cook is the author of two very similar accounts of her parents, William and Adelia, that are housed in the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers files. The sources are separately noted here for information about the Mackelprangs that is not noted elsewhere).

<sup>12</sup> Mary Ann Cook, "The Move South," 1; Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Terry Mackelprang," 1.

<sup>13</sup> Minerva M. Guymon, 60.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Ann Cook, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Mary Ann Cook, "Biography of William and Adelia Terry Mackelprang," 4; Maurine G. Nielson, 55.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>17</sup> Minerva M. Guymon, 62.

<sup>18</sup> Mary Ann Cook, 6.

<sup>19</sup> Minerva M. Guymon, 63.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Ann Cook, 5-6.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 7.