

Charles Coulson Knight

18346- 1839

Son of Joseph Knight, Sr. and Phebe Crosby Peck

Charles Coulson Knight was born 3 November 1836 in Caldwell County, Missouri, the second son of Joseph Knight, Sr. and Phebe Crosby Peck.

In the summer of 1836 Joseph Knight, Sr., and all the many other extended Knight-Peck relatives packed up their families living in Clay County, Missouri, and moved to Caldwell County, with the hopes that they could avoid bloodshed. Far West, Missouri, became the new headquarters for the Missouri Saints, and once again they had to first find shelter and then build homes and a community.

Joseph and Phebe with their family moved to Far West, but returned in 1837 to Clay County to tend a mill that Joseph's son Newel had built. In November of 1836, another baby son was born to Phebe and Joseph, Charles Coulson Knight. Joseph Knight was the step-father to Phebe's children who were quickly becoming teenagers. Joseph and Phebe's first son, Ether was two years old by then.

Serious trouble again boiled up in Caldwell County with attacks on members of the church in in October of 1838, that seemed almost government authorized with the extermination order of Governor Lilburn Boggs. The attack at Haun's Mill and murder of 17 men was on October 30, 1838.

Latter-day Saint refugees from outlying areas poured into Far West. In November of 1838 a Missouri newspaper reported that there were 5,000 Saints facing starvation with no means and "where shall they be sent?" the newspaper asked. Lucy Mack Smith, mother to Joseph Smith, recalled that her one-acre front yard became a refugee camp, "completely covered with beds, lying in the open sun, where families be sent?" the newspaper asked.

The families were forced to leave entirely. By January of 1839, there was forced exodus from Caldwell County began for all members of the church and they head east towards Commerce, Illinois. The journey of more than 235 miles in the snow and cold was hard.

Joseph Knight, Sr. had been a robust and prosperous farmer and miller in Colesville, but he built and had to leave behind homes in Thompson, Ohio (near Kirtland,) and three homes in Missouri. He sons tried to help him, but in 1839 as he arrived in the Nauvoo area, with a family of young children, he was 67 years old, in declining health, and struggling to support a family.

Young Charles Knight died 13 August 1839 in Quincy, Illinois, near what would become Nauvoo.