

HENRY¹ OF HINGHAM

Tenth Generation

No. 79

NAME: Joseph Ramsay¹⁰ Chamberlin

Father: John Wilbert⁹ Chamberlin (No. 67)
[Joseph⁸ (James Woodmansee⁷, Thomas⁶, James⁵, William⁴⁻³, John², Henry¹)
and Amy (Wilbert) Chamberlin]

Mother: Helen Ramsay

Born: 4 Feb 1869, West Point, Pahute Co., AZ

Died: 11 Dec 1936, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT

Buried: 13 Dec 1936, City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, UT

Married: (1) Myra Elizabeth Weight, 31 Aug 1891, Salt Lake City, UT

Other Marriages: (2) Cora Winkless, 25 Dec 1906, Salt Lake City, UT

No. 11709

SPOUSE (1): Myra Elizabeth Weight

Father: Frederick Weight

Mother: Mary Milnes

Born: 29 Oct 1871, Springville, UT Co., UT

Died: 25 Feb 1902, Salt Lake City, UT

Buried: 28 Feb 1902, City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, UT

Other Marriages:

CHILDREN

(By First Marriage)

F 103 Mable Weight¹¹, b. 10 Dec 1891, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT. Married Roscoe Self Nuttall, 6 Oct 1915, Salt Lake City, UT. Died 26 Nov 1960, Salt Lake City, UT. +

M 104 Ray¹¹, b. 27 Oct 1893, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT. Died 7 Apr 1895, Salt Lake City, UT.

F 105 Vera Marie¹¹, b. 22 Oct 1896, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT. Married Charles Ernest Bowers, 15 Aug 1917, Salt Lake City, UT. Died 17 Mar 1989, Salt Lake City, UT. +

F 106 Merlyn Helen¹¹, b. 19 Nov 1898, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT. Married William Chauncey Dunford, 24 Sep 1925, Salt Lake City, UT. Died 16 Nov 1965, Salt Lake City, UT. +

No. 11710

SPOUSE (2): Cora Winkless

Father: Joseph Thomas Winkless

Mother: Sarah Ann Priday

Born: 22 Oct 1882, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co., UT

Died: 15 Oct 1970, Salt Lake City, UT

Buried: 20 Oct 1970, City Cemetery, Salt Lake City, UT

Other Marriages:

BIOGRAPHICAL

Biographical notes by Audrey Bowers Arthur.

“West Point, a small pioneer town located in the Territory of Arizona, was the first residence of Joseph Ramsay Chamberlin. His parents were serving in the Muddy Mission in answer to a call by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The town is now called Moapa, and is in the Moapa Valley of the state of Nevada. At the time of his birth, West Point was one of the Muddy settlements on the Muddy River, and a part of the Muddy Mission which was formed for the purpose of growing cotton and settling that desert area.

The family tradition is that Joseph was born in a covered wagon as his parents were trying to escape unfriendly Indians on their way to St. George in the Utah territory. His Death Certificate states that he was born in St George. As the informant was his second wife, she gave information that she had remembered. However, I feel strongly that his parents were going to another town on the lower Muddy River called St. Joseph (now known as Logandale, Nevada) because of his imminent birth, this place being only twenty miles or less away. The Muddy settlements were over 80 miles by a circuituous route which crossed the Virgin River about 35 times, and was a three-day journey from St. George.

Helen did not mention St. George in the letter she wrote to her sister-in-law, Frances (wife of William Henry Chamberlin), telling of the birth of her second son which says: ‘I have been very sick since my baby was born. I took cold when he was two weeks old and was bedfast for two weeks, and I do not think I should have been alive now, had it not been for kind friends. I got along another week, and took another backset, and have not got over it yet...you said in your letter, ‘if this Josey was as nice a boy as Johny is’....you would think so, Frances, if you could see him. He was born on the fourth of February about nine o'clock in the morning, and weighed nine and a half pounds.’ This letter is dated West Point, April 3, 1869. Birth records of this time period are non-existent, but John W. Chamberlin, and his wife and two sons are listed in the U.S. Census for Nevada at West Point in the year 1870. When the Muddy Mission and settlements were abandoned by the vote of the inhabitants (9 December, 1870), John W. and his family soon returned to Salt Lake City, and lived in the 15th Ward, their previous home.

Joseph's sister Nellie was born in Salt Lake City on August 28, 1871. Four years later, on October 21, 1875, the second little sister was born, but lived less than two weeks. She was named Georgina after her mother's sister, Georgina Ramsay, who had died in London, England at age 23. John William was his older brother's name, and we always called him Uncle Jack. He had been born in Salt Lake City on the 20th of November, 1866, prior to their sojourn on the Muddy River. Helen was frail, and suffered with consumption for several years, and died at the young age of 30. Joseph was deprived of his mother's love and care at the age of eight, and after that, he always felt a deep loneliness. About a year and a half later, his father married one of the housekeepers of the home during Helen's long illness. Her name was Elizabeth Smart, and most everyone called her Lizzie or Aunt Lizzie.

On November 12, 1967, while visiting with my mother and father, Vera and Ern Bowers, they told me some things that they could remember about my grandfather.

Schooling was very meager, they told me, and he probably never got to go to the eighth grade. His family home was in the 15th Ward of the old Salt Lake Stake at 215 South 4th West. Mother could not remember him talking about his parents or Aunt Lizzie, although she did know Aunt Lizzie. Both of his parents were dead before he married Myra Weight.

Dapper was a word to describe Joseph's appearance, as he was a very neat dresser and enjoyed fancy clothes, and was even on the 'splashy' side when he was young. The story is told that when he married his second wife, Cora Winkless, he had asked his eldest daughter Mable to press his suit for his wedding. Never having done this before, she pressed the creases down the side seams instead of down the front over the knees, which was not discovered until he was standing in line for the ceremony. The family had a good chuckle over this event.

Everyone liked Joe Chamberlin; he made friends with everyone easily, as he was an out-going personality, amiable, good natured, goodhearted, and very kind. One of his pet sayings was, 'never say a bad word about anybody; if you can't say something good, don't say anything.' This was a philosophy he lived himself, as he always saw the good in other people.

As a young man, he worked as a salesman for the Studebaker Company, and later, for Consolidated Wagon and Machine Company. Selling farm machinery took him away from home into the farming areas, especially in the summertime. He was very successful in this occupation. Later, he became a 'jack of all trades.' This was after the unexpected death of his dear wife Myra, at age 31 years. He then had three daughters to care for, and though many family members wanted to take one child, no one could take all three together, and he would not consider separating them.

His traveling jobs were given up, and he worked at many things, and sometimes had two and three jobs at the same time. A list of his jobs includes bar tending. He also worked at a slaughter house. He worked at his friends' ice skating rink at about 1100 South State Street. He was manager of the dance hall at the famous old Salt Palace where he did everything, taking tickets, conducting dance contests, and overseeing the dances. He cleaned the place up as well. For a time, he assessed property for the tax department. In the winter, he drove miles and miles, cleaning streets and sidewalks with his horse and scraper. Children watched for him, and hitched rides with their sleds. He would only let them ride for a couple of blocks, and would shoo them off so they would not roam too far from their homes. Then another group of children would arrive for the same sport.

In the city directories, he was listed as a nurseryman, the same as his father. He had beautiful flower gardens, and his asters were prized by everyone and attracted a lot of attention. He sold plants and vegetables and did gardening and pruning. Uncle Jack, his brother, also did this kind of work. One of his bosses, John P. Williams, said of him, 'He was reliable, and I didn't have to watch him to see that he was at work all the time. When I gave him a day's work to do, it was done.' He contracted his horse and scraper in the spring and summer to dig basements for buildings, homes and churches.

His home, after his marriage to Myra, was a small two-room house with the property stretching back to the Whittier School yard. Joseph's father had bought the property from Joseph Wyler, and used it for his nursery business. The address was 1581 South State Street, where South High School is now located. Later, the house was enlarged and remodeled into a fine brick home with three bedrooms, a living room, entry hall, dining room, kitchen and pantry, with a large porch across the front. His brother Dent told me that he helped him build his new home. This took place after his marriage to 'Aunt Cora.' The address was changed to 1555 South State Street.

As his political affiliation was with the Republican party, and his brother Dent was a staunch Democrat, there was some rivalry. During the Depression, Grandpa went to Dent for a job, and Dent was unable to help him because 'Joe was in the wrong party.' Voting was conducted at Joe's home, as well as voting registration.

Although he was not active in the Church, he was in charge of the Ward shows in the Farmer's Ward house for many years. I remember going to them occasionally. Children soon learned that if they couldn't really find a dime for a ticket, it might be possible to get in anyway. Joe was very soft-hearted, and could not disappoint a child. 'If I don't see you—well I can't take your ticket.' Then he would turn his back. He always insisted that the audience be orderly, and would not start the film until everyone was quiet.

When she was little, Vera, his middle daughter, was throwing a tennis ball in the house, and occasionally it would touch the ceiling where it left a mark. The unsightly marks bothered her father, and he asked her not to do it again. She defied him, and did it again! He went directly to her, and tapped her on the head. Immediately she burst into tears, but so did he, and they embraced on the floor together and bawled and bawled. He never believed in spanking children, but disciplined them by depriving them of something they wanted, or wanted to do. This was why Vera was so surprised when he tapped her on the head.

Ray, his only son, died when he was only fifteen months of age, of complications following measles. He hoped for another son, and when Vera was born, he always called her 'Bill,' a nickname that even her sisters and husband called her.

The tragic and untimely death of his dear wife, Myra, came when she was only 31 years of age. This was a traumatic experience for him and his three daughters who were age three, five and ten years old. He had been married about eleven years. This closely parallels his father's experience, as each lost a young wife, and had three children to raise. Myra's death was from ptomaine poisoning caused by eating tainted sausage, resulting in a severe illness of three days, and then death. Louise Chamberlin Neff told me that she could remember the anxiety, and later, the sorrow experienced by her father and mother when they learned of Myra's illness and death. Nellie, his sister, who lived next door, mothered the children, along with her son, Clarence Nichols, who was slightly older than Mable, Joe's eldest daughter. The girls loved her, and felt at home there, especially when Aunt Nell married Uncle 'Ollie' McAllister, and they moved just two doors away. The McAllisters treated them as if they were their own children. Housekeepers came and went during the four and a half years before Joe married Cora Winkless.

The girls especially liked one little English woman who danced and sang and played with them. Though they grew up without their own mother, they had a very happy, close relationship with their father, and loved him dearly. He was proud of his three daughters.

The highlight of the year for his daughters was the special summers they looked forward to, when their father drove them to Springville, UT. They stayed with Aunt Charlotte, their mother's sister, and her husband Uncle John, for the three summer months. This kept them in close touch with their mother's relatives.

When his daughters were married, Joe said that he was satisfied with his sons-in-law. He knew that they would be good to their wives, and he could sleep well at night. He called Ern the 'Bowers Kid.' Ross Nuttall and Ern Bowers went on hunting and fishing trips with him often. They always used the meat that they got. An ugly bull dog by the name of Clip would retrieve the birds such as ducks and pheasants. His half-brother, Dent, often went too.

He was a special grandpa to us (Audrey and Jeri), and made us feel loved. We sat on his lap, and played with the little gold saw that was on his watch fob. We were entertained with simple tunes that he played on the piano, especially 'Little Brown Jug.' We liked to watch him roll his 'smokes,' but he always made it clear that it was not a good habit. We looked forward to riding with him in the high wagon pulled by a horse, or horses, and loved to 'drive' ourselves. Often he delivered sacks of potatoes, onions or carrots to us. He was an attentive audience when we danced for him. When we lived with Aunt Mable and Uncle Ross on 13th South, I can remember Grandpa and Aunt Cora often being there for dinner around the big oval table, especially on Thanksgiving or Christmas

When we visited his house, Grandpa used to take us out to pull a carrot to munch on the biggest ones we could find. Some were so big, it took our little jaws all day to eat it. It was fun to run through the corn field behind the house. Once there was a pet lamb that we called our very own. I remember being quite old before I realized they disappeared into lamb chops. Often Grandpa would give us a shiny silver dollar. Jeri kept hers in a little abalone shell purse.

At Christmas time, our tree was decorated with paper dollar bills given to us by Grandpa and his brother, Uncle Jack.

One precious experience that I had with Grandpa was at Heath's skating rink when I was about ten years old. I had gone there with some friends from school, but when we got skating, I got the impression that they did not particularly want me around. I felt so alone and discouraged and in the way. Grandpa must have seen me (he worked there at the time), and when I saw him I burst into tears and spilled out all my unhappiness. He knew what to say to me, and though I cannot remember what he said, I felt a lot better, and went out and skated again.

He had a very unusual, deep voice, and a hearty chuckle, and a sense of humor. One of his favorite jokes was about all the very famous people born in February. There was Joe Chamberlin, Frank Heath and —?— McKenzie (Grandpa's good friends), and Washington and Lincoln....

When the building of South High School forced a move, we visited Grandpa and Aunt Cora at their home at 3519 South 11th East. It was a pretty little green frame house with a small stream running down the side. He had a wonderful strawberry patch which we raided, then stuffed ourselves with the juicy berries which we washed under water from the hose. One Winter, we were there for dinner, and there were many open fields close by his home. He and Dad took us on our sled which they tied to the bumper of the car, and they whisked us down the road and through the fields. We never had a sleigh ride like that before or since.

Vera remembers one summer as they were returning home from their summer visit in Springville. They were driving home in a covered wagon when something frightened the horses. They began racing down the American Fork hill, and Grandpa could not stop the runaways. The three girls were so frightened that they wanted to jump out of the wagon. Grandpa had a very hard time driving the horses and keeping the three little girls inside the wagon, but the horses finally tired, and they were all safe."

Memories of Joseph Ramsay Chamberlin by Ruth McAllister Black

"I have some special memories of my uncle Joseph Chamberlin. My favorite was of the buggy rides into town with Uncle Joe. I loved horses, and was thrilled when he let me go with him. The ultimate was when I was old enough in his eyes to actually drive the horse!

He always grew lovely, juicy tomatoes on his property behind Whittier School, quite a ways from the house. He loved to nibble on the tomatoes as he worked, and frequently slipped a salt shaker into his pocket when he went to work on the tomatoes. How very often Aunt Cora would call me and send me to retrieve a 'salt celler' as we used to call them. Sometimes, he had several in his pockets.

He often used a horse when working his fields, and at days end, the Christopherson children (two or three of them) and I would sometimes be lifted onto the back of the amiable animal and be allowed to ride as he led us to the barn. That was a big thrill.”

PREPARATION OF THIS RECORD

This record was prepared by the late David C. Chamberlin Sr., using data obtained from various sources as listed. Comments and additional information are welcome and should be sent to the World Chamberlain Genealogical Society. < www.chamberlain-society.org >
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Records compiled from personal interviews and letters (about 1920 to 1960) by Seth C. Chamberlin, 2401 Neffs Lane, Salt Lake City, UT
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