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Sarah Loader Holman

HANDCART PIONEER

By RAY J. DAVIS

She was ninety-nine years of age when she passed away in March 1942, one of the last, and possibly the last survivor of one of the great pioneer treks of history. Some time before her death, she told me her story. As she unfolded it to me, her wrinkled face seemed to become calm and smooth,



SARAH LOADER HOLMAN ON HER 95th BIRTHDAY

and across the table I fancied I could see this little English girl as she appeared in 1855.

Sarah's childhood was uneventful, but when her parents joined an unpopular church this peace was broken. Her father was soon dismissed from his position and was unable to find another, so the family counseled together about the future. They talked of going to America, and the thought grew until one day they found sale for their furniture. That settled it. They would go.

The parents and the five younger girls left for the United States. The eldest one had married a Mr. Jaques, and he went too. The four eldest of the thirteen children refused to leave England and were never heard from directly again, though the family continued to write to them for years. The next four children left later.

A company of five hundred fellow religionists chartered a sailing vessel, the *John J. Boyd*, stocked it with food and water, and left the shores of England on December 12, 1855. The sixty-five days spent in crossing the ocean were marred by the food and water running low, bitter cold weather, sickness, and the eventual death of sixty of their fellow passengers. The ship arrived in New York near the last of winter. The emigrants pooled their money and rented a storage house to live in until prep-

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aration could be made to continue their journey. Most of them secured work of various kinds to supply the necessary means with which to continue on to Utah, their "land of Zion."

In June, they started their journey west in cattle cars on the railroad. At times they made good progress, but at other times they camped for days beside the railway tracks waiting for a train to take them on. Upon arrival at Iowa City, Iowa, the end of the railroad, they found that they could not leave because the handcarts from St. Louis, which were to carry their belongings, had not yet arrived. It was the latter part of July before these came, and the hurried preparations for the trip were completed, as other families joined the group. Two handcarts were allotted to the Loader family. One was pulled by Mr. Loader and Mr. Jaques, and the other by the four Loader girls. These carts were two-wheeled with a pair of shafts in front and a crossbar. The two older sisters got between the shafts and pushed on the bar, while the two little girls pulled on ropes tied to the bar.

The food was carefully rationed, carried in ox-driven wagons, and apportioned each day. Each family took a tent, and were allowed to take a total of seventeen pounds a person of clothing, cooking utensils, and personal effects. Many were the heartaches as prized possessions they had carried so carefully from their home so far away had to be discarded. On top of the cart pulled by the men were perched the sick mother and the eldest sister who was expecting a baby very soon.

It was a sight seldom seen when on that July morning six hundred and twenty people, pulling all of their earthly possessions in handcarts, faced the West and thirteen hundred miles of prairies, mountains, and Indians. Mr. Savage, an experienced frontiersman, said it was too late in the season to start, for an early winter could overtake them before they reached their destination. But the group insisted on going. Hearts were happy and feet light as permission to start came from Edward Martin, their leader, for they thought only of the peace and prosperity that seemed to lie ahead.

At first all went well, but days lengthened into weeks, mornings of hope changed to nights of despair; there were sickness and death, but the march had to continue. Never was there a day spent in rest except the Sabbath.

One evening just as the company was preparing to camp, the married daugh-

ter said that her time had arrived. The family tent was erected, and all possible done to welcome the new child into the world. No anesthetics or doctor were available, not even a bed to lie on. All night they worked, and early the next morning the baby was born. A small supply of food was left with the family, and the company went on. Fear of Indians and wolves helped the lone family to forget the heat of the summer day, but the fear of not overtaking their comrades was even worse. When night came, the two men took turns standing guard to watch for Indians and wild animals.

At daylight the next morning, they prepared to continue. Their belongings were loaded on the carts, the two sick women and the new-born babe were made as comfortable as possible on the load, and they started. All day long they hurried on. As evening approached, they paused to eat a frugal meal, then continued on their way. The country was so level they could see the campfires of the company miles ahead of them, and at midnight in a state of exhaustion, they joined the group.

From this time on, Mr. Loader began to weaken. Every day except Sundays, the party pushed on. The sick and the weak had to go, too, as it was a race of life and death against the cold of winter, for it was getting dangerously late in the season. As they approached Ashhollow in western Nebraska, the father fainted several times, but managed to travel seventeen miles his last day of walking. The following morning he was unable to rise, so friends lifted him and placed him on top of the girls' cart, and occasionally the mother helped pull. They hauled him all day, and at evening left him on the cart, for he had gone beyond all hope. Early the next morning they dug a shallow grave in the sand, wrapped the body in a blanket and hurriedly buried him in an unmarked grave. The journey must go on regardless of personal feelings or sufferings.

When they arrived at the Platte River, an early winter had set in. Their progress was hampered by a heavy snowstorm, and the river was partly frozen over. The two little girls in front started out on the ice, but Sarah said, "We would rather push than pull," so they got behind the cart and pushed everything, including the two older girls, off the ice and into the river. The water was waist deep, but the entire company crossed safely and had to let their clothes freeze dry during the day. They were further delayed by the handcarts breaking down, caused by the unseasoned timber from which they had been built. The farther they went, the worse this trouble became.

Food also became a serious problem. Because the bacon was gone and wild game had been scarce, flour had to be rationed in the amount of one pound to each adult, and one-half pound to each child. This made eleven biscuits a day

(Continued on page 822)



MISSIONARIES WHO ENTERED THE MISSIONARY HOME SEPTEMBER 9, AND DEPARTED SEPTEMBER 19, 1946

Reading from left to right, first row: Norma Burton, Ione Kimball, Amy Brandt, Hazel Kearl, Ruth Robertson, Ivan K. Bruderer, Katherine Zollinger, Genevieve Mary Allen, Don B. Colton, director; Kenneth L. Barrick, Chariton R. Jacobs, Eva Coombs, Lenard B. Allen, Leroy Noble, Cyril Whatcott, Albert Clarence Crandell, Lon W. Rigby, Harriet Y. Woodard, Dorothy M. Tracy.

Second row: Marjie Smith, Ida Hart, Elsie Schloer, Julia Carver, Maurine Lawrence, Reva Baird, Myrle Hardee, Shirley Dee Hansen, Ellwyn R. Stoddard, Dona Anderson, Cecile Romney, Melba Sutherland, George J. Walser, Betty J. Cluff, Elmira K. Galloway, Maralyn Olsen, Hazel Harris.

Third row: Charles Bytheway, Donald Edvalson, Robert C. Eyring, Blaine E. Olson, Keith B. Schofield, Dale S. Bailey, Charles E. Parkin, Martin J. Isaksen, Vernon L. Greenland, George Ray Clawson, Carol Ogden, Oliver Glen Schow, VaLoy Hanney, Marinette Meit-os, Mae Anderson, Flora A. Miles, John Schwendimann.

Fourth row: Edith M. Mullinger, Emma Jane Schoenfeld, Hannah Baker, Norman Carl Ahern, Jr., A. Cornell Green, Ernest LeRoI Carroll, Jr., Max Liljenquist, Garth C. Allred, Merrill S. Budge, Veldon

R. Hodgson, Keith C. Poulsen, Regina C. Wade, Yvonne Green, Kenneth Arthur Jarvis, John W. T. Haynes, Sterling Nicolaysen.

Fifth row: Gwen Clegg, Marjorie Tate, Victor D. Nelson, Vida O. Nelson, Conrad J. Z. Hansen, Richard Mondfrans, Nellie Mondfrans, LeGrande Mondfrans, Richard L. Castleton, Joseph R. Smith, John R. Bybee, Guy L. Merkle, Deane H. Platt, Ross V. Burnside, John R. Parker, Calvin H. Evans, Chester Hill.

Sixth row: Hannah B. Monson, Betty Mitchell, Geneve Clayton, John A. Johnson, Augusta Johnson, Peter T. Hart, Franklin Ross Jensen, L. Stephen Richards, Jr., George P. Marchant, Conrad P. Flake, Edwin F. Cammack, Donald W. Adling, Conrad W. Bolter, Maurice John Moulton, David G. Berbert.

Seventh row: Gertrude Nelson, Maxine Lund, Anneva Galbraith, Neva Wright, Ruth Rockwood, Keith R. Walker, Robert Callister, Lucretia Hart, Gordon H. Flammer, Franklin N. Davis, A. Elmo Jyers, Rollo W. Bickley, Dean S. Farnsworth, Mervyn S. Bennion, Calvin D. Whatcott, Kenneth B. Done.

Eighth row: Benjamin F. Mortensen, R. Wendell White, Robert L. Anderlin, Morris D. Young, James H. Wells, Kenneth M. Flake, Francis C. Stoddard,

Harold R. Germaine, Daren C. Young, Thomas F. Howells, Connell B. Roberts, Harvey Melle, J. Dale Bown, Robert A. Pearson, Joseph A. Fitzpatrick, Robert W. Wood, Austin Barney, John T. Ely, Carrol B. Liechty.

Ninth row: Rex L. Christensen, Kenneth W. Burnett, Lysle C. Tuckfield, Norman L. Dunn, Frank B. Salisbury, Don H. Jenkins, Richard Folkerson, Lorin N. Pace.

Tenth row: Dwight R. Dixon, Joe C. Roestenburg, J. Ellsworth Brown, Arnold E. Maas, Reed A. Watkins, John Ray Wall, Richard R. Clark, Richard G. Ellsworth, Donald R. Hall, Hollis D. Smith, Ordith W. Bourgeois.

Eleventh row: David Egbert, Floyd Keith Hawkins, Roy Montierth, Kenneth H. Barker, Aelcideon M. Barker, David R. Kezerian, Gale B. Sessions, Harold P. Clawson, Richard I. Ricks, Junius C. Ruesch.

Twelfth row: Lester D. Haymore, Jay D. Hansen, Verrn L. Chapman, Floyd J. Herlin, Theodore Perry.

Thirteenth row: John Sidney Creager, Joseph Elroy Jones, Lionell L. Myers, James O. Jensen, Mrs. Roeine S. Jensen, Mrs. Eliza Jane Smith, Elmer W. Smith, Samuel Smith, F. Dean Berry, Clarence R. Campbell, Oscar W. Walch, Wilford M. Finck.

SARAH LOADER HOLMAN

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for the entire Loader family. The deep snow made travel extremely slow, so it was an act of Providence when a man with a wagon came along and took the young Jaques couple and the new baby on with him. The four younger girls and their sick mother had to take care of themselves from this point on. The main company followed up the Sweetwater River in Wyoming, and the cold continued. During the last nine days that there was any food, they had one-fourth pound of flour each, daily—their only nourishment—then all was gone. That night eighteen people died, and they had to build a fire to soften the frozen ground in order to dig graves deep enough in which to bury the bodies.

The company pushed on at a snail's pace for three days more. Word had come that wagons of food were on the way from Salt Lake City, where information had previously arrived of their plight. At Martin's Hollow, named after the leader of the company, they gave up trying to go on. The Loader tent had been soaked in the river while crossing, so the four children had to hold it up by four corners while the mother tried to drive pegs into the frozen ground. Finally they gave up, but the tent had frozen partly into

shape, and they were able to make their beds inside.

Toward evening a man staggered up to their tent to see how they were, and fell headlong to the ground. They dragged him inside and wrapped him as best they could, and then crawled into their own beds to await death. To a girl twelve, this was a horrible thought, but it seemed inevitable. During the night the man died, and the next morning hardly enough strong men remained to dig the usual shallow grave. During the day Mother Loader tore some rawhide from the framework of the cart and boiled it, and gave the hot water to her children to drink; then she urged them to get up. But, too cold, the two older girls refused, when in a desperate effort to rouse them, the mother started to dance a jig; she slipped and fell, and rolled on them. This made the smaller girls laugh, and soon they got up. With a little more urging the other girls also arose.

ONE man from the company volunteered to climb to the top of the next hill to see if he could see the rescue wagons coming. When he returned, the despair on his face answered the one question on every lip. Toward evening he felt strong enough to try it again. Upon reaching the

summit, he began to wave his arms and shout that help was at hand. All who were able came out of their tents and started out to meet the drivers. Men fell on each other, kissed and shouted for joy. Women and children cried. This was indeed a resurrection. Soon frozen loaves of bread were tossed out to the starving pioneers, and in the terms of Sarah Loader, "Nothing ever tasted so good before or since."

With the food came hope, and the next morning they loaded the sick and the weakest into the wagons, and continued westward. The four children, still pulling their handcart with their few belongings, trudged behind. The mother was now riding in a wagon. Each day they would meet more help, and just before reaching Salt Lake City, the children were picked up. They abandoned the handcart which had carried all their earthly possessions for over a thousand miles across the pioneer trail, and rode into the valley in comparative comfort, where they arrived the last of November.

Perhaps Ezra Meeker was right when he said of the pioneers, "The weak died, and the cowards turned back." Out of the six hundred and twenty, death had taken almost one-third of the company in the last month of the trip.

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Sarah Loader's hardships were not over yet, for the family had to separate and each work for a living. Later she went with a married sister and family to Snake River valley in Idaho, where she was soon married and built what was said to be the first house in the state to have a wooden roof.

When asked if they suffered much in pioneering the new state, she said, "Oh, some were poor, and some were rich."

"Whom did you consider as being

rich?" she was asked, and she replied, "Anyone who could eat all the bread he wanted each day was considered rich."

On the night in February when I heard her story, Sarah Loader Holman was living in a substantial, comfortable home. Within a few miles were her nine children, sixty-eight grandchildren, and ninety-five great-grandchildren, all of whom are respected citizens. Surely her dream when a little girl of twelve had come true—love, security, and peace enveloped her.

THE STAFF OF LIFE

(Concluded from page 784)

our health all to this. We can point with pride to our educational statistics; we may quote our health statistics; we may name numerous athletes. But this is not enough.

THE "Mormon" people have made an enviable record because they have abstained from liquor and tobacco. What might we be if we kept the whole Word of Wisdom! Factors that help us obey the sections of the revelation about liquor and tobacco are the immediate bodily effects as well as the stench, to say nothing of the expense and slavery. Eating in accordance with the advice about food is so simple, and all that happens is that we feel normal and well. If every time we didn't eat enough grain during the day to equal "the staff of life" and ate insufficient amounts of "wholesome herbs" which the Lord says he "hath ordained for the constitution, nature and use of man," and "the fruit of the vine, that which yieldeth fruit, whether in the ground or above the ground," we had immediate noticeable effects, perhaps we could keep these sections of the law more easily.

I have been rebellious when I have become ill and blamed the Lord because I "kept the Word of Wisdom" since I did not smoke or drink. Now I know better. It will be hard for me to live above years and years of careless eating habits, but I am hoping because I am now learning to obey this law to the fullest possible extent, that I will live to fill the measure of my creation; that when my time comes the Lord can call me home quietly—not have to rescue me from some pain-filled death that makes us acutely aware of the fact that death is a blessing.

The Lord says, this revelation is

... the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days—Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints. (D. & C. 89: 2, 3.)

Mills produce only two percent whole wheat flour. In other words ninety-eight percent of the population deprives itself of full flavor, vitamins, and minerals. We have been so commercialized and so affected by advertising that we have been lulled into using what the crowd does. At breakfast, the important item should be a bowl of whole grain cereal instead of the devitalized "stuff" served in most homes. Even the foods that are said to be "enriched" contain but a small percentage of the precious elements removed in preparation for the market. At noon the important item could be whole wheat bread for sandwiches. Whole wheat toast is excellent nibbling. Dinner should stress vegetables. When fruit is in season, it can be fifty percent of a meal or more, especially during the summer. A quarter of a watermelon, a cantaloup, large bowls of peaches or berries served with whole wheat bread and butter make the best possible dessert.

Our values have become twisted. We think little of paying two dollars for a roast but we complain about paying three dollars a bushel for peaches, or four dollars a hundred pounds for potatoes, etc. If we are to keep the Word of Wisdom and obtain the promised blessings we must buy wisely, cook carefully, and eat objectively and enjoyably all the different foods provided by a wise Heavenly Parent for our use.

THE IMPROVEMENT ERA

ACCOMPLISHMENT should always be the result when energy is expended. Yet, like a dizzily spinning top, many businesses go 'round in the preparation of advertising and get nowhere. Month after month, the same thing happens again and again and nothing is accomplished but the expenditure of dollars that could be made to produce results. The function of a printing organization today is to help clients to plan printing that builds sales—to take copy and dramatize it, make it so irresistibly attractive that it must naturally draw the reader's attention. The waste of which we speak is often due to lack of understanding. Realization of this has made us sales minded. Your selling problem is our problem, and our experience puts us in a position to print your sales story so that it will get results.

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Miner Mike SAYS

"Recently the Newmont Mining Company, one of the nation's larger mining companies, announced its intention of developing certain mineral ground in Utah. We should encourage more outside capital to take a hand in development of our resources. For each dollar of ore produced, 90c stays in Utah."



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