

Utah Pioneer of 1862

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On September 22, in the year 1840, Jane Withers was born in the little town of Glasgow, Scotland. Her family, consisting of father, mother, two brothers and one sister, were of Scotland's working class and belonged to the Methodist Church until the coming of the "Mormon" elders in their midst. Then the family unit was split never to be reunited. The father and two daughters became Latter-Day Saints; the sons, with the mother, remained staunch adherents to the doctrines of John Wesley.

The home life, from then on, was not very pleasant, for the father, who had been a clerk in the English Church, lost his position through joining the Mormons, and with his position the small salary it afforded and the harmony of the home. As the family was strong in its different faiths no lasting reconciliations were made among them even after the time of the father's death which occurred shortly after his conversion.

His death left the family in dire circumstances and thru the sale of the Mother's embroidery work, which work she did skillfully, they were able to eke out a rather miserable subsistence for a number of years.

Then the elder sister married and moved to London, where she and her husband affiliated themselves with a little group of saints.

At this time mother was just fifteen, and yet she probably had the severest test of her faith. In the absence of her sister, the other members of the family used every influence to urge her to abandon the religion she had lately adopted. However, she was not to be easily persuaded, and after praying ~~for~~ guidance, she stood firm in her decision, and though it meant that family ties were forever broken she clung to her new faith and immediately made preparations to seek occupation away from her home. She found the desired work in the city of Glasgow as servant in the home of a retired wine merchant. Here, and in other homes in Glasgow she spent about three years, and then proceeded to London in order to be near her sister.

Here she ~~went~~ "went out to service" in the household of a titled gentleman, where she remained for last three years in England. During that time she carefully saved

her earnings for the wonderful journey to the land of her longings and cherished desires.

The family in whose home she had been serving tried numerous times to persuade mother to stay with them and give up the thots of going to the new world. But she was determined and in 1862, mother sailed from Liverpool in the *Bapscot*, a sailing vessel bound for America. The six or seven weeks on the sea would seem long to a person who had heard many of the same route being covered in as many days as there were weeks spent then, but with all the discomforts of traveling "steerage" mother and her companions, found the time short with new scenes opening constantly before them.

After landing on the shores of the new world, there was a long trip by rail from New York to St. Joseph, Missouri, where they joined John R. Murdock's ox-team company which was to take them to Salt Lake City.

There were in the company, a number of young men who had gone back from Salt Lake a teamsters, and among these, John Middleton, to whom mother was married upon reaching Salt Lake City.

After the marriage they started immediately for Cedar City where they lived for about two years, during which time their first child, a daughter, was born. Afterward they moved to Hamilton's Fort, where they made their home for a great many years. Here all their other children, three boys and three girls, were born, and here the second child, a boy, died while mother was alone.

The country was new and comparatively unsettled at this time and the pioneers were all subjected to hardships and privations of various kinds. I recall hearing mother say many times that the one thing of all others that was hardest on her was the lack of soap.

While mother had a taste for good literature there were things which she valued above genius. They were honesty and integrity. The adage she quoted most often was: "An honest man is the noblest work of God."

She believed in living simply and always within her means. Often she said, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but the wherewithal to be comfortable." She advised:

"Never put the mill stone of debt around your neck." She was careful and thrifty in

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in small matters and often stated, "It's the drop by drop that fills the bucket."

Father died in 1896 and mother moved into Cedar City where she lived until her death in 1913.