

## THE LIFE OF MARY HAY

The Hay family has been of record in Scotland since 1160; consequently are found in various counties of Scotland. The hero in this article, Mary Hay, states in her record that her family came from Woodly Farm in Kirkentilloch, near Glasgow, later moving to Paisley Refrew Shire where her father and mother were born.

Paisley Refrew Shire for many generations has been noted for its textile manufacturing and ship building. Here William Hay and his wife Margaret Frazer were born, and grew to manhood and womanhood and raised their family, which were as follows: Isabella born 19 April, 1817; John born 23 April 1819; Mary born 21 April 1821; James born 11 April 1823; William born 4 Dec. 1824; Agnes born 17 April 1827; Robert born 8 Dec. 1828; and Alexander born 30 May 1831.

As was the custom in those early days, the children were put to work as early as possible to help support the family. Consequently they were denied the privilege of an education which is given to all children of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Mary was small in stature and frail; yet she was quick and ambitious. Early in her life she commenced working in a warehouse connected with a cotton manufacturing establishment. Although she did not have a scholastic education, she was considered well informed. She loved to read good books; especially was this true along religious subjects. She delighted in the study of the Bible.

When she was 28 years old she heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Having a firm conviction of its truth she, with her mother and older sister, embraced it. Although most of her family and friends were opposed to her joining this new faith, she was not ostracized as many people were who did join it.

In the Spring of 1856 she decided to go to Utah to be among the people of her new faith. She with many others left Liverpool on March 23 on the sailing vessel Enoch Train. They were on the water for 38 days, landing in Boston May 1, 1856. From there they took a

train to New York, passing through Castle Gardens, which was the Custom Port.

The only means which was afforded the Saints to carry them to Iowa City, which was the outfitting place for the "Mormon" emigrants to Utah, were cattle cars. Although Mary left no record of that part of her journey, one lady who rode in them told how they were herded in like cattle; the cars were so dirty that at every stop the Saints would get out and build fires to heat water and wash their clothes. On one occasion logs were piled on the track to derail the train, but they were seen soon enough to prevent a wreck. To say the least, a trip under such conditions was anything but pleasant.

For the purpose of emigrating the converts to Utah, the Saints had what is known as the "Perpetual Emigration Company." The converts would pay as much as they could upon leaving their home, then they were helped to their destination from this fund, after which they would finish paying as they were able to do so.

Arrangements had been made for Mary, along with others, to cross the plains from Iowa to Utah, in a handcart company. However, they were detained until June 11, as the handcarts had to be made, supplies procured, and arrangements made.

There were two companies preparing to cross the Plains that summer. One called the English Company under command of Edmond Ellsworth left on June 9. The other called the Scotch Company under command of D. McArthur left on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June. Mary was in the second company. The Company contained 497 souls, 100 handcarts, 5 wagons, 24 oxen, 4 mules and 25 tents. The Saints were only allowed to take the absolute necessities for the trip with them. Everything else had to be left until the following year. Each member was given their bedding and rations to be pulled or pushed in his cart. The main provisions were carried in the wagons and rationed out twice a week. Mary stated their rations were meager, just enough to get along.

Little children and the sick were allowed to ride. Some children were born on that trek across the plains. The weather was pleasant

and everything went along without a mishap for a time. As summer wore on, the carts, having been made of green timber, began to shrink and break down, causing the Saints endless trouble.

What these people lacked in food and other necessities for comfort, they made up in optimism and courage, cheering each other during the trying days and singing songs and dancing at night.

As stated in the beginning, Mary was a frail girl, yet she walked and pulled her handcart the entire 1400 miles, with the exception of one day after she had sprained her ankle. They forded streams, climbed mountains, but they sang as they went. They landed in Salt Lake City September 23, 1856, having traveled three months and 12 days. Mary says in her record, "I never felt down hearted until I landed in a strange land without a relative; then I sat down and cried." However, she was met by a Scotch family named McGreger who took her to their home, and were very kind to her. She stayed with them for two weeks.

A young man by the name of Thomas Cunningham Young, whom Mary had known in Scotland, and who had been in Utah for four years, had settled on some land in Three Mile Creek, Box Elder County, now known as Perry. He came to Salt Lake and asked Mary to be his bride. There was little time for courting in those days. They were married on Oct. 8 and Mary went north with him.

His home was just a one-room log cabin with dirt roof and dirt floor, a few crude articles of furniture, a cook oven and some tin dishes. What a contrast from what Mary had been used to in Scotland, working in a factory, coming home to well-prepared meals in a comfortable home. Even the ordinary task of bread making she had never learned, probably due to the fact that her mother had bought their bread; but she took up her new life with the same zeal and fervor that she did the trip across the Plains. It is surprising how rapidly she learned her household tasks as well as to help her husband milk cows and other chores on the farm.

In the baggage which Mary had to leave in Iowa were needles, thread, clothes, books, and many other useful articles which she needed in her home. One experience which she used to tell is very interesting.

Her husband had a pair of Elk skin pants which had the disagreeable habit of stretching terribly when wet and shrinking up out of shape when dry. This of course rotted the stitching and soon ripped apart. Not having any thread, Mary gathered the outside skin of the milkweed and used that. As soon as it dried, it too broke apart, but she would repeat the process until her thread arrived in the Fall of 1857. When her baggage arrived she traded many of her books and clothes for some things she needed so badly in her home.

In the midst of the difficulties of that first year, her first baby was born Sept. 14, 1857. They named him after his father Thomas Cunningham.

The winter of 1857 all the able-bodied men were called to go to Echo Canyon to keep Johnston's Army out of Utah. The Saints had suffered so much from their enemies that they were determined they could not come in to molest them here. Mary's husband had to go, leaving her and her baby with scarcely enough to eat or clothes to keep them warm. When the snow got so deep that the army could not progress, Thomas returned home.

The next spring he, like all other settlers in Salt Lake, Weber, and Box Elder Counties, loaded his belongings into a wagon, filled his home with straw, and moved south to a place called Pond Town, now called Salem. Had the soldiers entered the Valleys, they would have found nothing but ruins as the Saints were determined to burn their homes rather than have them possessed by the Army. However, an agreement was reached between the Army and Utah officials that summer so Thomas and Mary returned home in time to harvest their grain, which provided their bread for the coming winter.

It required the greatest struggle and strictest economy to provide for their family. Mary had five children in the next eight years. They

were: William Hay born Dec. 31, 1858; Margaret Frazer born Nov. 22, 1860; Catherine born Mar. 9, 1862; Robert Cunningham born July 25, 1863, and Isabella Mary born Feb. 25, 1865. Yet with all the work taking care of them, she found time to go into the field to help her husband. The last time she helped him pile hay she fell off the wagon, lighting on her head, nearly killing herself. From that time on her ten-year-old son took her place helping his father.

Thomas had procured three pieces of land, one on which the log home stood, one north of what is called White's lane, and one south and east. The latter had more water on it and Mary had looked forward to the time when she could have a real home built on this piece.

The same courage that carried her across those 1400 miles of trackless desert, facing all kinds of hardships, including possibilities of Indian attack, now carried her bravely forward. Her husband died 6 May 1868. She and her little boys must now make the land yield to them their living.

Providence was kind to that brave little woman. The following year 1869, the great Atlantic and Pacific Railroad was completed. This ran through the two south pieces of Mary's land.

While other families profited by good wages working on the railroad, Mary's family was too young to realize anything that way, but she received a certain sum for the right-of-way through two of her places. She also sold soil from her north place for the railroad grade. Now she was able to build the home of her dreams.

In contrast to her dirt roof and dirt floor that she had been living in, this new home was a mansion: One large room, well lighted and ventilated. This was used as the living room as well as the bedroom. On the west was a lean-to which served as her kitchen. Beneath the kitchen was a well-built clean, cool cellar. What a joy she must have had in her new home.

She planted two Box Elder trees in the front for shade, while on the north she set out fruit trees. As before stated, there was more water on this land, which made cultivation much easier. Here Mary

raised her children to manhood and womanhood, instilling in them high moral standards.

Thomas was the first to marry. He established his home about a mile east of his mother.

When he brought his young wife, Emma, to see his mother she called her "gid daughter." Emma thought this quite a compliment when Mary had two daughters of her own. But she soon learned that "gid" daughter meant daughter-in-law in Scotch, and not good daughter as she had supposed.

Isabella was the next to marry, and then Robert. Robert built two more rooms on the north of his mother's house. Later an extra room was added to the west of both places. That completes the picture of the home that holds many fond memories for the writer.

All during her life Mary was an active church worker. She had unbounded faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. She stated that through all her trials she was never sorry that she had left her home in the old country and cast her lot with those early pioneers of Utah.

During the last four years of her life her health failed her, but she still acted as counselor to the President of the Relief Society in her ward. After two months of illness, she passed away on the 16 of January 1886, and was buried in Brigham City beside her husband who had died 18 years earlier.

She was held in fond remembrance by all who knew her.