

Written by Charlotte Parry Clark (a grand-daughter) from notes taken from conversations with her Mother, Charlotte Ann Edmunds Parry, who was the fifth child of Jane Jones Edmunds and Nathaniel Edmunds. The material under quotations was copied from an article written by Gustive O. Larson, History Department, Brigham Young University and from " Ordeal by Handcart" by Wallace Stegner.

Jane Jones Edmunds was born in Merthyr ~~Tydfil~~^Y, Glamorganshire, South Wales, March 29, 1832. Her parents were David Jones and Mary Rowlands. When she was only seventeen or eighteen years of age she heard the Gospel preached by our ~~M~~ Missionaries, became converted and was baptized in 1850. She was the first of her family to join the Church. Her parents felt so ashamed and disgraced that they turned her out. They drew their blinds, which was a customary exhibition of grief when a member of a family was taken by death. William Phillips, President of that Branch of the Church, befriended her and gave her a home. Later, her mother became ill and Jane returned home to care for her during her last illness, so evidently she was partially forgiven by her parents. Her mother died April 20, 1851.

On December 6, 1851 Jane married Nathaniel Edmunds. He had been baptized into the Church in 1848, so may have influenced her to listen to the Gospel Message. Nathaniel worked in the Crashaw Steel Mills, possibly in Dowlis, Wales. Their oldest child, a boy, died when six weeks old. DOWLAIS

She left Liverpool, England in April 1856 with her husband and year old son for Utah. They spent a little over six weeks on the Atlantic, and disembarked at Boston to entrain for the western railroad terminal at Iowa City. " So far they had caught only straining glimpses of America through smeared train windows or from station platforms. Now they encountered things that piety and hope had not anticipated. The Iowa heat was intense and steamy. Reared under north Europe's

gray skies, the pale novices sweltered, crowded three and four families to a tent, while they waited for the handcarts to be built. Children whined with prickly heat, there was not enough food, Iowa natives were often hostile and uncharitable to Mormons. In the long grass of river bottom and woods, unseen insects bit their ankles and left red swollen, itching patches. " In Wales, nobody had told them about chiggers.

They had planned this migration for five years and so had saved their money and generously supplied themselves with clothing and supplies to last for years. Like many others who came here with the Handcart Companies, they left their possessions in boxes on the Plains, expecting them to be picked up later by wagons and brought to Utah. They did not receive any of them. According to Wallace Stegner the load limit on each handcart was seventeen pounds for each adult, ten for each child.

The handcarts were ready now, made of " oak and hickory and built the width of a wagon so as to roll easily in the ruts of the Oregon and Mormon Trails. Beyond Iowa City " lay nearly 1,400 miles to be covered by foot with handcarts. The first three hundred miles were through settled Iowa which offered opportunity for the novices to accustom themselves to the environment and method of travel. Their final jumping off place was Florence, Nebraska(formerly Mormon Winter Quarters) beyond which stretched the wilderness."

" Pitted against the terrain, climate, and distance was a conglomeration of urban factory workers, colliers, etc. more zealous for the kingdom than robust in body."

They traveled with the third Company, led by Edward Bunker. They arrived at Florence sunburned and dusty, early in July and after ten days of rest and repairs stretched their line of one hundred handcarts westward on July 20. Five commissary wagons drawn by three span of oxen each trailed behind."

" This third party had such a phenomenally lucky passage, discounting the usual discomforts of the trail, and the occasional and expected deaths, that they seemed to demonstrate beyond all doubt the excellence of Brigham

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Young's handcart plan. In spite of the presence of many old people this company averaged twenty miles a day, as against the ordinary ox-train average of little better than ten."They came into Salt Lake Valley on October 2, 1856.

Jane had lived all her life in a large industrial city in South Wales. What an adjustment she had to make in her new home. In Utah they went to Spanish Fork with William R. Jones who was choir leader in Spanish Fork., a very fine man. Here they lived in an earthy, damp dugout. They lived there two or three years. Their son Thomas Jones was born there in March of 1858. He was born with a "crooked" foot and it was necessary to take him to a doctor at frequent intervals during the early part of his life. The nearest doctor was at Provo. This devoted young mother walked with her babe in her arms to Provo and back every two weeks to see that her son had proper care. It became quite normal except that it was shorter than the other foot. He grew to be a tall, handsome man.

The family moved to the small town of Wales, which was settled mostly by their countrymen. Jane was a counsellor in the first Relief Society organized in Wales. She knitted family stockings, patched quilts, made family clothing. She had a very good singing voice. She was said to have been a beautiful woman, large and well proportioned. She had blue eyes and medium brown hair. She was about five feet five and a half inches tall. She was well thought of and was refined in manner.

She died December 12, 1891 after a short illness. She seemingly was getting better when she suddenly passed away. From her symptoms it is now supposed that she may have had a ruptured appendix.

This was my grandmother. She is typical of ancestors nearly all of us, who were born in the Church have had. I wish to express my appreciation to her memory for the strength of character that she possessed. Would I have had the courage, when still in my teens to leave my parents and home for the Gospel?

" There are some people who say they attach no importance to a man's descent

or to family honors and despise those who do. Perhaps they may be sincere but their judgement in this matter is certainly erroneous and their feeling unnatural." "The glory of children", says the wisest of men, "are their fathers,"...."and an honorable descent should be highly valued."

Children of Nathaniel Edmunds and Jane Jones Edmunds

David J.

John J.

Thomas J.

Mary Jane

Charlotte Ann

Sarah

Hannah

Eliza