

PATIENCE LOADER

Born: 1827 England - daughter of James and Amy Loader

Age: 29

Martin Handcart Company

James and Amy Loader came to America in 1855. James had worked in England as foreman and head gardener for a wealthy gentleman by the name of Sir Henry Lambert. Patience and her eight sisters and four brothers were all born here on this estate where James had worked for 35 years. Somewhere around 1850, the Loaders were baptized members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. James was fired from his job as a consequence. In November 1855, they left for America on the "John J. Boyd" with at least six of their unmarried children, including Patience. Their oldest daughter, Ann (Dalling), had already emigrated with her husband and was awaiting their arrival in Utah.

Patience recorded a rather precarious and interesting experience she had upon her departure from England: "After my parents and my sister and I got all our baggage on board the ship, we found that it would not sail until the next day, so I decided to go back to stay at my married sister's house that night. The next afternoon I went back to the ship and found it ready to depart. The men were just taking away the last plank. There were all my folks standing on deck watching anxiously for me and shouting at the top of their voices, 'For Lord's sake bring our girl on the ship and don't leave her behind.' There was just one plank to walk on from the dock to the ship and father and mother were afraid I should fall off into the water.

"The sailors said, 'Miss, do you think you can walk the plank?' I told them I thought I could, but they thought I might get dizzy and fall off so they were very kind. One man went on the plank before me and took my hand, the second man came behind me on the plank and took my left hand. They said if I slipped they would save me from going into the water . . . There was great anxiety among them when they saw me walking the plank with the sailors, and there was great rejoicing when I was safe on the vessel with them."

The Loader family first went to Williamsburg, New York, where they all worked for a time. Even their daughter, Sarah, who was not yet twelve, worked as a nursemaid in the home of a wealthy family by the name of Sawyer. They left in June of 1856 and traveled to Iowa where they joined with their daughter, Zilpah, her husband, John Jacques, and their one-year-old daughter, Flora. Zilpah was expecting another baby, which was born on the plains in August. This new baby, Alpha, survived as (eventually) the longest-lived member of the Martin Company, but little Flora did not survive the trek. She died about a week before reaching the Valley.

One family record indicates two sons coming to America, but only ten-year-old Robert is listed with the Company. Robert died on the plains. James also died, fairly early in the trek, leaving his wife and daughters to finish the trek alone. The rest of them survived the trek, experiencing many miracles amid their tribulation. James had been

faithful and courageous in defending his new faith. One of his greatest wishes was to see his daughter, Ann, in Zion. Surely the Lord granted James this blessing of witnessing his entire family in Zion.

Patience was blessed with a mother who was a very strong woman. She protected, sustained and cheered her children as well as others without complaining, and manifested great faith in God. She put on all the extra clothing she could carry under her own, so when the children needed dry clothing, she always had it, including dry stockings for them after fording streams. As the weather became colder and provisions shorter, they were given four ounces of flour a day for each person. Instead of the usual gruel, Mother Loader made hers into little biscuits and would have them through the day, thus having a bite or two for the children when they were tired and faint.

One day, a man lying by the roadside, when asked to get up, said he could not, but if he had a mouth full of bread he could, so Amy gave him some food and he got up and went on. In Salt Lake some time later, this man stopped Amy and thanked her for saving his life.

After one exceptionally cold night, Amy (whose health was also very fragile), could not get her daughters to arise. She finally said, "Come girls, this will not do. I believe I will have to dance to you and try to make you feel better." Amy struggled to her feet, hair falling about her face as she filled the air with song. Louder and louder she sang, her wasted frame swaying as finally she danced, waving her skirts back and forth. The girls laughed, momentarily forgot their frozen toes and snow-covered blankets, as their mother danced and sang and twirled until she stepped on an icy patch and fell in a heap to the ground. Then, Patience wrote, ". . . in a moment we was all up to help our dear Mother up for we was afraid she was hurt. She laughed and said, 'I thought I could soon make you all jump up if I danced to you'. Then we found that she fell down purposely for she knew we would all get up to see if she was hurt. She said that she was afraid her girls was going to give out and get discouraged and she said that would never do to give up."

Patience had a sister, Tamar (22), who was very much grieved when she left England because she had been unable to convert her sweetheart and he remained. One night, while on the plains, after much grieving, she had a dream. The next morning she told her mother that she had dreamed that her sweetheart came and stood beside her and he seemed so real. But he was not alone. Another man was with him . . . In the dream the sweetheart finally faded away but the other man remained. When Tamar first saw Thomas E. Ricks in the rescue party, she took her mother by the arm and said, 'Mother, that's the man.' She did marry Thomas Ricks (after whom Ricks college is named).

Patience also had spiritual experiences on her trek. She relates that one day as she was pulling the handcart through the deep snow, a strange man appeared to her: "He came and looked in my face. He said, 'Are you Patience?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'I thought it was you. Travel on, there is help for you. You will come to a good place. There is plenty.' With this he was gone. He disappeared. I looked but never saw where he went. This

seemed very strange to me. I took this as someone sent to encourage us and give us strength." (The Loader family was met by rescuers at camp that night.)

Patience also wrote: "We did not get but very little meat as the bone had been picked the night before and we did not have only the half of a small biscuit as we only was having four oz. of flour a day. This we divided into portions so we could have a small piece three times a day. This we eat with thankful hearts and we always as[k] God to bless to our use and that it would strengthen our bodies day by day so that we could perform our duties. And I can testify that our heavenly Father heard and answered our prayers and we was blessed with health and strength day by day to endure the severe trials we had to pass through on that terrible journey before we got to Salt Lake City. We know that if God had not been with us that our strength would have failed us . . . I can say we put our trust in God and he heard and answered our prayers and brought us through to the valleys." [spelling corrected]

