

## **SARAH ANN ROGERSON**

Born: August 13, 1843 England

Age: 13

Martin Handcart Company

Sarah Ann was the youngest daughter in the family of William and Mary Harrison Rogerson. The family, except for William, was converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and had a great desire to come to Utah. In May 1856, Sarah, her mother, Mary (53), sister, Bridgett (23), and four brothers, James (25), William (22), Josiah (15), and John (9), sailed from Liverpool to America. Sarah Ann's father refused to come, and her oldest sister (Jane Ollerton) also remained in England. (Jane and her family emigrated later.)

In Iowa City, the family joined the Edward Martin Handcart company. Sarah's oldest sister, Jane, had married Seth Ollerton in England. Seth's parents and three sisters were also traveling with the Martin Handcart Company. Both of Seth's parents died on the trail, and his oldest sister, Alice, died shortly after arriving in Salt Lake City. Sarah was the same age as her sister-in-law, Jane Ollerton, and they were no doubt friends.

Sarah's older brother, James, was crippled and apparently had not known he would have to walk all the way, so when he reached Iowa Hill with his family, he decided to go back to England. Perhaps he felt he would be a burden on the family.

The company was only part way to Utah when the cold weather started and snow began to fall. Handcarts broke down, loads needed to be lightened, food rations were cut again and again, and rivers had to be crossed. Sarah Ann's mother had a quilted petticoat with thimbles, crochet hooks, hair pins, broaches and other keepsakes sewn between the top and the lining. This was the only way she had of bringing them with her. Sarah Ann wore a similar petticoat.

One cold, stormy morning, Sarah Ann tried to get out of bed and couldn't raise her head. The wind had drifted the snow under the edge of the tent onto her long braids of hair and they were frozen tightly in the snow. A brother came to her rescue, and with a pocket knife he cut off her hair! She had to walk away, leaving her braids frozen fast to the ground.

Because of the foresight of their mother, the lives of this family and many others were saved. She had traded some clothing items at a Fort along the way for jerky and different kinds of pepper which, when made into a hot soup, helped warm them from the inside out. Rescue wagons from the Salt Lake Valley finally arrived and the Rogersons left their handcarts at Devil's Gate on the 9th of November. They then rode in the wagons, reaching Salt Lake on November 30, 1856. This entire family, led by their courageous mother, all miraculously survived.

The Rogerson family moved to Parowan after spending that first winter in Salt Lake. Sarah Ann was sixteen when she married John Henry Lister who was nineteen. They had eleven children. At the birth of their last child, Ellen, Sarah Ann was not able to recover and died when Ellen was three weeks old.

