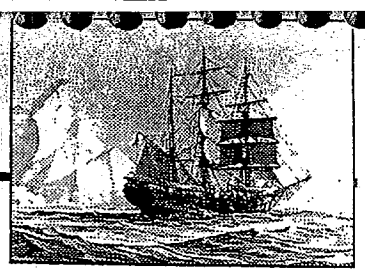


Biography Of Alice Brooks Anderson

Written by Horace Ralph



Alice Brooks Andersen, daughter of Sara Astley and Samuel Brooks, was born in Bolton, Lancashire, England, 16, Jan 1835. Her father was a painter by trade and she was the oldest of 3 living children. Alice had a younger sister, Nancy, born 8 Dec. 1838, and 2 brothers, Richard, christened 15 Dec. 1839, which died the following spring and buried 17 Apr. 1840. A second brother by the same name Richard was born 7 Feb. 1841, and grew up in Bolton.

As a young girl she heard the Mormon Elders preach the Gospel and was convinced that it was the truth. Seldom would her parents allow her to visit their meetings, as they were bitter against the Latter-day Saints. She and her sister would often steal away from home and walk a long distance in order to hear the Elders preach. Although very young she desired to be baptized. She was 12 years old before she obtained permission from her parents, after a good deal of coaxing and earnest prayer to the Lord. Alice was baptized 26 June 1847, by Elder Squire Farnsworth, and confirmed 2 July 1847, by Elder Robert Hoft, (Bolton Branch Records). The young boys and girls thought nothing of walking 10 to 12 miles to Sunday School. They would often leave home at 6 o'clock on a Sunday morning and walk this long distance to be on time for Sunday School and get home again about 10 or 11 at night, then go to work the next morning early.

When Alice was baptized, the Spirit of Emigration came upon her, but her parents would not hear of it. She felt determined however, to come to Zion. After a good deal of persuasion her parents gave their consent. As the time drew near for her departure, her father became very opposed to her going and her preparations were made secretly. One night when her parents were away from home she took her clothes and emigration money, which she had earned herself working as a weaver in a cotton mill, and left home and went to live with a family of Saints the remaining 2 weeks before she would set sail for Zion. Her father came home at night and found her missing and demanded her sister to tell where she had gone.

Then at 2 o'clock in the morning he went to the place where she was stopping and ordered her to come back home, but she refused, saying, "she would never come back home again". He then became so angry that he went to search for the police, since she was not of age, but he could not find one. He then went back and ordered her to give up her clothes, which she did. He thought by this he could stop her from going. On the last Fast Meeting she attended before leaving she bore her testimony and said farewell to her friends. When she finished speaking, a man arose and spoke in tongues. He said that would come to Zion through much tribulation and would become a mother in Israel. This strengthened her faith greatly and proved a source of inspiration to her on her journey.

She left England for America, 25 May 1856, on the ship "Horizon". There were 856 Saints on board, the largest company that had ever set sail. They were 5 weeks on the ocean, reaching Boston 30 June 1856. They were to travel the rest of their journey with handcarts, but had to wait 3 weeks in Iowa for the handcarts to be made. Samuel Richards was President of the handcart company and Edward Martin it's Captain. Brother Taylor advised them not to start out with so large a company because it was late in the year. But Brother Richards insisted on going and when the handcarts were finished they continued their journey. Captain Martin's company on the start consisted of 575 persons, 146 handcarts, 7 wagons, 6 mules and horses, 50 cows and beef cattle. The company left Iowa City, 28 July 1856. They left the Missouri River 12 Aug. 1856, and made good headway until they passed Fort Kearney, when during the night they lost 15 head of cattle. These had been used to haul provisions, which had to be taken from the wagons and added to the all ready heavy loaded handcarts of the company. Some time was spent in searching for the lost cattle, but they were not found.

There were 2 persons to each cart, and 17 pounds of bedding, a few cooking utensils were allowed each couple to start with. Two ox teams carried provisions for the entire camp. They traveled from 2 to 30 miles a day. Some days they would have to travel 20 miles in order to reach water. As they walked along pulling their handcarts behind them, people living along the way would come out and gaze at them, it being a wonderful sight to see so many people traveling along with their handcarts. When the travelers became tired they would rest themselves and rejoice that they were on their way to Zion. They also sang a song, the chorus of which is, "As we go marching up the hill, as merrily on the way we go, some must push and some must pull, until we reach the valley. Oh".

They traveled on in this manner until they reached Green River where they were caught in a severe snowstorm, which took a great many lives. They had to wade across the river and pull their handcarts. The storm increased so they were unable to go but little farther. The wind blew their tents asunder and scattered their campfires; the weather was very cold and their provisions were almost gone. Every night there would be 9 or 10 persons who would perish from hunger and cold and the men became so weak and famished that they were unable to dig graves for the dead, so were left on the open prairie to be tom to pieces and eaten by wolves. Finally, when they could go no further, they camped in a ravine (now known as Devil's Gate) never expecting to get out alive. They had only 4 ounces of flour a day for each person and only enough of that to last 4 days. They had no salt to put in it, nothing but flour and water to mix together. They had to go up on the mountainside and break icicles off the sagebrush to melt for water. When the oxen that they had with them were exhausted, they killed them, roasted their rawhides and made soup of their bones. While at this camp so many of them perished and it was so difficult to dig graves because of the frozen ground they had to bury as many as 16 in one grave. In this discouraging and heart-rending condition, Alice thought of the blessing that was given her before she left England and wondered if she really

would become a mother in Israel. The whole company, or what was left of them, fasted and prayed for their deliverance, and then held a Fast Meeting at which the President asked if they; were willing to perish there for the Gospel's sake if the Lord saw fit, and every person answered "Yea!" This was the most pitiful and tragic sight.

Alice tells her story about experience as follows: "Some days we traveled from 10 to 15 miles and one day we journeyed 30 miles. We usually pitched our tents at night near water and gathered buffalo chips for fuel. Having left most of our clothes behind, we were compelled to spread gunnysacks on the snow for bedding. We often sat and held our feet in our hands at night to keep them from freezing. Our eatables consisted chiefly of flour, tea and sugar, and we had to depend upon the killing of buffaloes for meat. During that time, when our cattle gave out, we boiled their bones for soup, as there was no meat. We also roasted raw hides and ate them. At last we found ourselves encamped in a ravine near Devils Gate with just 4 ounces of flour to each person per day for 4 days. A great number of our people died, sometimes half a dozen a day, and on one occasion 16 persons were buried in one grave. People would walk until exhausted and then drip down by the wayside dead, leaving their bodies to be eaten by wolves, as the survivors, on account of the frozen ground, were not able to dig graves deep enough to secure them from ravenous beasts. In their starving condition both men and women seemed to become devoid of all human feeling and lost all affection for each other. The children's faces sometimes assumed the appearance of monkeys, and they; would frequently grab pieces of food out of each other's mouths and die crying for bread. We climbed mountains to get icicles off the sagebrush and melted snow to obtain water where with to mix our flour. At Devils Gate the people were called together for prayer and asked if they were willing to die if the Lord so willed it, or if they were sorry they had come. They all answered that they; were willing to die if the Lord so willed it, but they were not sorry they had come. Almost at the same moment was witnessed the approach of Joseph A. Young on a white horse. He was hailed by us as the arrival of an angel. Men and women surrounded him, weeping and holding onto him to save them from death. Elder Young returned to Salt Lake to make his report. In Salt Lake he found Brigham Young presiding over a Fast Meeting and told him of the condition of this company. President Young told the people, dismissed the meeting at once, and ordered food and clothing and covered wagons to bring the suffering travelers to Salt Lake Valley. In traveling through Echo Canyon, camp fires were built every quarter of a mile to thaw out those who lingered behind."

At last they arrived in Salt Lake City, 30 Nov. 1856. It is estimated that 135 members of the Martin Handcart Company died on the journey from Iowa City to Great Sale Lake.

In December 1856, Alice went to Weber, Utah, where she met Andrew Andersen. He had walked across the planes the summer before driving an ox team as a 19 year old Norwegian convert to the Church. Andrew came in the Noah T. Ouyman Company, arriving in Salt Lake Valley, on the 7 Sep. 1855.

They became good friends and were married 9 Mar. 1857 in the Endowment House, in Salt Lake City. They left Weber in 1857 to go to Sessions Settlement, located about 8 miles north of Salt Lake City, where Bountiful is now. It covered about 5 miles along the road where the best farming land was used by the pioneers.

Together with her husband she participated in the great "Move' South upon the approach of Johnson's Army. With others they piled straw around their homes before leaving with the view to setting fire to them if necessary. After peace was declared, they returned to Sessions Settlement, where they remained 2 years. In 1860 they moved with their family to Hyrum, Cache Valley, Utah, where they resided until their deaths. They were frequently exposed to unfriendly Indians. She writes in her journal, "Indians were hostile, we first camped in an Indian type wikiup with a fire in the center. One day a rattlesnake wrapped itself around the willows in the wikiup, and a small boy helped me and we succeeded in killing it. There were 25 rattles on that snake." There were many snakes and crickets around the camp.

During the summer of 1860, Alice and Andrew were busy with some 20 other pioneer families getting settled in what was then called Camp Hollow. In May that year Apostle Ezra T. Benson and Peter Maugim visited the families in Camp Hollow. As the two visitors went about the area they were not pleased with the low ground. They checked an area southwest that was higher ground, which they liked better for a settlement. So the pioneer families decided to locate their new town on the higher plateau. Then they changed the name to Hyrum, in honor of Hyrum Smith brother of the prophet Joseph Smith. By fall with the help of other men Andrew had one of the first small log houses built for his wife their 2 children Sarah Marie and James Andrew.

By fall enough log houses were built, 21 in all, in 2 rows facing each other in a Fort fashion to protect them selves against the Indians.

Alice Brooks and Andrew Andersen had a large family, which kept them very busy as their children were growing up in the small pioneer country town of Hyrum. Ten children were born to them, 5 girls and 5 boys, Sarah Marie and Samuel both died soon after reaching maturity, not married. All the others were married in the Temple and had families of their own.

Andrew Andersen and his sons became very successful farmers in Cache Valley. Andrew was a hard worker and a good provider for his family. He developed home building skills and was a good pioneer mechanic and blacksmith. He was active with other pioneers building roads, irrigation canals for their farms. He was able to make and repair shoes for his own children and neighbors. In his latter life he did a lot of temple work, going to the Logan Temple by horse and buggy several days a week. He had folks write to his relatives where he was born in Onsoy, Ostfold, Norway, for names, dates and genealogical data about his ancestors, who he could have the Temple work done for them.

Alice went through many hardships and trials common to the pioneers in the early days, but lived to see all the blessings fulfilled that had been promised her. She was also told that her last days should be the best and that life should pass quietly and quickly as a snuff of a candle. This was fulfilled on 24 Aug. 1915, at the age of 80 she passed away, true to the last to the faith she had embraced.

Alice had a lovely voice, sang in the choir in England before immigrating to America. The following is a list of names of their children and spouses:

1. Sarah Marie, born 27 Feb. 1858, in So. Weber, Davis Co. not married, died 25 Sep. 1878, Hyrum, Utah.
2. James Andrew, born 1 Sep. 1859, in So. Weber, Davis Co. Married (1) 18 June 1885, Hansine Larson, Md. (2) 7 Aug. 1930, Lelia Swenson, had 12 children, died 16 May 1943, Collage Ward, Cache Co. Utah.
3. Phennetta Alice, born 5 July, 186 1, in Hyrum, Cache Co. Utah, married 8 Oct 1883, Ira Thomas Williams, had 7 children, died 17 Nov. 195 1, Hyrum, Cache Co. Utah.
4. Nancy Ann, born 12 May 1863, in Hyrum, married 1 Feb. 1883, Nils Joseph Nielson, had 4 children, died 24 Feb. 1893, in Hyrum.
5. Martha Marinda, born 18 Oct. 1865, in Hyrum, married 14 Jan. 1886. Lewis Thomas Miller, had 11 children, died 4 Aug. 1942 in Hyrum.
6. Samuel, born 8 July, 1867, in Hyrum, not married, died 2 Aug. 1910, Hyrum, Utah.
7. Joseph Willard, born 2 Oct. 1871, in Hyrum, married 23 June, 1895, Carrie Ann Thorsen, had 10 children, died 12 Aug. 1941 in Hyrum.
8. Hyrum, (Hivy) born 25 Aug. 1873, in Hyrum, married 16 Mar. 1905, Rachel Stanley, had 10 children, died 30 Mar. 1961 in Hyrum.
9. Lovina, born 17 July 1876, in Hyrum, married 30 Mar. 1898, Frederick Charles Ralph, had 7 children, died 10 July 1959, in Salt Lake City, Utah.
10. Gilbert Nathan, born 23 Aug. 1878, in Hyrum, married (1) 16 Jan 1901, Mary Wyatt, Md. (2) 9 June 1953, Mary Ellen Barnes, had 10 children, died 18 Aug. 1964, Hyrum.

This biography of Alice Brooks Andersen has been compiled from family records in my possession and research and my recollection of my grand mother Alice Brooks Andersen. I used to visit her often as a young boy 12-15 years old during the 3 summers I worked for her son uncle Hiram (Hivy), on his farms in Hyrum and Collage Ward, etc. Rewritten, 29 Dec. 1977, by Horace Fred Ralph, g son, Salt Lake City, Utah.