

My babe was only weeks old when on the 21st of March 1856 we sailed on the "Cnoch Train" with more than 350 other Latter Day Saints. This was the first part of our journey to the promised land. We arrived in Boston May 1st and traveled to Iowa City by train. There we waited for the handcart to be made which we were to use in carrying our few belongings to Utah.

My baby was five months old and little Christopher three years of age when on June 11th we loaded our allotted supplies into the big wheeled flimby carts that were to be our constant companions for the next 1300 miles.

The Lord truly guided and protected us. We were not alone before him, for there were many of us traveling Zionward. The McClave family, along with another, shared a big sleeping tent with us at night. Fifteen years old Mary Jane McClave carried my baby many an afternoon, for she was a strong healthy Irish girl whose friendly teasing cheered the hearts of all who walked near her.

There were pleasant campgrounds and many that were dry. The days we had no water were the hardest. The violence of the prairie storms choked me. We slept in our drenched clothes in wet beds when the rain storms swept our tent shelter away. There was no wood on the prairie for bright fires to dry our clothes by. There were only the smoldering buffalo chips on which we cooked our small rations of food. There was no turning back, we had to keep moving in but one direction. That on let the earth envelop us.

One morning, my husband, William, turned pale and haggard. As the heavy miles unrolled slowly behind us, his foot-atepa lagged and he stumbled behind the pulling bar. Weakly he stepped aside and sagged into a stupor beside the trail. Fear was a great smothering lump inside me. I eased his aching limbs into what comfort was possible, as my arms pillowed his head.

The worried captain came and told me that I could not stay behind. They tried to rouse William but he only mumbled, "Let me rest."

Frienda forced me to walk along with them. Mary Jane took the baby onto her shoulder and took the other hand of my clinging little boy and teared him into skipping in great leaps over the dry brush. "There you go, Chara Lad, be a wild pony playing in the sun, leaping high bushes and sailing over the streama.

"Mary Jane," I said carefully, "After camp is made this night, will you return with me to William's resting place? If he is still alive help me to bring him on to camp."

Her answer was quickly given. "Aye, that I will, Eather. I've been thinkin' that we must do something. He is such a faithful kind soul."

We had not so far to go as we had feared, for my husband had revived somewhat in the cool of the evening and had tried to follow after us. As we supported him and put his arms across our shoulders, he spoke his gratitude. "Thank God you have come. I could not have made it to camp alone. Know this night you have saved my life."

In the days that followed, when he was strong again, William would joke with Mary Jane. "Surely, Miss McLeave, you saved a life that should be of some use to you. Soon you will be needing a husband. Wouldn't you like to be my second wife when we get settled in the Valley?"

"Fa, fa, marry an old man like you?" She would retort, "I will not. A handsome young man will choose me to be his wife."

Dear Mary Jane lived long into a modern day, a last sentinel of our westward hike. Instead of marrying her handsome young man, she was inspired to marry Dr. Priddy Meeka - a man much older than William.

By Gwen Heaton Shearatt  
taken from "Cather's Children"

## LEFT ON THE TRAIL

As the handcart train neared the mountains, our food became scarce. We had not seen many of the wild buffalo that we had been told would be plentiful on the plains. Though a cow was butchered now and again to sustain us, we had to ration our meager supply of flour. A cup a day for each person was our common fare. It was further reduced during the final days. Milk was portioned also, a pint in the morning and another at night for every five persons. This when the cows had that much to give. We were not allowed to eat the berries that grew along the stream on in the foothills because we did not know which might be poison.

One day we came upon an emaciated young boy lying in the shade of a large rock. The lead carts were hurried on by him for the travelers thought he was dead. My heart ached at the sight of the limp body and I could not pass him by. When I touched his shoulder, I could tell that he was not yet dead and I called.

"William, come and see if there is ought we can do for this boy." When we turned the final body over, it was a familiar yet changed face we saw. "Why, Cather! This is Widow Bowen's boy Isaac." "It is indeed," he exclaimed, "and he is burning up with fever. We cannot leave him here, William."

Gently, my husband lifted him onto the cart and I made him a small toddy from our medicine supply. We covered him over and with much lighter hearts proceeded on the trail.

After a time the lad broke out in a sweat and was soon wonderfully improved; so much so, that he sat up and said he was ready to walk.

He was such a brave little fellow, for, though he often had to grab the cart as he staggered along, he broke into a song as we joyously went on our way to meet his mother.

The lead company was never far ahead of us. When we next came up to it, there was Isaac's mother accompanying our slowly moving train. Suddenly she gave a cry and ran to the boy and hugged him close to her. She told us through her tears that when her son had gotten the Mountain fever, she had tugged him along and finally had to put him onto the rickety cart. The leader was stern about it and had insisted that he be made to walk. "He could not keep up" she sobbed "and he dropped by the side of the road. It was almost more that I could do to go on, but I prayed with all my heart that he would be found. Thank you, oh thank you, Brother and Sister Heaton, for bringing my son on to me alive."

We felt a closer kinship for the Bowen family after that and were rewarded by an association that lasted through the years.

By Gwen Heaton Shearnat  
Taken from "Father's Children"

### A PROMISE

Grandfather Priddy Meeka lived close to the Manaton Houae back in Nauvoo, so he was very well acquainted with the Prophet. On one occasion, Grandfather became very ill and both Joseph and Hyrum came over to administer to him. In this blessing, the Prophet promised him that he would go to the Rocky Mountains and there would raise a large family. (At this point, he had no small children) Joseph then requested that he name the first boy after him and Hyrum asked that the next boy be named for him. So Grandfather did - Uncle Joe was named for the Prophet Joseph and Uncle Hy for his brother Hyrum.

By Heber Meeka

### THE SCOUTING PARTY

Grandfather Priddy was with the very first group that went over into the Orderville country. John D. Lee was with them too. Grandfather seemed to be the leader. They wanted to explore that area to find out if it would be suitable for colonizing.

They went over into the valley then down into the Baracka. I have been down there and there are some places where the walls of the canyon come straight down to the river and are so narrow that you have to walk in the water. Riding through the Baracka, they found a trail out on top then did some exploring. As it turned out, there was no water there, so they spent one whole day without anything to drink. When night came, they had such difficulty finding the trail they came up on that they realized they would probably be spending the night there too. They were beginning to suffer from thirst and so were the horses.

In spite of the fact that it was dark, they decided to do a little exploring to see if they could find some water in some of the little canyons

that headed there. After a time, they heard something that sounded like a waterfall. Sure enough, there was a little stream of water falling down from a ledge and forming a pool. They got water for themselves and their thirty horses.

The next morning, when they went for more water, they couldn't find it - it just wasn't there. They felt the Lord must have provided it in their great need. In the day light, they were then able to find the trail and get back down to the river.

By Heber Meeka

### MARY GANE McCLEVE MECKS

In 1876, Mary Gane McCleve Meeka, the youngest wife of Dr. Priddy Meeka, moved into Orderville with its ochre hills and narrow canyons winding back into their reaches. She was born in Belfast, Ireland, August 21, 1840 and was baptized in the Iniah Sea when she was eight years old. When she was fifteen the family sailed for America, and came to Utah in the second handcart company, with Daniel McArthur as captain.

Mary Gane's father died September 23, 1856, just two days before the company reached the Salt Lake Valley. Mary Gane went to work for a family named Gifford, but that same autumn was married to Dr. Priddy Meeka. He was nearly sixty-two and she was not yet seventeen.

They lived at the north end of Long Valley Canyon at the time of the massacre of the Benry brothers by the Indians in 1866, but moved away with the other settlers. After their return to Long Valley, Mary Gane commenced practicing midwifery.

Her daughter, Ellen Meeka Hoyt, of Orderville, when seventy-five years old, wrote: "I remember mother took care of five pairs of twins during her time of bringing babies. If my memory and those of others who live here serve, she never had a woman or baby die out of the seven hundred cases she cared for. She used to walk great distances, three and four miles, to look after her patients. She has come home with some of her clothes gone; had torn them off to make some poor woman comfortable. One time she came without her undergarment. "What did you do with it?" we asked. "The poor woman had none, so I gave her mine," she replied. Another time she came home in her stocking feet. We asked her where her shoes were. "The poor woman had none, so I gave her mine as I have another pair at home."

"Mother was very successful in her administration with the sick. She used only the herbs that grew around us. Some she raised. Father was a Thomsonian doctor, so she learned these things from him.

"She was blessed and set apart. I just don't remember which one of the Apostles it was. She was very humble and prayerful in her calling. Never felt she was doing too much. She was very joyful, always had her patients laughing. Her wonderful disposition and sweet nature awaited her greatly in her labors. She was very witty, like all Iniah people, I suppose.

"One night a deaf and dumb man walked on into the bedroom, took hold of her and shook her. She awoke, was soon ready to get in the wagon, and was gone. She said there had been many come for her help that she did not know, but she never refused to go. In summer she sometimes rode the hayrack, but in winter she often went by bobbed dressed in her fur cape and with a fascinator wound around her head.

"Sometimes she would have to go fifty miles to far-away farms and ranches. Once when someone called to get her she was away attending others. The children became quite alarmed when they could not find her, fearing that she might have fallen in one of the vats of the tannery, which stood near the hills across the street. But in due time, she returned. She never left a woman until she was taken care of properly.

"She was called out in the night at one time to go up the canyon twelve miles. The horse became frightened and ran away, throwing her out of the spring seat. She hit the front of the wagon, bruising her face and loosing some of her teeth, which caused her a great deal of pain and suffering for a number of years, but she never quit going.

"Many times she would have to leave her own children for weeks at a time, and they would not know where she was or when she would return. She practiced midwifery in Long Valley for twenty years. Though she was only thirty-six when she returned to the valley, she was somewhere between forty and fifty when she commenced this work. As long as the Order was in existence, she put her allotted \$3.00 into it. Sometimes she was paid in store pay, sometimes in vegetable or flour. If she received produce on it went in the common storehouse; if she received neither produce or money, her labor was noted in the books to accumulate as a dividend.

"She waited on the three wives of one man and earned enough money to buy father (Friday) a headstone."

Ida Meek Balken, Mary Jane, a granddaughter, says that as a child, whenever she heard "an old wagon come rumbolling down the street in the middle of the night, she knew that her grandmother would be gone in the morning, and sometimes she would not see her again for a week or more.

When Mary Jane was eighty-three she visited in Salt Lake City at the home of her granddaughter, Ida Balken, who occasionally drove her to the airport to see the plane take off. She never lost the thrill of seeing them leave the ground. She had an enormous desire to go up. "My darling," she said to Ida, "when I came pulling a handcart into the valley, I little dreamed that I would live to see the day when people would come flying in here through the air."

At the house one day, she looked in the mirror, and noting her wrinkles, said to herself, "Why Mary Jane, how could you have come to this?" "Nowadays," she said to Ida, "the young men won't look at the girls unless they are all fixed up, and I don't blame them. However could I have reached such a state?" She sighed as she contemplated her wrinkles, but in the next moment she was laughing at herself. Her joy in life never ceased.

She was delighted with the modern conveniences of her granddaughter home. Looking about her one day, she said, "When I see the things you are

surrounded with, I can't help thinking of the time when I was out there working for 50¢ a day at the Hot Springs for one yard of calico a week; that was my wage for scrubbing the floor and all the rest of the work I did." Again she laughed, and her amazement knew no bounds when she heard Calvin Coolidge address the Nation over the radio. "Little did I dream, she said, that I should some day be sitting in my granddaughter's home listening to the President of the United States speak to the Nation from back there in Washington." But it was not President Coolidge who provided her main joy on the radio. It was Will Rogers, imitating the President. Then indeed her Irish wit was attuned to her heart's content.

In 1885, the United Order was dissolved as a means of saving the accumulated property for the individual members. Many gave continued to reside there and died in that historic town, January 19, 1933, with pneumonia. She was ninety-two years old and could go anywhere until ten days before her death.

"Taken from 'Woman Wives'  
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UNCLE ED AND TOBY INDIAN

Uncle Ed Carroll had a horse that he was having a hard time breaking. It was especially hard to get on him early in the morning when they were out riding on the range. One time Uncle Ed was out on the Arizona Strip during a roundup and was having quite a bad time with the horse. Toby Indian was also helping with the roundup. He said to Uncle Ed, "here, you ride my horse and I'll ride yours." Toby was a very good horseman, so Uncle Ed switched and Toby gentled the horse for him. From that time on, they were good friends.

Later on, Toby visited Odenville and asked Uncle Ed if he could stay in his barn and have some hay for his horse. Uncle Ed said, "yes you can have all the hay you want for your horse, but you can't sleep in the barn. You will come in to supper and stay in the house with us."

By Ialah Meeka

"DUMPLIN CANYON"

When I was around nine or ten years of age, I was sent by the Board of Directors with Willia Webb and Gode Hancock to assist in lambing a bunch of sheep. One morning they asked me to remain in camp and prepare dinner. I was to put some meat on to boil and when about done, I was to mix up some dough according to directions and cut in pieces and drop into the soup for dumplings. I did as directed but dropped more dough into the kettle than was necessary. When the men came, they were elated over the prospect of a good meal for they could tell by the smell. But when they came to dip out the dumplings, imagine their surprise to find only one huge dumpling. The Alicea dropped in had run together and formed a mass of dough. From this incident, the canyon in which we were camped, was named "Dumplin' Canyon" and was known by that name for many years. It is now called "Seaman Canyon."

By Heben Beave Meeka