

BIOGRAPHY OF CAROLINE BROWN LEEMASTER

Written By

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In our research we were so pleased to find a patriarchal blessing given to Caroline Brown with "no provisos". The person who did the research and translated it for us is a convert, and her comment was:

"It is people like this who receive such blessings that strengthen my testimony and inspire me to greater effort."

The following is quoted from Caroline's blessing:

"You shall be a peacemaker and adviser and instructor of your kind in your generation. Your deeds and works shall be worthy of imitation. You shall have a great offspring; yea, as many as the leaves on the trees." .....

Caroline Brown LeeMaster was born to Martin P. Brown and Anna Hansen Brown on the Island of Lolland, Denmark, in the town of Tourabø, June 11, 1843. Her parents were converted to Mormonism by Peter Thompson and joined the church in 1854. The Brown family then consisted of Father, Mother, Caroline age 11, Peter 13, and Jorgen 2. A year later they decided to sell their home and emigrate to Zion. They packed their clothing and a few necessities, and with other Saints set sail in an old wooden sailing vessel. The weather was terrible; the storms caused them to turn back 5 times. Compare this boat with the modern ships that make a crossing in 5 days. But these people had faith and were blessed and their lives were spared. After 6 weeks of much sickness on board, they landed in Hull, England, where they were able to wash and refresh themselves for the first time since leaving home. This was Christmas Day.

They crossed the Atlantic on the Boat Semprea and landed at New Orleans almost 4 months after they had set sail from Copenhagen, Denmark. Continuing up the Mississippi River, they landed at Atchison, Kansas. Caroline was ill

and had to be carried from the boat. It was bitter cold as they swept the snow away and pitched their tents on frozen ground. A slege of cholera was an added trial. There were many deaths, and often the burials took place at night.

Krastus S. Snow and James Ivie went to Kansas to help buy wagons and ozen and to guide this little group across the Plains to Zion. When they were loading, a selfish boss named Hogan insisted that Mother Brown's goose feather bed was too cumbersome to haul and wouldn't let her keep it. He appropriated it for himself.

P. O. Hansen worked hard to get things in order and helped to lead the little band across the Plains. Two companies travelled together on account of the Indians, who were preparing for the Walker War.

Anna Brown related the following incidents:

"We had been on the road 2 weeks and came to a lonely little log cabin which had been partly burned by the Indians. The table was set as if the family had just been ready to eat boiled potatoes and corn biscuits. We never knew what happened to this family."

"Just before we reached the Platte River, we saw a large herd of buffalo heading straight for the wagon train. Caroline's father quickly turned the oxen around, and others did the same and the buffalo went through the opening. No damage was done except one team of oxen ran away."

Though Caroline and her brothers were young, the trip in a way was an education, and in after years left memories, pleasant as well as sad.

They reached Salt Lake City in September of 1855, eleven months after leaving their home in Denmark. They were sent to Ephraim with other settlers to help build up that section of Utah. Larene Fisher said:

"They had very little food and no means of getting more, so they left Caroline and Peter with Peter Kersen in Big Cottonwood that they might not starve while the parents located a home. The first was a dugout with a fireplace and a cedar-post roof.

"Martin Brown, with spade and shovel, helped dig the first canals and ditches in Ephraim to divert the waters of the Sampitch River onto the land for irrigation.

"Anna Brown was a nurse and midwife and her knowledge of herbs and their medicinal value was a great help to the people.

"When Caroline's father came to Salt Lake City for her and her brother, Peter, he brought one team of oxen to trade for flour. After walking miles and miles from house to house, he got 50 lbs. of very coarse cornmeal. He took Caroline's new green flannel dress and traded it for what he thought was a hind quarter of mutton, but which turned out to be very old salty venison and had to be cut with a hatchet.

"Peter was 14 now and Peter Persen offered him a home for the work he could do. Father Brown and Caroline started for Ephraim, camping the first night at Lehi. It snowed and drifted in the night and they had to dig the oxen out of a snow bank the next morning. The second night they camped with a very kind man who gave them hay for their oxen and baked potatoes and salt for themselves. (It tasted like 'mamma'.)

They were really glad when they finally reached home, even though they faced a terrible winter. Peter Thompson's patch of barley had proven to be a "gold mine". After harvesting the grain he let the settlers have the gleanings. The women and children gleaned early and late, until there was not another kernel on the field. They ground it on a stone. This flour, the salty venison and the cornmeal were all they had to eat that winter except frozen potatoes. In the spring they got some early planting done and got a cow.

Anna Hansen Brown was a very determined woman, and while she entertained the women authorities from our church, she was a little wary when the Brethren came. 'Tis said she hid lovely Caroline in the cellar on some occasions.

One particular day Grandmother Brown saw "this same man" coming down

the street. She lifted the trap door to the cellar and Caroline literally fell in on her head. The door was closed and the rag rug in place almost instantly. Grandmother wondered if Caroline had broken her neck, but did not even look in the direction of the trap door. After a while the man left and Caroline came out of hiding. I doubt if this set so well with our heroine.

On another occasion President Brigham Young was visiting at Ephraim. Grandmother Brown kept Caroline home from church. Years later Grandmother Brown remarked that she was happy she kept Caroline home that day because she'd generally sat at the side of Amelia Polson, and who knows, he might have selected Caroline for his wife instead of Amelia.

In 1861 the Brown family was sent to Gunnison to settle. Here Elizabeth was born and when she was 6 they moved to Scipio and made their home.

On October 30, 1863, Caroline married Jonathan LeMaster. They made their home in Gunnison and on September 19, 1864, their daughter, Nancy Melissa, was born. They moved to Scipio in 1865. On January 14, 1867, William Jonathan was born. They moved to Mantl in April, later moving back to Scipio. John Martin was born in 1869. October 30, 1871, Jesse Louis was born. Another son, Carlos Peter, was born October 3, 1874. January 3, 1878, a daughter, Caroline Rose Ann, was born to brighten their home.

The cheese factory was at Dover between Gunnison and Round Valley. When they lived at Dover they would tie the wagon box down to the wheels when fording the Sevier River as they drove to church. Jonathan and Caroline would sing all the way across while cracking the whip. Caroline and Rose were scared to death every time they forded this river. They went to meeting every Sunday in Gunnison.

Caroline was very devoted and loyal to her husband through the years in all the moving back and forth and visits to their children. They finally moved back to Scipio where they made their home, comfortable with lovely flowers and fruits that everyone enjoyed.

Caroline was saving egg money for an Easter bonnet. She didn't believe in playing cards. One time when she found Jonathan playing cards in the log coop, she dumped the eggs right on those cards. Much as she wanted the Easter bonnet, she still had to do that because she was so against card playing.

Caroline didn't believe in telling lies. When she lived in Grass Creek, she got real angry when the children were told there was a Santa Claus. She wanted her children and her children's children to be honest above all else. No matter how heartbroken the children were to find out there was no Santa Claus, she still wanted them to know truth.

Caroline was skillful with the needle. The youth of Denmark are trained under strict discipline. She was always busy with fancywork. She loved to crochet, work needlepoint, and she made rugs, rugs, and more rugs! Melissa Colledge (a granddaughter) has a sample of her needlepoint. She would make sunbonnets out of excelsior -- press and weave the material. She did this at Grass Creek. She made a cape out of turkey feathers. She would strip the feathers down to the quill and lay them on a flour sack and sew them in place. She would line it with silk. The feathers would fall in place and hide the stitches. It was about 15 inches wide.

In later years Caroline had her own soft feather bed and took it wherever she went to sleep; she graced our home with it. It was around 1901 or 1902 when she and I got all dressed up and went together to cast our vote in Castle Dale -- an honor for all American women.

When our daughter, Zina, was around 10 years old, she sent Grandmother Leekmaster a gift for her birthday. Soon a package came from Scipio, Utah, containing a beautiful wine-colored casimere with tan satin trim for a dress for Zina D.

One of Grandmother's last gifts before she died was to give a \$20 gold piece to each of her daughters, Melissa and Rose Ann, and to her three daughters-in-law. I purchased a dresser with mine.

Caroline died January 20, 1925. The children all went to Scipio for the funeral.

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