

## CAROLINE NEWMAN

Born: May 16, 1849 in England

Age: 7

Willie Handcart Company



Caroline's family began to save for their emigration to Zion as soon as they were baptized in England in 1842. Evidencing their newfound faith, their next child was given the middle name "Moroni." By 1856, they had saved most of the funds and were formulating a plan to leave their 12-year-old son, John Moroni, in England to continue working. He would then follow the rest of the family when he had earned enough money to pay his own passage. However, Caroline's father, John Newman, became very sick in January 1856. On his deathbed he made his wife, Mary Ann, promise to still get to Zion, and take Johnny in his place. When the handcart plan was announced, this courageous new widow was able to leave that year. Her husband died in February. Mary Ann left England on the ship *Thornton* in May 1856.



Mary Ann  
Newman

The Newman family consisted of the widowed mother, Mary Ann (age 37), and six children; Eliza (17), William (14), John Moroni (12), Mary Ann (9), Caroline (7) and Ellen Maria (5). They landed in New York on June 14, 1856, traveled mostly by train to Iowa City, and then headed west with their handcart on July 15. This part of their journey was 1,300 miles, a very difficult trek for this family of young children with no father. The older children helped their mother with the handcart. Caroline and Ellen walked the entire way, perhaps with short rides on the cart.

When the early winter storms overtook them in Wyoming, they faced many challenges as did all the members of the company. Sometimes their clothing froze on them and some mornings their hair was frozen to the ground. Caroline's mother heated rocks in the campfire at night and put them in the bed to keep the children warm. Rations were cut and then cut again before the rescuers finally found them. The family arrived in Salt Lake City on November 9, 1856. They were soon taken to Parowan by Bishop William E. Jones of Paragonah and James Guymon of Parowan. Eliza Newman married William Jones in 1857. They had 9 children, 4 of whom died as children. Eliza died with the birth of her last baby which was stillborn. Caroline later helped to raise her sister's children.

As a young woman in Parowan, Caroline worked at the cotton factory running the drawing frame and the two big cards that made rolls of cotton batting for quilts. Her younger sister, Ellen also worked here and ran the speeder. Caroline also worked for Brigham Young in his home in Salt Lake City and at one time in the Lion House. When Caroline was 26 years old, she married John Thomas Mitchell. They lived several places but finally settled in Parowan. Caroline would often be left alone while her husband was gone with his freighting business. In one corner of Caroline's home in Parowan was a General Dry Goods Store and Post Office. Caroline and her husband also operated a ranch at Panquitch Lake where they cut and sold the wild grass for hay. They also had a farm outside of Parowan City limits. Many times the Indians would come and walk right into her home demanding food and sugar. Her children would try to hide for fear of being kidnapped.

The latchstring of Caroline's home always hung out to their friends and acquaintances and to anyone in need. Caroline lived to be 79 years old.

Emily Hodgett, who called herself a "dear and life-long friend" of Caroline's, was a 15-year-old girl when she crossed the plains at the same time as Caroline. (See William B. Hodgett story in Hodgetts company section of this book.) Emily brought a very special blue chest that had been made in England by Caroline's father before he died. Emily also lived in Parowan, and died at 103 years of age.

Caroline and her brother, John Moroni, were the only two Newman children to live into the 1900s. In December 1926, they were two of at least five honored guests at a banquet in Parowan for surviving members of the Willie handcart company. The guests included Mette Mortensen (Rasmussen), Dorthea (Bayles) and Richard Rowley.

Sources: Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; "Caroline Newman Mitchell," by unknown author; "John Newman and Mary Ann Williams Newman," and "Eliza Newman Jones," by unknown author, edited with new information by Lola Ann Johnson Jones, 1994, sent to Jolene Allphin from Traci Jensen, Lewiston, Utah; familysearch.org.