

## REBECCA SIMMONS MAISEY (or MASSEY)

Born: 13 February 1822

Age: 34

Martin Handcart Company



Rebecca was born in Gloucestershire, England, to John and Sarah Bryan Simmons (or Simmonds). Her father was an architect by trade and the family enjoyed a comfortable living. Rebecca's mother was a woman of cultural and personal refinement, so Rebecca had a very proper upbringing. They had become dissatisfied with the Church of England and were seeking and praying for more light and truth.

When Apostle Wilford Woodruff arrived at Ridge Way Crossing on March 15, 1840, Rebecca's sister, Hannah, was there to hear him. At this time Hannah was living with the family of Benjamin Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Hill taught classes in music, needlework, trades, etc. to young people in the village. The Hills invited Elder Woodruff to their home to preach to their neighbors and friends, and Hannah invited her sister, Rebecca. Hundreds of converts were baptized in this area, including the Simmons sisters.

Rebecca married Daniel Massey in 1849. In 1856 they boarded the ship *Horizon* at the Liverpool docks with their three children: Silas Benjamin (5), George (3), and Rebecca (18 months), bound for Utah. (Hannah had already emigrated in 1841 along with the Hill family and was living in Kaysville, Utah. They had sailed on the *Harmony* to Quebec, and then gone to Nauvoo, Illinois.)

When the Martin handcart company began serious food rationing in October, Rebecca's husband, Daniel (age 39), went without his portion many times in order that his wife and children might have a little more to eat. His health finally failed and he became too weak to walk. After reportedly riding in a wagon for only half an hour one day, Daniel passed away and was buried in a shallow grave on an unknown date.

Rebecca told in later years of the difficulty in crossing the streams where ice chunks floating by would cut their legs and they didn't have enough warm clothing. At some point along the way, little George lost both of his feet and Silas lost the toes of one foot.

Rebecca and the children were taken to Hannah's home in Kaysville where she and her husband, Edward Phillips, nursed this little family back to health. On February 4, 1857, the *Deseret News* (Weekly) ran an ad entitled "Lost in G.S.L. City." It read: "From a luggage wagon in Capt. Mayer's [Mayo] hundred, Capt. [Reddick] Allred's ten, on Sunday, Nov. 30, a coarse linen SACK, with a leather patch, and tied with a piece of rope, containing a small sack marked H.W., in which were the following articles: - one black silk dress, one blue French merino embroidered skirt of dress, two dress patterns, one alpaca dress, one new flannel dressing gown, and three flannel petticoats without bands. The above articles were lost by a widow named Maisey. Information will be recieved by Dr. Levi Richards, opposite, west, of Stewart and Co's Store."

Rebecca married James Ware in 1857. He was a kind father to her children who needed a little more attention than ordinary. George went about the house on his hands and knees. When he was 12 years old, George died from diphtheria. Silas walked with a limp the rest of his life. He married twice, had four children and four step-children. James and Rebecca had five sons and one daughter, who died as a child.

Known for her refined and patient ways, some were said to be surprised when Rebecca "almost lost her patience on one occasion." Her daughter, Rebecca, had handed out all the food in the house to an Indian who begged his living from the neighborhood. Because the girl was alone at the time and frightened, she had thought this was the quickest way to get rid of him.

Rebecca was reported to be a "most lovable grandmother" by those who knew her. She passed away on August 23, 1888, at the age of 66 in Kaysville, Utah.

Sources: Biography by granddaughter, Sarah Kershaw Adams; Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website; Mormon Immigration Index; familysearch.org.



Ruth, George, and Emily Maisey, children of Silas's 2nd marriage.