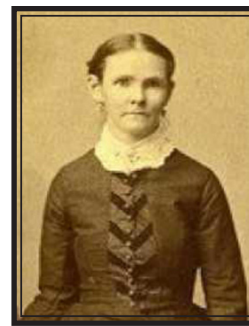


ELLEN PARKINSON

Born: 1851 England

Age: 5

Martin Handcart Company



Ellen's parents, John and Ellen Smalley Parkinson, were among the very first converts to the Church in Preston, England, in 1837. John was fairly well to do, owning his own shoemaking business and employing servants in his home. He served a full-time mission with William Speakman as his companion between 1840-42. Elder Speakman's daughter, Hannah, was employed in the Parkinson household in 1856, and traveled to Zion with them.

In a letter Elders Parkinson and Speakman wrote to their mission president, Orson Pratt, on Sept. 29, 1841, we learn something of their missionary experience:

"We take the liberty to inform you that we have been laboring in Westmorland and through the mercy of God, in the midst of persecution and lying editors, the work of the Lord rolls on. . . . At one of our meetings in the open air, four pretended preachers of the Gospel came up, and one of them publicly demanded our Elder to take some arsenic, which he had brought with him, in order to have a sign to enable him to believe the Bible. The people, however, seemed to have more reason and good sense: for they were very much hurt with his conduct, and told him that if he were a Man of God, he would not disturb a meeting. . . . There are many who say that we preach erroneous doctrine and lies: and yet they say show us a sign and we will believe. It seems by this that they are willing to believe errors and falsehoods, if they can have a sign, but we have not so learned Christ."

Ellen's first memory of her emigration was of her father carrying her on board the ship *Horizon*, sitting her on a plank and giving her a sea biscuit. This large family consisted of parents, John (age 37), Ellen (37); and 9 children - Samuel (18), Joseph (15), Jane Elizabeth (11), Margaret (8), John (7), Ellen (5), Mary (3), Esther (2), and William (infant). (A daughter was also born and died in 1843.) John Parkinson had paid for a wagon and ox team, but it was "not to be had" upon reaching Iowa City. The Parkinson's made a major decision there, to discard many belongings and travel by handcart that year.

The Parkinson's may have lost more members than any other family in the company. Before leaving the campground near Iowa City, baby William died on July 20, and Mary on July 25. (One family record also notes July 25 for Esther's death.) Three days later the family left this sad scene for their journey westward. Other family death dates are not known, but records indicate they were all in October. Joseph collapsed while still in his handcart harness. The night that Ellen's father died, her mother took his coat to keep herself warm and had Ellen sleep next to her. Ellen became very cold and tried to wake her mother, but could not. She snuggled next to her mother's body through the night and when morning finally came, Ellen's mother was wrapped in a blanket and buried in a shallow grave with several others. Samuel left the family at some point and returned back on the trail to Florence. Ellen was now bereft of parents and 5 siblings, including two older brothers who had often carried her on their shoulders.

Ellen, Jane, Margaret and "Johnnie" continued to the Valley where Ellen and Jane were taken to the home of Leonard Hardy to recuperate. Brother Hardy had stayed at the Parkinson's home in England when he was there on a mission and had blessed Jane as a child. A Mr. Atwood took Margaret and Johnnie into his home. It is said that when Ellen was a "young lady" she ran away from the Hardy home and spent her time between her two sisters' homes until she married Hyrum Covey at the age of 16. Jane married Hyrum's brother, Joseph. Margaret married a German man, William Deppe. Johnnie moved from the Atwood home when he was of age and went to work in the mines near Salt Lake. He was killed in a logging accident 9 May 1864 at the age of 15. Samuel married, returned to Utah for a time with his family, and died in Nevada in 1883.

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In July 1889, Ellen's two sisters died about 2 weeks apart from each other. Ellen was the lone survivor of this large family. One day a gentleman representing the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company approached Ellen and offered to pay her the difference for the wagon and team her father had paid for and the cost of the handcart journey. Ellen was hurt and offended and refused the money. It is said that she gave the PEF representative "a most thorough scolding."

Ellen lived until 1915. Her posterity wrote of her: "She was a kind mother and friend. She never turned anyone away from her door. She had a keen sense of humor. She spent much time seeking information about her ancestors." It seems that the following excerpt from John Parkinson's Patriarchal blessing was fulfilled in Ellen: "Thy posterity shall be blest and they shall rejoice even as they shall enjoy the good things of the Land of Promise." (Given 24 Aug 1840 in Preston by Patriarch Peter Melling)

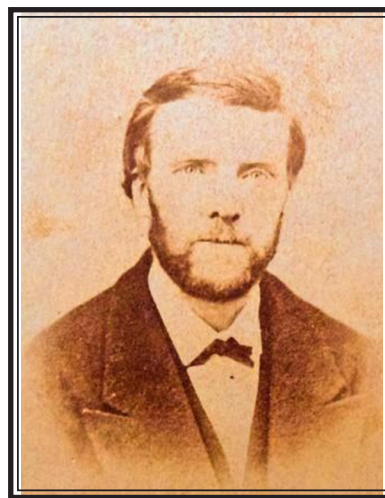
Sources: *The Parkinson Family of Lancashire*, by Doyle J. Bauman, 1990, pgs. 48-114; "Ellen Parkinson Covey," *Women of Faith and Fortitude*, Daughters of Utah Pioneers publication, 1:685-686.



Margaret Parkinson (Deppe)



Jane Elizabeth Parkinson
(Covey)



Samuel Parkinson