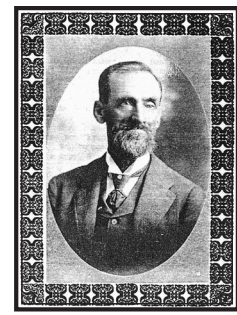


JOHN BOND

Born: England 1844

Age: 12

Hodgett Wagon Company



John Bond came to Zion with his parents, William (age 39) and Mary Ann (34), his two older sisters, Sarah (17) and Ann (16), and four younger siblings, Margaret (9), Mary Jane (6), Joseph (3) and Nephi Alma (almost 2). John and his sister, Ann, kept accounts of the trek and later wrote biographies. John also published a book entitled *Handcarts West in '56*.

In 1840, while still in England, the Bond family heard Elder Parley P. Pratt preach the gospel and were converted to the Church. The Bonds first left Liverpool, England, in May of 1848, on the sailing vessel *Ark Wright* and arrived in Boston on July 15, 1848. John was only four years old. John's parents operated a successful tailoring business in Fall River, Massachusetts, for the next eight years and saved money to cross the plains to the Utah. While the Bond family was in Massachusetts, their three youngest children were born.

John's mother brought with her some precious souvenirs, an oil painting of her mother, and a new "Beautiful No. 8 Charter Oak" kitchen cooking stove of which she was very proud. These items had carefully been loaded into the wagon, but the painting had to be left along the way to lighten the load so children with freezing feet could ride. John's sister, Ann, recorded:

Then mother, with tears in her eyes, also gave up the new cooking stove, thinking how nice it would be to have at the journey's end, but it was also left by the wayside along with other much needed equipment.

The journey became one of survival rather than one of bringing a "bit of the old home" to the new home. John recorded: "Day after day passes and still no tidings of help coming from the westward. The bugle is sounded again by John Watkins to call all the Saints together for prayers to ask the infinite Father to bring food, medicines, and other things necessary for the sick and needy. After prayers, all are ordered to bed. I had seen someone prepare a nice pot of dumplings just before the bugle sounded. She hid the dumplings under the wagon, being a zealous woman, and went to prayer meeting, but I did not go this time. I stood back and looked for the dumplings, found them and being so hungry I could not resist the temptations, sat down and ate them all. I admit that those dumplings did me more good than all the prayers that could have been offered but I felt I had done a great wrong in that act and I regret it and ask God to forgive me for that temptation that overcame [me] in a time of hunger.

John's mother cut up an empty cloth sugar sack and once a day gave a small piece to each child to hold in his or her mouth. She hoped that there was enough sugar among the threads to give the children some energy. John wrote of their continuing challenges:

"The captain ordered all who were able to do so, to walk, for the snow made difficult walking for the teams as well as the poor Saints. My sister Sarah, and I had to walk a great deal of the way. Her shoes were worn out, making it necessary for her to wear a pair of English clogs. In walking in the snow, the snow stuck to them so much that the lumps would break off and skin her heels badly. We had walked some distance on ahead of the train on a bitter cold day when I noticed that my sister seemed to be very tired and the tears were rolling down her cheeks from the pain of her skinned heels. When I saw the condition of her feet, I said to her, "Sister, you sit here by the road and I will return to the captain and see if he will not let you ride. Your feet are in such a condition that I can hardly bear to see you walk." She was willing that I should try. I met the captain and said, "Captain Hodges [Hodgett], I left my sister on the roadside with such bleeding heels that it is exceedingly painful for her to walk and the tears are streaming down her cheeks. Can't she be allowed to ride?" He answered in a kind hearted way, "I am willing for her to ride from now on to the valley, as she has always walked when I have asked the Saints to walk." I then returned to look for my sister, but found she had gone from where I left her. I felt alarmed at her absence as the wolves were howling all around when I left to see the captain. Was it possible that the wolves had devoured my sister in my absence? I traveled on and on in suspense. I had traveled some distance when I saw fresh blood in the snow. I then tracked her by her bleeding heels until I finally found her lying down in the snow exhausted. When she saw me, she was so glad that the tears were falling down her care worn cheeks.

All nine members of the Bond family made it to Utah, where John was blessed with six more brothers and sisters.

Sources: *Handcarts West in '56*, by John Bond, 1970 edition; "Biography of Ann Bond," in *Remember*, Riverton Wyoming Stake; Daughters of Utah Pioneer history files.