

PATIENCE LOADER

Born: 1827 England - daughter of James and Amy Loader

Age: 29

Martin Handcart Company



James and Amy Loader sailed to America in 1855. James had worked in England as foreman and head gardener for a wealthy gentleman by the name of Sir Henry Lambert. Patience and her eight sisters and four brothers were all born here on this estate where James had worked for 35 years. After the Loaders joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, James was fired from his job. Patience was fired from her job in London for the same reason. In November 1855, James and Amy left for America on the sailing ship *John J. Boyd* with five of their unmarried children—Patience (age 29), Mariah (19), Jane (14), Sarah (12), and Robert (10). Their oldest daughter, Ann (Dalling), had already emigrated with her husband and was awaiting their arrival in Utah. A married son and his family also was onboard: John Loader (34), Harriett (40), Harry (3) and Zilpah (1 year). Patience’s sister, Sarah, recorded: “My oldest brother, his wife and two children, came with us across the sea and they buried their little child on the sea. She was thirteen months old and was just teething. My father took the little baby in his arms and waited until a big wave came even with the ship, and he layed the baby on the wave and she rolled away. We all watched.” John’s family reached New York but did not continue to Utah until 1866. Four other Loader children stayed in England: Jonas, Eliza, Emma, and Marshall. Jonas and Marshall died in 1865; Emma (wife of Frederick Stopes) in 1869; and Eliza (wife of Thomas Heritage) on an unknown date.

Patience recorded a rather precarious experience upon leaving England: “After my parents and my sister and I got all our baggage on board the ship, we found that it would not sail until the next day, so I decided to go back to stay at my married sister’s house that night. The next afternoon I went back to the ship and found it ready to depart. The men were just taking away the last plank. There were all my folks standing on deck watching anxiously for me and shouting at the top of their voices, ‘For Lord’s sake bring our girl on the ship and don’t leave her behind.’ There was just one plank to walk on from the dock to the ship and father and mother were afraid I should fall off into the water.

“The sailors said, ‘Miss, do you think you can walk the plank?’ I told them I thought I could, but they thought I might get dizzy and fall off so they were very kind. One man went on the plank before me and took my hand, the second man came behind me on the plank and took my left hand. They said if I slipped they would save me from going into the water . . . There was great anxiety among them when they saw me walking the plank with the sailors, and there was great rejoicing when I was safe on the vessel with them.”

The Loader family first went to Williamsburg, New York, where they all found work. Patience and her sister, Maria, worked in “the store in Grant Street making mantillas” where they made good wages.¹ The Loaders left New York in June of 1856 and traveled to Iowa City where they joined their daughters, Tamar (28) and Zilpah Jaques (24) with her husband, John, and 1-year-old, Flora. They had sailed on the *Horizon* in 1856 and joined the family for the Martin handcart trek. A baby boy was born to Zilpah about a month into their handcart trek. He survived, but Flora died a week before entering the valley.

Patience’s father, James, died fairly early in the trek, leaving his wife and daughters to finish the trek alone. Patience wrote a poignant account of her father’s death, which she concluded with this testimony: It did seem a great trial to have to leave our dear father behind that morning, knowing we had looked upon that sweet smiling face for the last time on earth, but not without hope of meeting him again on the morning of the resurrection for he had been a faithful servant of God and bore testimony to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ numbers of times and we know if we, his children, follow his example that we will meet our dear father again and be reunited with him to dwell in unity and love all through eternity.

¹ Lucy Ward of the Willie handcart company also worked in New York with Patience, and traveled to Iowa City with her in 1856. It was likely the place where Lucy obtained her green mantilla or scarf. (See Lucy Ward story in Willie company section of *Tell My Story, Too*.) On a layover at Dunkirk, Lucy and Patience went for a walk and bathed in Lake Erie.

Patience had become engaged to Alexander Ott during the time the family was in New York. She promised to wait for him, to be married as soon as he returned from his mission the next year. However, President John Taylor wrote to Patience and informed her that Alexander had married a widow woman. Patience wrote: “He proved false to me and ... I considered myself free from all promises.” The Loader family’s handcart journey finally began.

Sarah told how the two family handcarts were managed: “There was a bar across the front of the two shafts. The two older sisters got inside and pushed, and [a] little sister (14) and myself (12) had ropes tied to the bar and we pulled. Two of my sisters, Brother Jaques wife [Zilpah] and another sister [Tamar] came together. She had mountain fever all the way across and wasn’t able to push or pull. ... My father pulled a hand cart but he died on the plains. ... We hauled him on the hand cart the day before he died. The day before ... he walked seventeen miles. Some ladies told mother they helped pick him up because he fell.”

Patience’s sister, Tamar, was very much grieved when she left England. She had been unable to convert her sweetheart and he remained. One night, while on the plains, Tamar had a dream. The next morning she told her mother she had dreamed that her sweetheart came and stood beside her and he seemed so real. But he was not alone. Another man was with him. In the dream the sweetheart finally faded away but the other man remained. When Tamar first saw Thomas E. Ricks in the rescue party, she took her mother by the arm and said, “Mother, that’s the man.” She did marry Thomas Ricks. Ricks College—now BYU Idaho—was named after him.

Patience had spiritual experiences on her trek. She relates that one day as she was pulling the handcart through the deep snow, a strange man appeared to her: “He came and looked in my face. He said, ‘Are you Patience?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘I thought it was you. Travel on, there is help for you. You will come to a good place. There is plenty.’ With this he was gone. He disappeared. I looked but never saw where he went. This seemed very strange to me. I took this as someone sent to encourage us and give us strength.”

Patience also wrote: “We did not get but very little meat as the bone had been picked the night before and we did not have only the half of a small biscuit as we only was having four oz. of flour a day. This we divided into portions so we could have a small peice three times a day. This we ate with thankful hearts and we always asked God to bless to our use and that it would strengthen our bodies day by day so that we could perform our duties. And I can testify that our Heavenly Father heard and answered our prayers and we was blessed with health and strength day by day to endure the severe trials we had to pass through on that terrible journey before we got to Salt Lake City. We know that if God had not been with us that our strength would have failed us. ... I can say we put our trust in God and he heard and answered our prayers and brought us through to the valleys.”

Patience married a U.S. soldier and convert to the Church, John Eugene Rozsa, in 1858. She traveled back across the plains with him and her young son to Washington D.C. in 1861 at the beginning of the Civil War. She worked as a laundress for the army. She had two more sons here and also ran a boarding house for a time. After the war, John died on the return trip to Utah. Patience returned to her home in American Fork where her mother was living. Patience continued to care for her mother to the end of her life. Patience married John Archer about 1878.

Patience continued to live an active social and family life. She raised her cousin’s infant son after his mother died, cared for a stepdaughter, and had other children in her home. About 1901, a girl named Ruth was intentionally left at Patience’s doorstep to be raised. Patience and John adopted Ruth. In the Church, Patience served as ward Relief Society president; and in her community of Pleasant Grove she was elected treasurer. (Her daughter, Amy, was next elected treasurer.) When Patience was close to 90 years old she learned to play the organ. She wrote letters to dozens of missionaries, and enjoyed having people young and old in her home. Maintaining her English heritage until her death, Patience kept a picture of Queen Victoria on her wall.

Sources: *Life history and writings of John Jaques including a diary of the Martin Handcart Company*, by Stella Jaques Bell, 1978; Sandra Ailey Petree, *Recollections of Past Days: The Autobiography of Patience Loader Rozsa Archer*, 2006, All USU Press Publications, Book 37 (online at http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1036&context=usupress_pubs), excerpts at Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website.; “Sarah Loader Harris Holman,” in Merrill D. Beal research files, 1938-1969, MS 4022, folder 3, Church History Library. (Quotes from the accounts of Sarah and Patience Loader have been edited for readability by Jolene Allphin.)