

## ALICE DANDY OLLERTON

Born: 4 Oct 1802 England

Age: 53

Martin Handcart Company



Alice Dandy Ollerton



Jane Ann Ollerton

Alice was one of six children born to James and Elizabeth Ogden Dandy. At the age of 23 she married John Ollerton and together they had fifteen children, nine of whom lived to maturity.

Among the very first converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England, John and Alice were baptized in 1837 and 1838, respectively. Many of their children were baptized at various ages and at different times, the strong faith of their parents being a religious influence.

On May 22, 1856, John and Alice and their four daughters, Alice (age 19), Jane Ann (15), Sarah (5), and Elizabeth (Wilson) (24) with her husband, James (26), sailed from Liverpool on the *Horizon*, bound for their Zion and promised land in Utah. Elizabeth gave birth to a baby girl on the ship and named her Nancy Horizon Wilson. The baby only lived 3 weeks and was buried at sea. Also traveling with them was Mary Harrison Rogerson and her six unmarried children. Alice's son, Seth Ollerton was married to Mary's daughter, Jane Rogerson. (Seth and Jane and their five children emigrated in 1864.) Mary Rogerson and Alice Ollerton must have surely enjoyed each other's company enjoyed talking about their common grandchildren back in England.

Alice and John survived the worst events of this journey—the reduction of rations and handcart luggage, including warm bedding; the dreadful final crossing of the North Platte River on October 19 when they were hit with the first storm; their stranded condition at Red Buttes until they were located 9 days later; and the November 4 crossing of the Sweetwater into Martin's Cove and subsequent plunge in temperatures and another reduction of rations. They had witnessed Elizabeth pull her husband in the handcart as his feet were too frozen to help. When the cry went up, "Teams with [more] food from Utah has arrived," John had just said he could go no further, but now asked Alice, "Hurry, Mother, and bring me some food." John Ollerton died with the uneaten food in his hands. Alice died eight days later on November 20, a mere 10 days from her goal to be in Zion with her family. Her daughter, Alice, died the day after reaching the Salt Lake Valley.

On the night Alice (Sr.) died, her three daughters and their friend, Sarah Foster, kept an all-night vigil by their fire. They said that Alice felt that she was dying, but was afraid they might only think she was dead in the morning and go on without her, so she asked them to watch with her and be sure. Alice did die during the night and the fire had thawed the ground enough for a decent grave to be dug for their mother, dear friend and surrogate mother. Mary Rogerson's son, Josiah, wrote of these things:

Here Sister Alice Ollerton died and was buried the next morning where our family had kept a fire burning nearly the whole night. She was about 60 years of age, and the relict of John Ollerton, who died on the 12th and was buried on a bench immediately west of the three crossings of the Sweetwater.<sup>1</sup> She had been the mother of fifteen or sixteen children, only four daughters succeeding in reaching Salt Lake that season—Mrs. Betsy Wilson of Levan, Juab county; Mrs. Jane Ann McPherson of Nephi; Mrs. Sarah Eatough, the relict of George Eatough, a miner, and for many years a resident of Eureka and Bingham mining camps, Utah, and a daughter named Alice, aged 17 [19] years, whose feet and back became so badly frozen between the Red Buttes and Bridger that she was brought into Salt Lake more dead than alive, expiring the next day and buried Dec. 3. the same day President Jedediah M. Grant was buried in the cemetery in this city.

<sup>1</sup> If John Ollerton died on Nov. 12, he was probably buried at the Ice Springs Bench, just west of Fifth Crossing, not Three Crossings. This matches the story of rescue wagons having just met them—Arza Hinckley and whoever was with him met the Martin company at Ice Springs on Nov. 12. Alice Dandy Ollerton died on Nov. 20. The company camped that night at a bend on the Big Sandy River. That morning they had left their camp at Dry Sandy, about 14 miles west of South Pass. Since Alice died "during the night," this is likely where she is buried.

Sources: "Jane Rogerson Ollerton," in Daughters of Utah Pioneers publication *Our Heritage*, unknown volume, pgs. 464-465; DUP history files; family histories courtesy George T. Crane, Tooele, Utah; See Robert T. Burton, William Broomhead, Arza Hinckley, and Sarah Foster biographies; Jolene S. Alphin, "1856 Rescue Timeline of the Smoot, Willie, Martin, Hodgett and Hunt companies," unpublished (2017) mauscript, pgs. 190-204.



The James R. McPherson Family, c. 1911  
 (Left to right, seated: Amelia (Lala), Jane Ann, Bertha, James R., Lavina;  
 Standing: Jane, John, Ruby, Elizabeth, Seth, Estelle, Jim, Rose, Heber, Alice.)