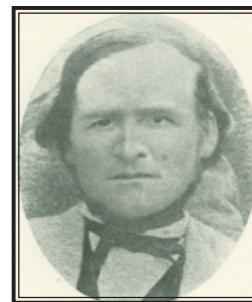


## SAMUEL WASHINGTON ORME

Born: 4 July 1832 Mentor, Ohio  
 Age: 23  
 Martin Handcart Company



Samuel's parents, Samuel and Amy Kirby Orme, first emigrated from England around 1831 to live near Amy's parents in Ohio. It was at this time that the first gathering of the Saints was occurring in nearby Kirtland. Samuel Orme, Sr. heard some men preaching the gospel in a town near Mentor and was impressed with the truth of their message, though he did not learn the names of the men or the religious sect to which they belonged.

The only son of Samuel and Amy was born in Ohio on Independence Day. His parents felt that in addition to carrying his father's name, he should have an additional name suggestive of this great event in American history. Accordingly, he was named Samuel Washington Orme.

Shortly after Samuel's birth, the family returned to England to assist Grandfather John Orme, who was in his declining years and wished his son to return. The family moved to Coalville where young Samuel remembered his father taking him and his younger sister by the hand and going a short distance to see the first train go through Coalville. Samuel, Sr. was a bookkeeper for the Midland Railway Company.

When Samuel W. was 9 years old, his father died. Samuel W. became an apprentice to a blacksmith for the next 7 years and also worked in the nearby coal mine. He was an excellent penman and learned somewhat of his father's trade, but did not become a bookkeeper. He finally earned enough money at his blacksmith's trade that he supported his mother and sisters comfortably.

Before Samuel Orme, Sr. died, he reminded his wife about his strong impressions of the preachers back in Ohio. He had studied the Bible, pondered about it, and knew it was true. He told his wife that she must join this church whenever she heard about it. He said, "When you hear the first sermon, you will feel as I feel, that it is true. A strange spirit will come over you, and you shall feel as if the truth of it is burning into your very soul." Only a few months after Samuel's death, Amy heard of two brothers, John and James Burrow, who were preaching a "strange" doctrine in nearby Whitwick. She took her children to go and hear them and at the close of the meeting she was ready for baptism. She said, "Why, I feel as if my very soul is on fire. I know it is true, although I don't know where these men got their truths. Yet I know it is the same as my husband heard in America years ago." Amy and her children who were over 8 years of age were baptized at this time. Samuel was active in church work, becoming a local Elder as well as a clerk of that branch. They began to save money to emigrate to be with the other Saints in Utah.

Samuel's older sister, Eliza, emigrated in 1849 with her husband, Michael Holden, and baby girl, Jane. Another sister, Caroline, went with them. Eliza died of cholera in Missouri and Caroline worked for a time in St. Louis and emigrated to Utah in 1882. Three other sisters had died as young children while still in England. Amy (52), Sarah Ann (30), Samuel W. and Rebecca (18) were able to start in 1856 when the handcart plan was introduced. They boarded the ship *Horizon* in Liverpool with a large company of other Saints bound for Zion under the direction of Edward Martin, a returning missionary. Martin's handcart company was organized in Iowa City, Iowa. It was the 5th and last handcart company of the year. The Hodgett and Hunt wagon companies were following closely along, and assisting as much as possible. However, because of their delayed start and early winter storms in Wyoming, they all suffered together from hunger and cold.

(Samuel Washington Orme - Page 2)

As flour rations were cut, and then cut again before the rescuers came from Salt Lake City, the Orme family was down to four ounces per day per person. Samuel's courageous mother saw her son quickly weakening. She proposed to her girls that they each cut their own rations even further in order to feed Samuel more. They all agreed to make this sacrifice and it saved Samuel's life. His sisters and mother also survived, although Rebecca had to have several toes amputated.

Amy Kirby Orme outlived all her children but Caroline. Sarah Ann died in 1866 giving birth to twins who also died. Rebecca died in 1871 leaving a feeble husband and three boys. Amy took over and raised these children.

Samuel had left his sweetheart, Sarah Cross, in England. She emigrated the next year and she and Samuel were married. They soon moved to Tooele where Samuel became prominent in the community, serving in many positions in the church and community, including mayor of Tooele two terms without pay. He was an earnest advocate for better schools and did much work as a trustee. Samuel died in 1889 at the age of 57. At this writing (2005), Samuel still has a living granddaughter, 92 years of age. Evelyn Orme Palmer grew up with the stories of her grandfather's life being saved by his devoted mother and sisters. She also knew of the heritage of honesty and integrity that he left his posterity.

Samuel's son, Lafayette, went to his father's home town in England, 50 years after his father had left there. He said, "I got a voluntary testimony as to his character while I was [there]. . . . I inquired for the oldest resident [in Coalville]. One man, William Sheffield, said he came to Coalville in 1851 but said he did not know my father. I found another man named John Starkey who said, 'I knew your father well. We were boys together. There are only a few of us old timers left. Your father and many of his type left years ago, and we have a much less desirable class to take their place. But say, William Sheffield should remember your father.' 'No,' said I, 'he told me he never knew anyone by that name.' Mr. Starkey wondered at this at first, then he said, 'I know why he doesn't remember your father. He came here to start a saloon, and your father was one of the few boys who would not patronize him. Your father as a boy never touched intoxicating liquor. He was honest and moral in every respect.' Thus from all friends and even foes comes the testimony that he was honest, true, temperate, and loyal to his country. His foes were those who were foes to Mormonism. He had no personal foes. He was as humble as a little child. The sun seldom went down on his wrath. If he offended anyone, he was quick to ask forgiveness. On offending one of his sons, the son, instead of flying into a rage, went from the room in tears. On returning the father said, 'My boy, I've hurt your feelings. I spoke too hasty. I want you to forgive me. If need be, I'll go on my knees to plead forgiveness.' Such was the humility of our father."

Sources: Interview with Mark Engh, by Jolene Allphin; "Samuel Washington Orme," by LaFayette Orme, son of Samuel Washington Orme, edited by Ruth Orme Yancey, May 1992; "Amy Kirby Orme," unknown author; *History of the Orme Family*, journal of Lafayette Orme; *Pioneers and Prominent Men*, Frank Esshom, 1913; "Correspondence from the Camp at Florence," J.H. Latey, *The Mormon*, 30 Aug. 1856, 2 (Posted on Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website); familysearch.org.



Amy Kirby Orme



Rebecca Orme (Lee)