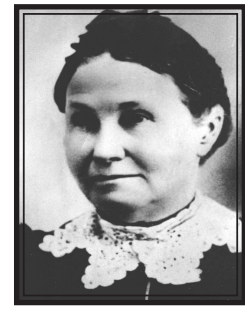


SUSANNAH STONE

Born: December 24, 1830 in England

Age: 25

Willie Handcart Company



Susannah was the oldest in a family of eight children. She was an avid scripture reader, attended a Wesleyan Sunday School, and often wished she had lived in the days of the apostles and prophets. She heard the missionaries and was baptized at age 17. She found employment and saved her money to go to Utah. The following comes from Susannah's autobiography (as found in Carol Cornwall Madsen, *Journey To Zion: Voices From The Mormon Trail*, Deseret Book, 1997, 632-635); interview by Jolene Allphin with Agnes Pearl Lloyd Poulsen,¹ her great-granddaughter; and other family sources. Agnes Poulsen's narrative is noted in italics:

I had the beautiful, wonderful privilege of sleeping with her in her feather bed. It was a tall bed and we would kneel on the steps. There were steps on both sides of the bed to get in it, and we'd kneel and say our prayers and grandmother would never let me get in the bed before she was ready. But she prayed a lot longer than I did, and so I'd stand and shiver before she'd get through. And then when she was through she would throw the covers back and state "Jump" and we'd jump in the bed together. There would be a rock under the blanket at our feet and we'd cuddle up. I've sat many an hour, many an hour, at her feet as she sat by the pot-bellied stove with a shawl around her and a little black cap on her head. ... When she was eight years old, she carried her mother's train when she was presented to Queen Victoria, so they must have been a well-known family. ... Grandmother joined the Church in her late teens and was disowned by her family and she came to Utah all alone ... in the Willie handcart company.

"My parents, relatives and friends, did all in their power to keep me from coming to America, but I had the spirit of gathering, and the Lord opened up my way, and I came to Utah in 1856 with the handcart company. Brother Willie was our captain, Millen Atwood was his councilor. ... We waded through the cold streams many times, but we murmured not, for our faith in God and our testimony of His work were supreme. Only once did my courage fail. One cold, dreary afternoon, my feet having been frosted, I felt that I could go no further, and withdrew a little from the company, and sat down to await the end, being somewhat in a stupor. After a time, I was aroused by a voice, which seemed as audible as anything could be, which spoke to my very soul of the promises and blessings I had received, and which should surely be fulfilled, and that I had a mission to perform in Zion. I received strength, and was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and arose and traveled on with a light heart. As I reached camp, I found a search party ready to go back to find me, dead or alive."

When they were stranded in Wyoming she was so discouraged and sick. ... She decided that she was going to wander away and sit down and just will herself to die. ... As she sat down she heard a voice, as plain as anyone could speak: "You must get up and go on to Zion. Your mission is not yet finished." After that was repeated three times, she decided she better get up and go back to camp, which she did and that was when the rescuers came.

"I had no relatives, but many dear and devoted friends, and we did all we could to aid and encourage each other. ... In the blizzards and falling snow, we sat under our hand carts and sang, "Come, Come, Ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear, but with joy, wend your way. Though hard to you, this journey may appear, grace shall be, as your day." While we were traveling thru the United States, the people tried to discourage us by telling us there was famine in Utah, that the grasshoppers had eaten up everything and that there had been a grasshopper war, etc., but we traveled on, trusting in God. [Before arriving in Salt Lake] I had sold my little looking glass to the Indians for buffalo meat, so I borrowed one and I shall never forget how I looked. Some of my old friends did not know me! A rescuer, Thomas Lloyd, said when he first saw Susannah she was "a very thin and tired ... but beautiful Miss Stone."

Grandfather Lloyd was a little orphan boy who had been raised by an auntie. When he joined the Church as a teenager he was put out of the home. He came to Utah two years before Grandmother did. When they needed rescuers, Grandfather was asked by Brigham Young to take his outfit and go help rescue them. He noticed this lovely lady and asked her if she would ride on his conveyance. By the time they got to Salt Lake he had proposed to Grandmother. They went to Brigham Young when they got to Salt Lake and asked if they could get married. They were a great couple and had a large family and I remember every one of those great aunts and uncles.²

Susannah's frozen feet gave her trouble for many years, but she did not regret her decision. She testified: "I am thankful that I was counted worthy to be a pioneer and a handcart girl. It prepared me to endure hard times in my future life. I often think of the songs we sang to encourage us on our toilsome journey. It was hard to endure, but the Lord gave us strength and courage."

¹Susannah lived to be 94 years old. Agnes was also 94 at time of this interview with Jolene Allphin in December 2004.

²Susannah and Thomas Lloyd were married the day after Susannah arrived in Salt Lake. They became the parents of 14 children, 10 boys and 4 girls.