

JAMES HEBER MOULTON

Born: July 1, 1848 England

Age: 7

Willie Handcart Company



Thomas and Sarah Denton Moulton

James H. Moulton's father, Thomas, was only 2 years old when his father died. Thomas became a child laborer. He lived with and worked for a family by the name of Tunnel. When Thomas was 22 years old, he married Esther Marsh. About this time, Mr. Tunnel made Thomas "superintendent of the livestock," and he was known as the shepherd.

Thomas and Esther had two daughters before Esther died. One of these daughters died at age two. Thomas was left to raise his young daughter, Sarah. Knowing that she needed a mother and he needed a wife, he married Sarah Denton. James Moulton was Thomas and Sarah's 4th child.

Among the first missionaries to preach the gospel in England was the apostle, Heber C. Kimball. One of Elder Kimball's converts, John Tingey, became the branch president in the area where the Moultons lived. Mrs. Tingey was a friend to James's mother. She tried to interest Sarah in the Church, but Sarah was not persuaded. One day Mrs. Tingey visited the Moulton home and left a tract, "The Voice of Warning," by Parley P. Pratt,¹ on the table. Sarah was not home when Thomas came for supper that night, but she had prepared his meal and left the tract sitting next to it. It is said that the tract "was part of the supper he ate" and when Sarah came home, Thomas said, "Mother, where have we been? Here is the gospel!"

Thomas and Sarah were baptized in December 1841. They began to make plans to gather with the Saints, but they did not have enough money. Sarah "turned her desire into resolution and determination" and saved money for the next 15 years in a hidden fruit jar. She carefully resisted the temptation to use her secret cache of money. During the last year before their departure, the family lived chiefly on barley flour in order to save more money. Thomas was hesitant about going because Sarah was expecting another baby, but Sarah had made up her mind and said, "Father, we are going. The Lord will take care of us." Sarah surprised Thomas when she revealed the money she had saved. She also received a blessing promising that the family would arrive safely in Zion.

This family of ten consisted of the parents: Thomas (age 45) and Sarah (38); and children: Sarah (19), Mary Ann (15), William (12), Joseph (10), James Heber (7), Charlotte (4), Sophia Elizabeth (2)², and Charles Alma. Charles was born on the ship *Thornton*, three days after they set sail from Liverpool. The family joined the Willie handcart company at Iowa City, Iowa. They had to leave behind many possessions because there was no room on the carts.³ Thomas was the camp butcher. Although he was weary from each day's trek, it was his responsibility to do the butchering for the camp.⁴ During part of their travels, the Moulton children went out in the fields with their mother to glean wild wheat to add to their food supplies. The Moultons were allowed one covered and one open handcart. The parents pulled the covered cart with Charles and Sophia ("Lizzie") riding. Charlotte ("Lottie") was allowed to ride whenever the cart was going downhill but complained that she would rather ride uphill. James walked behind with a rope tied around his waist to keep him from straying. The other cart was pulled by Sarah, Mary Ann, William and Joseph. James wrote a summary of his family's immigration:

At the age of eight years I emigrated from England to Utah Territory, North America, with my father and his family in the year 1856. While crossing the Rocky Ridge of the Sweetwater where so many perished with the cold while crossing the plains, an old lady led me by the right hand, my left hand being exposed to the cold. I cried with the cold and wanted to go back to my father and mother, but she, knowing that they had all they could manage without my going back to bother them, insisted upon my staying with her.

After a time my fingers ceased to bother me as they had become frozen, and we travelled on until night. When we went to the campfire and my fingers began to thaw I suffered a great deal. No one knew what to do with them. Between that time and the time we arrived in Salt Lake, the flesh all decayed and fell off the bones. The same day that

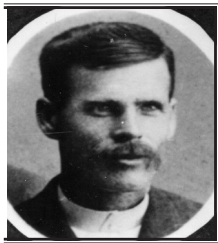


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my fingers were frozen, fourteen people froze to death. They would get tired and sit down by the side of the road and when the teams came along they would be found dead. The teamsters picked the bodies up and brought them into camp that night and a large fire was made to thaw out the ground so that a large grave could be dug to hold all the bodies. As one more person had died during the night, there was fifteen people buried in the one grave.⁵

With the help of rescuers, the Willie Company reached Salt Lake City on November 9. A relative of the Moultons was among those who met the company at Little Mountain. Charlotte wrote: "Father and Mother did not know that they had relatives anywhere in Utah. When the relief trains came to meet us, one of the men said, 'Is there a Thomas Moulton in this company?' And to their surprise it was my mother's brother-in-law by the name of [Samuel] Cussley. He had, oh, so many of the good things that children like; pie, cake, etc., but there was nothing looked so good as the good bread and butter. My father asked me, after eating a piece of cake, 'Lottie, do you want another piece of cake?' I said, 'Could I have another piece of bread and butter instead?'"

Also among the rescuers was John Hawkins. He and James's sister, Sarah, were married about three weeks after their arrival. The baby, Charles, whose frail body had been cradled on a pillow, was reduced to a mere skeleton. "When his pitiful little body was held up to the sun, one could see right through it, so little flesh did he have. ... He was a mere skeleton. People came from all around to see him and give him warm clothing."⁶ Nevertheless, Sarah's promise was fulfilled and not one member of the family was lost. James wrote:



James Heber Moulton

"After arriving in Salt Lake, Dr. Richards amputated the bones. This was before the day of anesthetic and was a very painful operation. The small finger was amputated at the second joint, the ring finger half way between the first and second joint, the second just below the first joint, and the first finger about the center of the nail.

"All the hand cart companies having come to Salt Lake, it became necessary to send some of the people to other settlements. My father's family and a number of other families were sent to Provo and were taken to the meeting house where we lived for a few days. The citizens of Provo were asked to see the immigrants and help them find employment. A man by the name of William Halliday ... questioned my father and found he was just the man he needed."

Shortly after the Moulton family was settled in Provo, the bishop brought the family some squash to eat. James's mother had never seen squash before and asked if they were chairs on which to sit. In Provo, James's mother taught reading and other school lessons in her home. In 1860 the Moultons moved to Heber City, where they built a two-room log house. Later they built a nice rock house on 2nd North and 2nd West. Thomas Moulton was quite strict and expected his boys to stay busy. If they had friends stop by after school, he would ask them if they didn't have work to do at home.⁷

James married Euphemia Ann Carroll in 1874. They became the parents of 13 children. Euphemia died in 1914 at age 56. James then married her sister, Emily Jane Carroll Bentley. James lived to be 86 years old. He provided much service and pioneering in the Heber Valley.⁸

James seemed to deal with the difficulties brought about by his injured hand with hard work and good humor. James's granddaughter, Lois Duke, said of him, "He had one of the most cheerful dispositions I have ever known. ... [He] was always such a cut up and doing things to cause a laugh." Two more sons were born to the Moultons in Utah: John and George.

In the early winter of 1863, three companies of Indians were unable to return to their reservation. They set up their tents across the street from James's home and camped there all winter. The ground had been flooded and was covered with ice. James watched the squaws cut the ice while the men did nothing to help. He finally took an ax from one of the squaws and cut the ice for her. After this incident, the Indians called James "Hebe Hatch Tooichanarient," meaning Hebe cut, very strong. He was called that name by the Indians for many years.

In April 1919, James and Emily moved to Salt Lake City. James worked in the temple the rest of his life. He was a set apart temple worker for a total of 27 years. The temple president, George F. Richards, said of James, "Brother Moulton was a genial, faithful laborer as an ordinance worker in the Salt Lake Temple, the House of the Lord. But few men at his advanced age could do the work he did day after day. His work never appeared drudgery for him, but he did his work with a light heart and a cheerful countenance. Having finished his life's work, the Lord graciously took him home."



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Sources: "Thomas Moulton," by Verda Hicken, great-granddaughter, 1973; "Thomas Moulton [and] Sarah Denton," compiled by Vicki Tovey, obtained August 2009; "William Denton Moulton," obtained from Vicki Tovey; "The History of My Grandfather James Heber Moulton & Family," by Lois Duke; "History of Thomas Moulton," as given by Dorothy Eggleston at the Moulton Reunion in 1951; Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; Moulton History, pgs. 167-179; How Beautiful Upon the Mountains, Heber Biographies, pgs. 452-53; "Outstanding Events in the Life of James Heber Moulton-1848," autobiography; ourgrandmasandgrandpas.com. A song entitled "Thomas and Sarah," is available on the CD *Unsung*. It may also be available as a single from iTunes.

¹ Many of these early missionaries visited the Moulton home. It appears that James Heber was named for Heber C. Kimball. Parley P. Pratt also visited the home, and family tradition says that he often cared for the little Moulton boys. In 1856, Elder Pratt was traveling eastward on a mission and passed the Willie handcart company on October 2, near Fort Laramie. He preached a "discourse suitable to the times, which was well received by the people; he bid the camp good by & went on his way to the States." (Willie Company Journal) Moulton family tradition indicates that when Elder Pratt saw the camp, he inquired, "Where are my boys?"

² On November 27, 1932, Sophia Moulton wrote a letter to her granddaughter, Verda Hicken: "Before leaving England our sister was staying with our aunt, and she [the aunt] took smallpox and died. My sister took it, too, but lived. When we left she had only one pox mark. It was on her left wrist. She had some gloves which her mother had made for each of the girls to cover the pox and allow the family to pass the health inspection. When we went to be examined, before we could get in the ship, Father prayed earnestly that they would not take off the glove covering the mark, for if they did, the mark was so fresh they would not have let us come. God answered his prayer. They did not take off the glove. I consider the whole journey faith promoting." (The aunt was probably Ann Denton Chapman who died April 1856, just before the Moultons left for America.)

³ In all, the Moultons had left excess baggage at the port in Liverpool, a box of clothing on board the ship, a trunk of clothing at New York City (with instructions to use it for the poor), a trunk of supplies at Iowa City, and another box of supplies at Florence. Lottie recalled that "one morning Father said, 'Mother, we have just got to lighten our load a little.' So he went through the handcarts. All he could find was the teapot lid so he threw that away. Mother went and picked it up again."

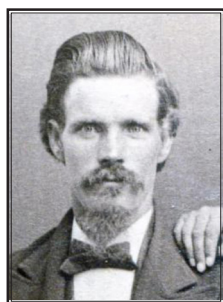
⁴ Charlotte Moulton wrote that "when a beef was killed the children would burn the hair off, put it on long sticks and roast it till crisp. To them it tasted better than pie does to children today."

⁵ The official Willie Company Journal indicates 13 people died Oct. 23. Two more died the next day and were placed in another grave.

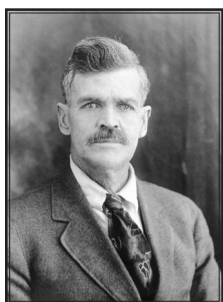
⁶ When Charles was a grown man, he often joked that he was a man born at sea without a country or nationality.

⁷ When James was older, he worked for his brother, William, who owned a prosperous ranch 9 miles north of Heber. William was also the presiding elder of the branch there. He was known for his honesty and influence for good business standards and was called the "model man" of the community. He employed many young men but would not keep any who smoked or drank. Parents asked him to employ their boys to break them of these bad habits. It was said that William's hired help could improve if they would pattern their standards after him in industry, integrity, honesty and in living the gospel. James was fortunate to have this influence in his life.

⁸ "James was an officer, director and promoter in six irrigation companies during their period of construction and improvement." Much of the Timpanogos Canal had to be constructed through granite. Over a mile of it was through sandstone. James "was reluctant to take up the work, as he had no land under the canal; but it was put up to him as a mission by the Wasatch Stake President, William H. Smart," and James accepted. James served in the positions of stake tithing clerk, stake clerk, stake MIA superintendent, and bishop's counselor. James wrote: "I was first counselor to Bishop Joseph A. Rasband of Heber Second Ward and we were in great need of a meetinghouse. I was asked to superintend the building of it. This was about as hard a task as I ever undertook. Details of this work required all my time, very often from daylight to dark. We were backed by an enthusiastic building committee. When the building was completed it was a pleasure to look at, as it was as good a meetinghouse as any in Heber."



Joseph



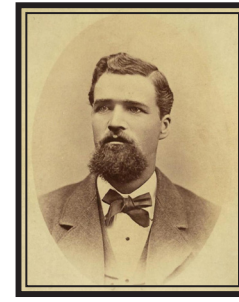
Charles Alma



Sophia Elizabeth (Hicken)



Charlotte (Carroll)



William Denton