

## ZILPAH LOADER JAQUES

Born: 1832 England

Age: 34

Martin Handcart Company



Zilpah came to Zion with her husband, John Jaques, and one-year-old baby, Flora. Also traveling with them were her parents, James and Amy Loader, five sisters and a brother, Robert. These two families had many great spiritual manifestations given to them by a merciful God during their travels with the Martin handcart company. Zilpah's husband was a great writer and biographer.

Zilpah had many heartaches on her journey. Her father died, and finally her precious daughter, Flora, died just one week before they reached their destination in the Salt Lake Valley. Zilpah also gave birth to a baby on the plains in August. She named him Alpha Loader Jacques. Alpha not only survived this trek, but was thought by some to be the longest-lived member of the Martin handcart company. (He died December 12, 1945.)

The following are some experiences recorded concerning the time of Alpha's birth by his aunt, Patience Loader:

"That night, my sister, Zilpah Jacques, was confined at twelve o'clock and my sister, Tamar, was very sick with mountain fever. My sister got through her confinement quite well . . . The next morning we got ready to start. The captain came to our tent and told us to be ready to start as soon as we could get ready. There lay my sister, Zilpah, on the ground . . . She was lying on some quilts in one corner of the tent and my sister, Tamar, was lying on quilts in the other corner of the tent, neither of the poor things able to move. Captain Martin said, 'Put them up on the wagon,' as there was a wagon for the sick who were unable to walk. I asked, 'Can one of us ride with them to take care of them?' He said, 'No, they will have to take care of themselves.' Then I said, 'They will not go. We will stay here for a day or two and take care of our two sick sisters.' So we were left there all alone as the company started about seven o'clock that morning.

"When night came my poor father and my brother-in-law, John Jacques, had to be up all night to make a big fire to keep the wolves away from us. I never heard such a terrible howling of wolves in my life as we experienced that lonesome night. We were all glad to see daylight . . . Brother Joseph A. Young [came] on horseback riding at great speed to our camp to see what was the cause of the big fire. They had watched the light all night . . . When he came into the tent and saw my sister with her new born babe lying on the ground on some quilts he was overcome with sympathy. The tears ran down his cheeks. Then he blessed my sister and tried to comfort and cheer her by saying, 'Well, Sister Jacques, I suppose you will name your boy Handcart, having been born under such circumstances?' 'No', she said, 'I will want a prettier name than that for him.'

"[In starting on our journey again the next day] we packed our handcart, struck our tent, packed it on my handcart, then lay my sister, Tamar, on that, then Brother Jacques packed his cart, then lay my sister and her two children on the cart. We tied the tent poles alongside of the cart. Our cooking utensils we tied under the cart . . . This was very hard on my poor sick father after having to be up all night, no rest or sleep. But it surely did prove that God was with us for my dear father seemed better that day than he had been for weeks past. Surely God gave him new strength that day for we traveled twenty-two miles before we overtook the company.

"[While traveling to catch up to the handcart company] we were overtaken by a Brother William Cluff who had ridden out from Florence after Brother Joseph A. Young had returned from our camp and told them who it was that had made the fire. He fetched a rope with him and tied it to our handcart and then to the pomel of his saddle and gave us a rest . . . I was very thankful, more on account of my dear sick father than for us girls because we were young and healthy in those days. (Alpha's Grandfather Loader died on the plains one month later.)

"[Brother Cluff, who had to return to his camp at Florence], had hardly left us when five great Indians came out of a cave in the mountains and got on their horses and came to meet us. They were all painted and naked except for breech cloth, had their tommyhawks and hatchets, bows and arrows. They stopped us in the road and talked but we could not understand them. When they saw our sick and my sister with her new born babe, they moved out of the road and motioned for us to go on. I think this was as near to being killed by the Indians as I wish to be. They were quite impudent in their manners to us and made fun of us pulling the handcart. We were somewhat afraid of them and

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I dare say they could see that. At the time we put our faith and trust in God, our Father, that he would take care of us and not let those Indians hurt us. I know it was nothing but the power of God that saved us from those Indians that day.”

Zilpah’s husband adored her. Following are some of John’s writings:

## HAST THOU A HEART

Hast thou a heart my dearest maid  
To freely give away?  
Nay do not blush nor be afraid  
The simple truth to say.

For love’s a power none can withstand  
Which death alone can part.  
And I’d not wish to have thy hand  
Unless I have thy heart.

I’d have you ask the question well  
Nor let the prisoner free  
Until you feel that it can dwell  
Where one is kept for thee.

If thou could love as I can love  
No two or all the earth  
The power of love more pure could prove  
Than that which we’d give birth.

Then tell me dearest, tell me true  
When reason says you may  
If love would meet return from you  
If so we’ll fix the day.

For love’s a power none can withstand  
Which death alone can part.  
But mark me! I’d not have thy hand  
Unless I had your heart.

“She was a beautiful woman, beautiful but not strong, having poor health. She had much better health after her marriage than before, though always delicate. Marriage is a wonderful thing, the wonder of wonders. It is a veritable garden of delights, of felicities unspeakable, a perennial fountain of the most exquisite sweetness, happiness, pleasures imaginable, a land of enchantment. The riches and honor of the world are nothing in comparison with it. In fact, it seems as if heaven would be nothing without the estate of marriage. Consequently, I thank the Lord that he created such a suitable and delightful companion and helpmeet for man. I would rather be married twenty times than live all my life without being married at all.

“In fact, my wife and I were married to each other three times - first, by the registrar in Liverpool; second, the same day by Elder Samuel Richards; third, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City by President Heber C. Kimball. My wife always wished to be married in white apparel, but never was until her third marriage.

“Her friends could not believe that she would ever become the mother of nine children.

“At our wedding supper we had by invitation a dozen of the poorest Saints in Liverpool, in accordance with the instructions of the Savior of his disciples . . .

“What a glorious thing is marriage. I think it, and I am never tired of sounding its praises. Man is never happier than when making woman happy, in enobling, assisting her to fulfill her royal destiny according to the original intent and heavenly design.

“Not only honorable is marriage and undefiled, but that estate the consummation of all delights, the crowning of every heavenly desire, no mortal tongue can tell how good it is, and those who know its real ecstasy will chant its praise throughout eternity. But it is nothing without love, pureborn, that in its nature is itself divine and all essential to the perfect life.

“To be the husband of a good woman with mutual love abounding, and to be the father of her children, is the grandest of earthly conditions, in fact it is heavenly. It is worth more than anything else on earth, and consequently is more to be desired, and more worthy of the highest appreciation.”

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. Some excerpts available at Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel website.