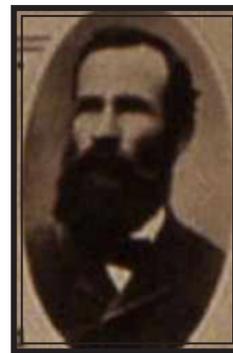


## EDWARD MILO WEBB

Born: April 15, 1838 in Daviess, Missouri

Age: 18

Rescue Party



Edward Milo Webb's journal reveals some of the dangers faced by the rescuers:

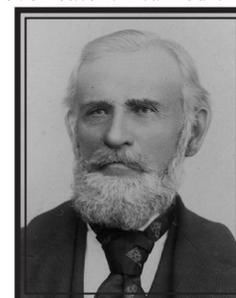
In 1852, my father was called on a mission to England, returning in 1856, the handcart year, in the fall when several thousand crossed the plains with their handcarts, and several of the companies were delayed until winter overtook them.<sup>1</sup> At the October conference of that year in Salt Lake City, a call was made by the Presidency for twenty-five teams of four horses, mules or oxen, each with two drivers, to go East and meet the belated companies. I had charge of one of the outfits, but had only one yoke of oxen. At Green River, Wyoming, we had to rest ten days until the Willie Company of handcarts came. The people in this company were in very poor condition, short of food and many were sick. I assisted them, pulling their carts through Green River, and then Brother William H. Kimball begged me to go East to meet and help Martin's company, who were in worse shape.

I left early the next morning and drove 12 miles to Big Sandy. When I awoke next morning, it was snowing hard and fast. That day I traveled thirty miles and camped on the Sandy river. In the morning I could not find my oxen that I had turned out in the night to feed. It was noon before I found them and I drove until midnight, crossed the South Pass and camped on the Sweetwater. The snow was now deep and the weather very cold, and my feet were badly frozen. I took off my worn shoes and held my feet in the icy water for some time. Here I ran out of food and was badly discouraged.

I was told when I left Salt Lake City that I would find a good camp and plenty of supplies at Pacific Springs west of South Pass; however, the station was off the road and I passed it in the night. I drove on down the river in a blizzard of wind and drifting snow; camped that night at Black Ridge and ate my last morsel of food. Next morning I climbed a hill but could see no living thing and then returned to my camp. The snow was now fully three feet deep on the level. I discovered a flour sack among my things, gave it a good shaking and got about four ounces of flour from it. This I mixed with water and baked it on a flat rock. It made three cakes about four inches square and one-half inch thick. I ate two and left the rest for the next day.

In the meantime my feet were paining me very much—the heels of my woolen socks were worn out and my old shoes let in the snow. For a coat I used a blanket with a slit in the middle, so it would slip over my head, and started out to find my oxen. I found them in a sheltered spot about noon and then left for Green River. I drove nearly all night and camped fifty miles from that town; made my bed in the snow and had to cut my shoes off my swollen feet. I felt as if I were lying down for the last time; but in the morning the sun came out as I was preparing to arise, when a mule team, driven very fast, came along going West. I was too dazed and stupid to call out or fire my revolver.

Later I saddled an ox and wrapped my feet in a blanket and made a resolution to ride to Green River or die in the attempt. I made thirty-five of the fifty miles, but could not go any further. Next day it took me all day, in great distress, to reach Green River just at sunset. Now my ox would not ford the river with me on him, so I had to dismount, twist his tail, and hanging onto his tail, I waded across the river. As I came out of the water, an old gentleman met me and seeing my condition, took me into his cabin and fed me some of the best food I have ever eaten. I turned the oxen out and the old man insisted that I stay with him until I could walk again. He did all he could to relieve my suffering and sent for a Shoshone Indian squaw who was a good nurse and put her in charge of me. She peeled off my toe nails and a lot of the frozen skin, and as far as I could see, used freshly killed jackrabbit, bear's grease, and other things, and tore up all the old man's white shirts to make bandages. She gave me the best of care and food for some weeks. Finally the [Martin] handcart company came along and to my great joy my father was among them. He had a light spring wagon, put me in it, and we started for home. The snow was still quite deep and frozen hard, but eight days later we reached Salt Lake City. I was rejoiced to see my dear mother and relatives again. I had to use a crutch until February of the next year, but, thanks to that wonderful squaw, I had the use of my feet again, although father had to cut off one toe with his pocket knife.



Chauncey  
Griswold Webb

Sources: familysearch.org; Diary of Edward Milo Webb, as found in "Freighting in the Olden Days," Daughters of Utah Pioneers lesson book; see also rescuer Harvey Cluff in *Tell My Story, Too*.

<sup>1</sup>Edward Milo's father was Chauncey Griswold Webb. He left England in March 1856 on the ship *Canada* as a returning missionary. He was assigned to be in charge of the making of handcarts at the outfitting camp in Iowa City, Iowa, for a time and then came on to the Valley, just in time to turn around and go back on the trail with the first rescue company under Captain George Grant.