

HARRIET AND ELLEN LOUISA SHOWELL

Ages: Harriet 31; Ellen 14
Born: 6 June 1824; 11 June 1841
Willie Handcart Company

Harriet was the oldest and Ellen was the youngest of the five children of Daniel and Elizabeth King Showell of Shepscombe, England. This entire family joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The girls lost a 20-year-old sister to death in Feb. 1848, and their mother died about a month later. Their father died in 1855. Their brother, Edwin, and his wife and children emigrated to Utah in 1866 and another brother at an unknown time. All of the children lived and died in Pleasant Grove, Utah, after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley.

Before leaving England, Harriet had begun work at a very young age as a domestic servant. She worked for the same family for 20 years. She had a sweetheart that she planned to marry, so she served notice to the people for whom she worked that she was leaving. However, Harriet and her fiancé quarreled, the engagement was cancelled, and Harriet returned to her former work.

When the handcart plan became available, and with the help of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, Harriet and Ellen boarded the ship *Thornton* in May of 1856, bound for their promised land and Zion in the Rocky Mountains of Utah. It is said that they were very anxious to get there. On board the ship was a family by the name of Cobbley. They had an 8-month-old baby named Charles Augustus Cobbley that the Showell sisters assisted in caring for. Perhaps the Cobbley family helped look after the Showell sisters also.

The girls apparently did not fare very well until Harriet secured a position as a cook for Captain Willie in the handcart company. Conditions improved for them until the time that food became scarce and rations dangerously low. Harriet took the hides of dead cattle, scraped the hair off and boiled the hide to make a broth for the camp. The girls suffered a great deal, but both arrived safely in the Valley on November 9, 1856. They had both celebrated birthdays during their emigration.

Harriet went directly to Pleasant Grove to work for a family by the name of Thorne where she stayed until her marriage to Joseph Daniel Davis on August 31, 1857. They worked hard together in their pioneer life and became the parents of three children before Joseph died in 1865. Harriet then married Thomas Wooley about 1868. She supported him while he served a mission in England from 1870-71.

Ellen also went to Pleasant Grove upon arrival and married Steven Martindale Farnsworth three months later. She gave birth to a baby girl in 1860. They named her Cosmelia Ellen. In 1863 she had another baby, but Ellen and the baby both died at this time.

Harriet's daughter, Emma Louise Davis, grew up and fell in love with Charles Augustus Cobbley, the baby Harriet had cared for on the *Thornton*. Charles and Emma's daughter, Sarah Berthena Cobbley, married George Albert Ash. George and Sarah's daughter, Emma Ash, married Clarence Homer Maxwell. Emma and Clarence became the parents of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, beloved apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Savior, whom they loved and had sacrificed so much to serve.

Sources: "Harriet Shoell," compiled by Lynn Jones; Daughters of Utah Pioneers history files; family group sheet for Daniel Shoell and Elizabeth King; familysearch.org.