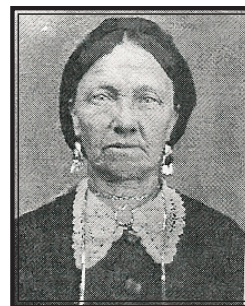


EMMA LAWRENCE COLLINGS

Born: November 26, 1825 in London, England

Age: 30

Martin Handcart Company



Emma was born to Simon and Ann Archer Lawrence. Growing up in London, Emma remembered seeing Victoria crowned Queen of England in 1837.

Emma married Richard Collings on May 26, 1844. In May 1845, Emma and Richard had their first child, a daughter they named Alice, who died when she was 4 years old. A few years later they joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and began making plans to join the Saints in Utah.

In 1856 Emma and Richard emigrated to America with their five young children, Louisa (9), Fred (7), David (5), George (3) and Samuel (4 months). Fellow traveler in the Martin company, William Binder, who had been president of the Lambeth Branch where the Collings family attended church wrote, "Brother Richard Collins and family kindly assisted me with some means to emigrate."

One clear evening on the deck of the ship *Horizon*, Emma remarked to her husband, "Well, I have seen the mighty deep in its anger, with our ship nearly on her bends, and I have seen it, as now, under a cloudless sky with scarcely a ripple on its surface, yet I know not which to admire most. I feel most powerfully the force of those words 'The Mighty God' which Handel so beautifully expressed in one of his chronicles."

The Collins family apparently had the means and first intended to travel across the plains by team and wagon, but made the decision to go by handcart instead. A little harness was made for Louisa and Fred and they helped their parents pull the handcart. Five-year-old David walked all the way. Three-year-old George rode on the cart, and Emma carried baby Samuel and sometimes helped push on the cart. They suffered with the rest of the Saints traveling with the Martin company. Fellow traveler, John Kirkman, wrote: "Scores were frostbitten. Fred Collings, a seven-year-old boy, had his big toe on each foot come off when his boots were removed. Louise Collings, twelve years old, while helping her weakened father pull the cart through the sleet and snow had the harness she wore frozen to her body, which when removed, left scars that she wore throughout her long life."

Family records indicate that both Fred's and David's feet were so badly frozen, the flesh came off of their heels. Several times on the journey, Louisa's hair became frozen to the ground and hot water was poured around her head to free her.

The Collings family first settled in Springville, Utah. Emma had many new experiences in learning to churn butter and bake bread. She was used to buying these items in London. She learned to make clothing for the family from the wool they raised. She bore four more children here and the family was then called to help settle in Monroe, Utah.

In 1879, after their nine children were raised, Richard and Emma accepted a call to help settle St. Johns, Arizona. After seven years on this mission, they returned to Monroe.

Emma was a faithful Relief Society teacher for many years. She attended church meetings regularly and bore her testimony often. She had a good singing voice and was often called upon to sing the "Handcart Song." Emma was making a fire one day when the sleeve of her nightgown was caught in the flames. She passed away eleven days after her eighty-ninth birthday, due to the burns received in this fire.

Sources: Mary J. Chase Findley, *A History of Springville*; DUP publication, *Women of Faith and Fortitude*, vol. 1, p. 642; Frank Esshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men*; Sylvia Collings Musig, *Richard Collings, Emma Lawrence, A History* (1 copy from Connie Wilcox, 2nd copy from Merial Musig Hawkins, with some additional information); Elaine Poulson, *Biography of Emma Lawrence Collings and Richard Collings*, (1 copy from research files of Joann Mellor Felix, 2nd copy, with photos not in this sketch, from Quenalee Nelson); diary of William Binder: "Our tent ... was occupied by Bro. Richard Collins and family, Br John Watkins and family, [Susannah] Patching, [Maria Christmas] White and myself and wife Lizzie. We were pleased with the arrangement seeing that we had all been long acquainted with each other." Also, in a letter to the Handcart Veterans Association September 23, 1907, Emma indicated that "Bro Jas V Williams," a Mormon Battallion veteran, was one who came to their rescue. Williams was on the list of the first 50 teamsters who signed up to go at the October 6 Conference call.