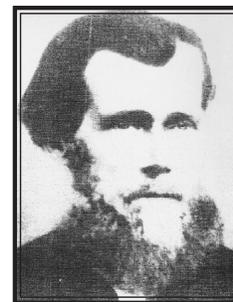


## GEORGE SUMMERS

Born: 8 May 1831 Cradley, Herefordshire, England

Age: 25

Rescuer



George was the fourth of nine children born to Thomas and Susannah Stockall Summers. He grew up working with his parents on the family farm in Cradley, England. George and other members of his family were among the earliest converts to the Church in England. His mother and siblings were all baptized and emigrated to Utah, but his father never did embrace the gospel. He died without his family in England in 1874.

George's emigration to Utah began in 1853 when he crossed the Atlantic ocean on the ship *Falcon*. He was married on board to Mary Ann Gittins (19), also from Herefordshire. They sewed tents and covers for their wagons while on board the ship, and arrived in New Orleans on May 18.

After much preparation for their trek across the plains, George and Mary Ann left their outfitting camp at Keokuk, Iowa, headed for Zion. On June 22, only a week into the journey, their Captain, Appleton Harmon, called a meeting, and "laid before the Saints in a plain manner their position and the lateness of the season, also the weakness of the teams and asked them to throw away their boxes and make a sacrifice of all they could do without which was not worth much, saying to them it was better to do it now than carry them hundreds of miles and do it then, or be late crossing the mountains and have to wallow in the snow. They cheerfully responded to the call and threw out about a ton and a half of boxes, &c."

Little did George realize upon hearing these warnings that in three years he would be back out on the plains, assisting other immigrants who were much later in starting their journey, and who were, in fact, "wallowing" in the snow.

After having a son, George and Mary Ann separated. George then married Emma Hodges in 1855. They settled in Bountiful where their first child, Martha Ann, was born October 1, 1856. Only a few days later, Brigham Young called for the first contingent of volunteers to go out and find the late companies still on the plains. George got ready and headed out with many others in mid-October. George's sister, Emma, was a member of the Willie handcart company and his brother, Edwin, was in the Hunt wagon company. George made many sacrifices to go out in to the mountains to assist his siblings and others. Edwin Summers was one of the men chosen to stay at Devil's Gate during the winter to guard the immigrants' belongings. Emma went directly to George's home in Bountiful, Utah.

In the next few years, George pioneered in Box Elder and Cache Counties, Utah, settling in Smithfield in 1860. Edwin married George's wife's sister, Elizabeth Hodges, and also moved to Smithfield. Emma Summers married one of her rescuers, Anson Call, who was George's friend.

George was left a widower with four young children when his wife drowned in the swollen Bear River. After this tragic event, George made several more trips to meet immigrant companies on the plains. He met his mother; his sister, Ann Marie; and his brother, Richard, in the Chipman Wagon train in 1866. He also met Sarah Ann Green of that company and they were married on the plains in August. They became the parents of eight children. These children were ages 1 to 16 when George died of a heart attack at the age of 52 in Kaysville, Utah. George is remembered by his descendants as a good and faithful man, showing "his faith by his works. If records had been kept of his many trips back across the plains to help emigrants, a most interesting biography could have been written. This was said by people who knew and associated with him."

Sources: "George Summers," compiled by Dixie S. Botsford; familysearch.org; letter and family histories from Gayle S. Riggs, 2009. See Emma Summers in Willie company section of *Tell My Story, Too*.