

540

Sketch of the Life of Ann Rodgers Snow

Utah Pioneer of 1852

Prepared by Bernella E. Snow Gardner, daughter

For the Old Fort Camp, Cedar City, Utah

(*****)

Ann Rodgers was born at East Lake Farm, Amroth, Pembroke-shire, Wales, on December 30, 1835, the daughter of John and Jennet Reese Rodgers. East Lake Farm was a beautiful spot, with a rambling old farm house, large shade trees, hardy fruit trees, many flowers, vegetable gardens, shrubs, and winding paths leading to all parts of the farm. There were hedge fences of blackberry bushes where they could pick berries in the summer; hazelnut trees were nuts were gathered for the winter, to be toasted by large open fire-places on cold winter nights when the family had all gathered round the dancing flames of the fire. Many were the hives of honey bee to make honey for the little family and for neighboring families who should chance to want it.

The house was well built, and for the time, well furnished. In the kitchen was an old fashioned brick oven where the week's baking was done; and there was also a large open hearth where meats were cooked on cranes and splits. Besides having all the fruits and vegetables they needed, there were many chickens, ducks, and geese. There was an old fashioned dairy house where cold spring water cooled the milk in queer water separators.

Though there were several girls in the family, there was always a maid to do the hardest work, and there were always hired men to assist the father and boys in the fields. The family was not considered a wealthy one, still they were very comfortably fixed.

The farm was very close to the ocean and warm summer days

very often found the members of the family going to swim in the cool waters. One day while they were enjoying a cool swim, one of the girls, Martha, was drowned.

Ann's mother died when Ann was only two years old, so she had very little of a mother's care. Within a few years the father married again to a maiden lady and by this union there was born a daughter. When Ann was twelve years old she went to the town of Renby to learn the art of dressmaking. This she learned very well and it was a great help to her in the later years.

In 1849 the gospel was brought to them and eight of the family, including Ann, joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They were an honest God-fearing people and the gospel came as a great joy to them. Ann was baptised on May 12, 1849 by a local elder to whom she was engaged to marry. The spirit of gathering came upon them and in January 1850 they left Wales to come to Utah. The oldest brother, who was a school teacher and Parish minister, tried to get them not to come, said that their father, who was not strong, could not stand the trip not the cold climate of North America. However they sailed on the ship "Osprey" and were ten weeks on the ocean. In the group were the father, Step-mother, half-sister, two brothers two sisters, and Ann herself. On the ship they made many friends and acquaintances whom they were loath to leave when they landed at New Orleans in April. Everything seemed so different in the new country that it was rather hard for them to adjust themselves. They boarded a steam boat to go up the Mississippi River and were quite a long time in making the trip up the river. One night after Ann had gone to bed, her most adored sister, Elizabeth, died very suddenly. The Captain pulled up the river bank, saying to his men, "Boys, if you are with me we will give this girl a decent burial." They found a

pretty spot on an old Plantation, dug a grave and buried Elizabeth in the night. When Ann woke next morning her sister had been buried and the boat was far on its journey. No one was ever sure afterward where she was buried, for it was done in the night and carefully concealed for fear the owners of the plantation would have objected. This was a very severe cross for the lonely Ann to bear, since the sister had been her closest companion and the nearest to a mother she had ever known.

When the company arrived at St. Louis, one sister and one brother married and decided to stay there to work until they could get a better means with which to make the trip to Utah. The rest of the group went on to Council Bluffs, where Urson Hyde, the officer presiding there, advised the father (John Hodges) to rent a farm and stay there for a time before attempting to get to Zion. The father followed the advice but was stricken down with a fever and died in August 1850. They received word that the one other sister Sarah, had died that very same time in St. Louis. Thus Ann was left in a strange land with neither father, mother, nor sister.

At this time the gold-rush to California was at its height and Ann's youngest brother, Henry, disliking the long delay and not being very fond of his step-mother, hired out to drive a team to California. He left soon after this and was never heard from again. Whether he was killed by the Indians, or what happened to him they never knew.

Ann worked out when chance afforded in order to get money with which to make the trip to Zion. In 1852 she, with her step-mother and half-sister, procured a team of oxen, a wagon, and a cow, and started on their long journey. The step-mother was of an irritable disposition and the severe trials of the road did not help to soften

her temper, thus she disagreed with the Captain of the company
and did not help her much. The brunt of the way fell on Ann's
young shoulders and she was forced to walk and drive the oxen most
of the way. When they were almost there (to enter the Salt Lake valley)
and the company was making haste to enter the valley,
one of the wheels of their wagon gave away, and since most of the group
was far in advance of the little family, Ann was forced to go on ahead
for help while the woman and her daughter remained with the wagon.
Thus alone, in the middle of the night in September 1852, she walked
into the promised land, she found a man whom she had known during
the trip, and he gave assistance she needed.

Very soon after they reached Zion, the step-mother married again,
and Ann, not wanting to stay at home, worked out as much as possible.
She went to work in the home of William Snow and afterwards married
him in plural marriage. This proved to be a blessing as the
other wives were like sisters to the young girl and they worked har-
moniously together. She had had other offers for marriage but had
refused them as she was engaged to the young elder in Wales. He
had promised to write to her but she had been gone for three years
and had never heard from him. After she had been married for about
three months she received a large bundle of letters from him which
had looked and longed for word from him to help brighten her journey
still she never regretted her marriage and found later that the
man she married was a much nobler character than the one she had
left in Wales. Through she passed through many trials she was happy
in her home and the Lord always sustained her. When it looked as if
there was no way out he opened up the way so they did not have to
suffer.

There was one instance where sheets, underwear, pillowcases, a ~~ad~~

many other articles were badly needed, a trainmaster who went
tears to and from the Missouri river to California, brought them
a lot of sheeting wagon covers to make and repair, paid them for the
work and gave them all of the old and torn ones. These they bleached
mended, and made all of the necessary articles to use and wear.

For some time they lived in Salt Lake City then moved to Lehi
where they made homes. In 1865 William Snow was called to help col-
onize the Dixie country. Now they dreaded leaving houses which
were just getting comfortably fixed, and having to start out all
over again, but they were willing to obey the call of those in auth-
ority. There were so many things needed for the long journey through
rough country, but again they were blessed. One of Ann's distant
relatives in Wales died and left her a little legacy. Through all
this time that she had been married (now the mother of five child-
ren) she had never had a cook stove so with the money from this
legacy she purchased a stove and other necessity articles for the
trip. They left Lehi in November in company with another family.
For six weeks they traveled through snow and bitter cold weather,
arriving in Pine Valley on Christmas Eve, 1865. They found a vac-
ant house belonging to William's brother, Erastus, which they thank-
fully moved into after camped out for so long.

William Snow was appointed Bishop of the little group, so
Ann often had to entertain in those who came as missionaries of visit-
ors. She was always helping in the little community, going out as
an assistant of the mid-wives of the day, staying up with the sick,
and needy, often helping lay out the dead or to make clothes for them.
She acted as teacher in the Sunday schools for sixteen years, council-
lor of the Relief Society ten years, President of Relief Society
thirty years. She was the mother of eight children. She led a busy

useful life, and died, at the age of 92, respected and loved by all who came in contact with her.