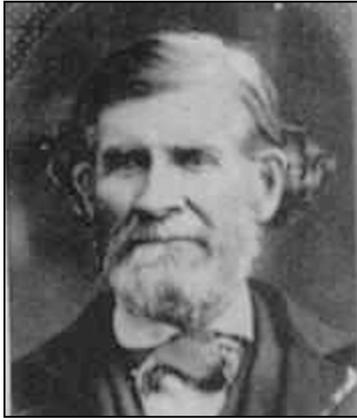


Robert McBride III and Sarah Ann Howard



Robert McBride III and Sarah Ann Howard are second great grandparents of Howard Legrand Lamb Jr., and third great grandparents of Randall Dean Lamb. Robert McBride III is a direct descendant of Robert Bruce I, King of Scotland, popularly known as Robert the Bruce, who is



featured in the movies *Braveheart* (1995, directed by and starring Mel Gibson, on Amazon Prime), *The Bruce* (1996, UK), *King of Scots* (2007, on Amazon Prime) *After Braveheart* (2015 documentary, on Amazon Prime), *Outlaw King* (2018, starring Chris Pine, on Netflix), and *Robert the Bruce* (2019, UK).



Robert and Sarah's eldest daughter, Janetta Ann McBride, is featured in *Journey by Handcart: A True Story Retold from Janetta Ann McBride's Journal and Her Family's History*, Paul Ferrin Hunt, *Friend*, July 2000 (Part 1) and August 2000 (Part 2), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Brigham Young gave me that name and blessed me when I was a baby

I'm very happy with my name, Janetta Ann McBride. Brigham Young gave me that name and blessed me when I was a baby. He was one of the elders who visited at my parents' home in Church Town,

England, where I was born on Christmas Eve in 1839. It isn't everyone who can claim that a prophet gave them a name and a blessing.

Robert and Sarah McBride heed the call of Brigham Young to gather to Zion, and join the Martin Handcart Company in 1856

At the age of fourteen, I was apprenticed to a dressmaker and learned how to make beautiful dresses. I worked for her for two years. Then my family made the decision to move to America. Times were hard in England. Jobs and food were both scarce. Also a call had gone out from the Church for the Saints to gather to Zion.

At age sixteen, I was the oldest of the children in our family. Heber had just turned thirteen. Ether was eight, Peter six, and Margaret was still a baby, not quite two years old. We love the Lord with all our hearts. We had been commanded to gather to Zion, and so we began our journey, one step at a time. Little did we know what would face us on the journey ahead. I think, though, that even if we had known, we still would have gone.

The Church had a special fund at that time that loaned money to members for travel to Salt Lake City, Utah. In 1856, however, there wasn't much money in it. To cut expenses, it was decided that my family, along with many others, would travel across the plains by handcart. The journey from Liverpool, England, to Salt Lake City would then only cost about forty-five dollars per person—much less than the cost of using wagons and ox teams to cross the plains.

But first we had to sail to America!

I was excited when my family packed up their belongings and headed for Liverpool. It was a great seaport, teeming with ships of every kind. I loved watching the ships being loaded and unloaded with every kind of article you could imagine. Spices from India scented the air. Passenger ships were a hive of activity as their holds were loaded with food and water. There was so much to see!

Our ship was the *Horizon*, a good ship. We had fine weather all the way across the Atlantic, except for a few days when it was so foggy that we couldn't even get candles to burn! On June 30, 1856, we safely landed in Boston, Massachusetts. We were thrilled to be in the land where the gospel had been restored!





I don't think any of us had any idea how big America really was. When we landed in Boston, we didn't realize that our long journey was just beginning, rather than nearing its end.

From Boston, we traveled to Iowa City, Iowa, by railroad. The new

railroad saved us weeks of traveling by wagon. The cattle cars were crowded, but we endured the journey well. The train stopped in Buffalo, New York, on the Fourth of July. We could only watch the people celebrate. How I wanted to join them!

Finally we arrived in Iowa City. From the train station, we walked three miles in rain and mud to the place where we were to meet the Church's agent in charge of organizing the trek. We had been assured that everything would be ready for us when we arrived, but it wasn't. The handcarts hadn't even been built! We camped and worked at preparing for the journey until all was ready.





Eventually the handcarts were obtained, and our family was assigned to Captain Edward Martin's company. Near the end of July 1856, we cheerfully began our journey to Zion. Our family had three carts when we started out. Each cart could carry about 120 pounds of baggage, 100 pounds of flour, cooking utensils, and additional food. There were 576 people in our company. I'd never been with so many members of the Church!

Pulling the handcarts wasn't bad at first. But many of them broke down because they were built of green wood. We pulled those carts three hundred miles to Florence, Nebraska. The last members of our company, and the Willie Company, arrived there on August 22. As soon as we arrived, there was some disagreement as to whether we should continue on. Some said that it was too late in the year. They felt that we should set up a winter camp in Florence and wait until spring to travel to Salt Lake City. But most of the Saints were for starting immediately. After much discussion, it was decided to continue on. We were anxious to finish our long journey. About a thousand miles remained ahead of us, but we had already come so many miles that another thousand seemed like a short trip. We didn't know that the worst part of our journey was still ahead.

It was the 25th of August, almost the end of summer, when we left Florence, Nebraska, and headed for Salt Lake City. Everything went fine until Mother became really sick. It was hard to see her ill. She had to ride in one of the handcarts, and I took her place pulling. Heber also was pulling a cart.

Traveling by handcart isn't bad if you have enough food and the weather stays nice. Many Saints traveled that way and found it a healthy and quick way to get to Salt Lake Valley. On September 7, a group of missionaries returning to Salt Lake passed us. When they saw how late in the season we were traveling and that the weather was unseasonably cold, they said that they would hurry on to Salt Lake and report to Brigham Young that we would be needing help to get to the valley. We later learned that they had arrived in Salt Lake on October 4. The next day, the 5th, Brigham Young called upon the bishops to immediately organize supplies, wagons, and men to go out and help us reach the valley. The first group left Salt Lake City on

October 7th. But, of course, we didn't know that.

When we arrived at Fort Laramie, we were starting to run low on food. Members of the company purchased what additional food they could. Our rations were also cut from 1 pound of flour a day per person to $\frac{3}{4}$ pound. Later it was cut to $\frac{1}{2}$ pound, and finally to $\frac{1}{4}$ pound per person.

On October 17, just before crossing the North Platte River for the last time, we were told to lighten our loads so that we could travel more quickly. Blankets, extra clothing, and utensils were left behind. How I missed the clothing and bedding a few days later!

The North Platte River was freezing cold, deep, and swift. On October 19th, Father helped us across, then helped others. We were all wet and cold and hungry. No sooner were we across, than the first snowstorm hit us. Father worked hard helping set up camp, and he gave away much—too much—of his food to those in greater need. Most of the men worked too hard and ate too little. They couldn't bear to see the suffering of the women and children.

The night of October 21st was especially bitter cold and stormy. Nobody had enough clothing or blankets to stay warm. Sometime during the night, Father died of exhaustion, starvation, and the cold. Twelve others also died that night. They were all buried in the same grave. The ground was so frozen that digging in it was almost impossible. How hard it was to leave him out there on the frozen prairie. I felt sad and lonely.



Heber McBride of the Martin Company, then 13 years old, wrote of the day when his father was among the 13 who died, "I went to look for Father and at last I found him under a wagon with snow all over him and he was stiff and dead. I felt as though my heart would burst. I sat down beside him on the snow and took hold of one of his hands and cried, 'Oh Father, Father'" (Heber Robert McBride Autobiography, typescript, BYU HBLI Special Collections and Manuscripts, 12). (Painting by Olinda Reynolds.) (*Remembering the Rescue*, Ensign, August 1997, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)



Mother was still ill, Father was dead, and I was now in charge of getting our family to Salt Lake. There was no time to sit down and cry or wait for help. None of us had any choice but to keep moving toward Zion and safety. I used our family's flour to make a kind of biscuit. I kept pieces from my share of the bread in my pockets. When I couldn't get the boys or Margaret to keep going, I'd offer them a crumb of bread. Even though they were cold and exhausted, they were so hungry that it worked.

At the end of October, Brother Joseph A. Young and Brother Stephane Taylor arrived in our camp from Salt Lake City. They had wagons of food and clothing! We greeted them as angels of mercy. For the first time in many days, there was joy in our camp. They told us more food, clothing, and bedding were waiting for us at Devil's Gate.

We kept traveling through the snow to Devil's Gate and ran into the other wagons with provisions for us. How I wished for a pair of shoes, as my feet froze in the icy slush. But even shoes were less important than food. We left Devil's Gate with a single handcart for our family. Many of the handcarts were left behind. Those that had brought the provisions from Salt Lake City traveled with us.

At the Sweetwater River, I pulled our handcart through the slushy ice water, then went back for my brothers and sisters. I carried them across one at a time. Sometimes we'd wake up in the morning with our hair frozen to the ground. One night, we thought my little brother Peter was dead, because he was frozen to his quilt. But he finally woke up and, after thawing out his hair, continued the journey.

Although we were much better off now, there still wasn't enough food or clothing to go around. It was still cold, it was still stormy, and I still had no shoes. Our company found a ravine that we later named Martin's Ravine, and we set up camp there. For three days there was a terrible blizzard. It was so cold! Even after the storm ended, we had to wait several days before we could travel over the fresh snow. Although there were now wagons and horses, I walked every step of the way. Only those who had frozen feet got to ride.

We camped at Fort Bridger for a few days of rest. More help came at that time. We kept right on traveling. We reached Salt Lake City on November 30, 1856, eleven months after we had left our home in England. Of the 576 people who had started with our company, about 150 of them had died and were buried along the trail, including my father.

We found a place to stay in Ogden with a family named Ferrin. Mother got better and cooked for this household of grown men in return for our board and room. I fell in love with one of the Ferrin brothers, Jacob Samuel. We were married in the Endowment House, and we moved to Provo with my brother Heber.

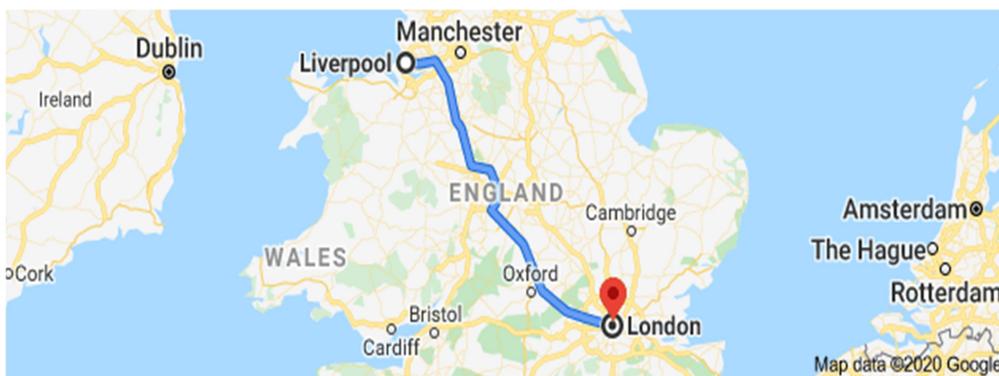
Later my husband and I moved to Arizona, where we were once again pioneers in an unknown territory.

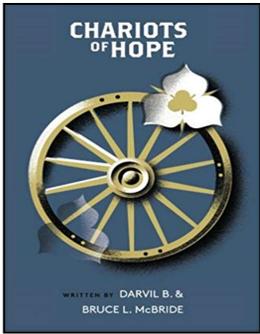
Do I regret any moment of following the call of the prophet? No! Despite all the hard times, we made it to Zion. We had the gospel, and we were with the Saints. Jacob and I were married for eternity. It was what we had left England for, to obtain the blessings of the gospel. No matter what it cost, it was worth it! All my life I bore testimony of my thankfulness that I made that journey, no matter how hard it was.



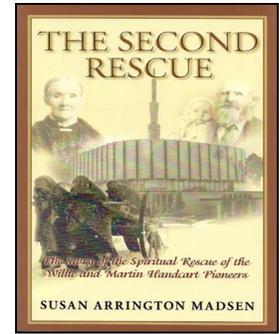
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints operates three historic sites in central Wyoming, Martin's Cove, Sixth Crossing, and Rock Creek Hollow. At these places and others nearby, in October and November 1856, rescuers provided aid to the William and Martin handcart companies and the Hodgetts and Hunt wagon companies. Brett Dean Lamb's Rapid City, South Dakota mission conferences were held at Martin's Cove. Matthew Brown Thompson

served a mission in the London, England. London and Liverpool are on the following map.

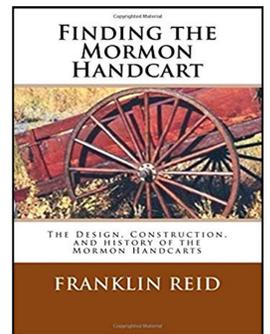
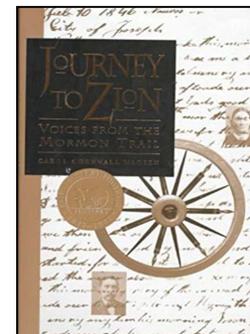
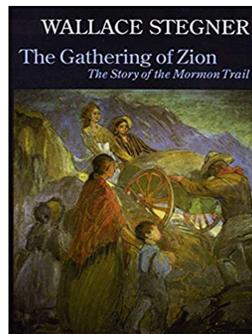
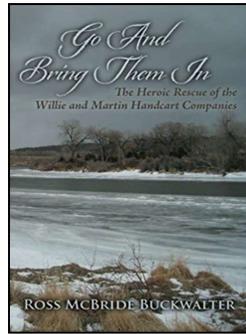
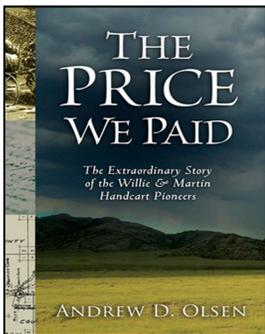
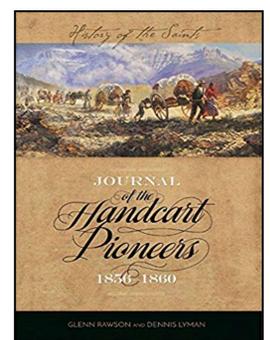
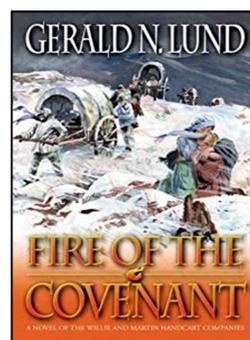
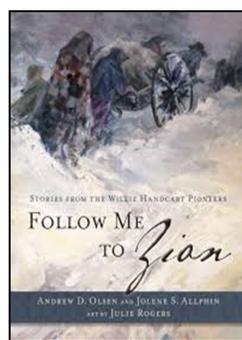
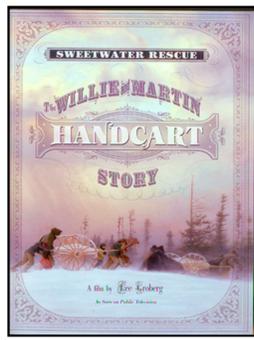
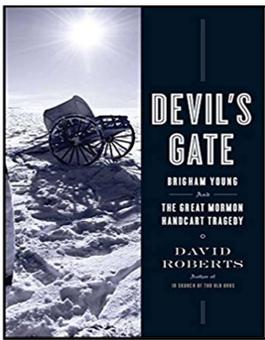




Many books have been written about the Willie and Martin Handcart Companies. One outstanding book is: *The Second Rescue* (2007, Susan Arrington Madsen). In 1987, the Saints of the Riverton Wyoming Stake embarked on a sacred trek of their own, a journey filled with miracles and laden with spiritual blessings for the Willie and Marlin handcart pioneers and for their immediate families. It chronicles their trials and triumphs



in their efforts to build monuments and pave the way for others to experience the sacred sites associated with the handcart pioneers.



Handcart pioneer monuments in Salt Lake City, Utah

