

MARY CARMELIA HAWLEY CONDIT

BY PEARL CONDIT HANDY (A DAUGHTER)

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AT BANDERA, BANDERA COUNTY, TEXAS, ON AUGUST 23, 1854, A BABY GIRL FIRST OPENED HER BIG BLUE EYES, THE DAUGHTER OF AARON AND ELIZABETH ANN (ANDREWS) HAWLEY. THE HAWLEYS WERE MEMBERS OF THE LYMAN WIGHT COMPANY, THAT LEFT NAUVOO, ILLINOIS, SHORTLY AFTER THE DEATH OF JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET. THE BABY GIRL WAS BLESSED BY LYMAN WIGHT, THE PARENTS GIVING HER THE NAME OF MARY, MR WIGHT ADDING THE NAME, CARMELIA.

IN 1857, THE HAWLEYS AND OTHERS OBTAINED A GOVERNMENT PERMIT TO MAKE SALT IN THE CHEROKEE STRIP OF THE INDIAN TERRITORY, AT WHICH PLACE, ELIZABETH ANN PASSED AWAY TO THE GREAT BEYOND, LEAVING LITTLE CARMELIA IN THE CARE OF HER GRANDMOTHER, NANCY ANDREWS.

THE YEAR 1859, FOUND THIS LITTLE BAND AT GALLAND'S GROVE, SHELBY COUNTY, IOWA, WHERE THEY LIVED FOR THREE YEARS. DURING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT GALLAND'S GROVE IN 1862, CARMELIA WAS BAPTIZED BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH SMITH. WHEN SHE WAS LED TO THE EDGE OF THE WATER, BROTHER JOSEPH ASKED, "HAS THIS CHILD REACHED THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY?" HER FATHER REPLIED, "YES." THEN BROTHER JOSEPH, TEARS STREAMING DOWN HIS FACE, LED HER INTO THE WATER SAYING, "CHRIST SAID, SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

THEY MOVED TO DOW CITY, IOWA, WHERE CARMELIA ATTENDED SCHOOL, AND DID HER SHARE OF KNITTING, PIECING QUILTS AND OTHER WORK REQUIRED OF ALL GIRLS OF THAT DAY. SHE WAS MARRIED TO LEONARD MERRY CONDIT, AT LITTLE SIOUX, IOWA, DEC 31, 1869. MR CONDIT DETERMINED TO LEARN THE MILLING BUSINESS AND ENTERED THE DUNLAP FLOUR MILLS OWNED BY "UNCLE ICH" SCHOFIELD. HE MOVED HIS FAMILY TO DUNLAP EARLY IN 1875

THE WASHINGTON TERRITORY FEVER STRUCK THAT PART OF THE COUNTRY IN THE SPRING OF 1881, AND THE CONDITS WITH THEIR FOUR BOYS AND AN EIGHT MONTH OLD BABY GIRL, STARTED WESTWARD BY WAGON TRAIN. IN LETTERS WRITTEN TO HER GRANDMOTHER, AUNTS AND COUSINS, CARMELIA PRESENTS A PICTURE OF CONDITION ON THAT LONG TEDIOUS JOURNEY, THAT NOT MANY PEOPLE NOWADAYS WOULD CARE TO FACE.

HOMESICK FOR LOVED ONES LEFT BEHIND AND DREADING UNKNOWN DANGERS AHEAD, CARMELIA'S FIRST LETTER DATED MAY 29, 1881, AT CLARK'S CREEK, NEBRASKA, SAYS: "WE CHANGED OUR MINDS ABOUT THE ROUTE, HEARD THAT THE ROADS WERE VERY BAD BY THE BLUFFS, SO CONCLUDED TO COME BY TEKAMA---TODAY IS SUNDAY, AND I FIND MYSELF AWAY OUT HERE IN THE RAIN, THE SECOND STORM SINCE WE STARTED; BUT OUR TENT AND COVER (WAGON COVER) DOES NOT LEAK, SO WE ARE QUITE COMFORTABLE. THERE ARE FOUR WAGONS, MR. BISHOP'S, BERT WALDO'S, JOHN CONDIT'S AND OURS, TWENTY-ONE PERSONS IN ALL. WE ATTENDED MEETING AT LITTLE SIOUX LAST SUNDAY. ELDER DERRY PREACHED A SPLENDID SERMON; HE ALSO WENT DOWN TO PARKER'S WITH US. PARKER (CONDIT) GAVE US A FAREWELL DINNER. I COULD NOT BEGIN TO TELL HOW MANY WERE THERE, AND EVERYBODY TRIED TO BE CHEERFUL.--I TRY TO THINK IT IS ALL FOR THE BEST. I TOLD YOU THAT I WOULD WRITE EVERY SUNDAY, BUT DON'T KNOW WHETHER I CAN OR NOT."

THE LETTERS ARE MORE THAN A WEEK A PART, THE NEXT ONE BEING WRITTEN FROM CENTRAL CITY, NEBRASKA, JUNE 10 1881, "WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING TO SHIP OUR GOODS THROUGH ON THE CARS TO A TOWN NAMED CARTEER WYOMING. WE WILL SHIP THE HORSES AND WAGONS AHEAD BY FREIGHT, THEN WAIT FOR PASSES ON THE PASSENGER FOR US. THERE IS A NEW RAILROAD BRANCHING OFF FROM THIS ONE, AND THEY ARE SHIPPING MEN AND TEAMS OUT THERE FREE. WE ALL THOUGHT IT BETTER TO SHIP OUT AND WORK AWHILE THAN PULL THE HORSES THE EIGHT HUNDRED MILES."

FOR SOME REASON THE PASSES NEVER CAME, AND THE LITTLE BAND, NOW GROWN TO SOME TWENTY WAGONS CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY WESTWARD. AFTER FOUR DAYS TRAVEL THEY STOPPED AT PLUM CREEK (NOW LEXINGTON) FOR ONE DAY, THURSDAY, AND LAID TO REST THE BABY GIRL. A LETTER FROM LEONARD CONDIT TO THE HARRIS COUNTY REPORTER TELLS US:

"THE BABY WAS TAKEN SICK MONDAY AND TUESDAY WE TOOK HER TO THE DOCTOR IN KEARNEY JUNCTION. RIDING DID NOT SEEM TO HURT HER, SO WE DID NOT STOP, BUT KEPT DOCTORING HER ON THE ROAD. SHE WAS SO MUCH WORSE WEDNESDAY THAT WE STOPPED AT PLUM CREEK. WE WERE UP WITH HER ALL NIGHT. THURSDAY MORNING SHE WENT INTO SPASMS, AND DIED ABOUT NOON. WE MISS HER SO MUCH, YET FEEL THAT GOD KNOWS BEST."

LITTLE GRACE IRENE WAS BURIED IN THE EVERGREEN CEMETERY AT PLUM CREEK, AND ON FRIDAY MORNING THE WAGON TRAIN WAS ONCE MORE IN ACTION. IN A HEARTSICK LETTER WRITTEN BY CARMELIA, JUNE 19, AT MAXWELL, NEBRASKA, TO GRANDMA ANDREWS, SHE SAYS "THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY TERRIBLE DEATHS, THAT WE SHOULD FEEL OURSELVES BLESSED.---I TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE.--SHE WAS ADMINISTERED TO THREE TIMES. IN ANOTHER LETTER WRITTEN, AUGUST 1, SHE SAYS "WE HAVE NO GREEN VEGETABLES THIS SUMMER. MILK AND BUTTER ARE OUT OF THE QUESTION; BREAD MEAT AND SYRUP ARE GETTING VERY TIRESOME.---BE SURE TO DIRECT YOUR LETTERS TO LEONARD NOT MRS LEONARD CONDIT, AS WE HAVE TO PAY TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A MONTH FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY RECEIVING MAIL."

THE COMPANY HAD SEPARATED IN JULY AT FORT FRED STEELE, WYOMING, SOME TAKING THE BITTER ROOT ROUTE TO WASHINGTON TERRITORY. LEONARD CARMELIA AND FAMILY, WITH OTHERS, TOOK THE SWEETWATER ROUTE TO IDAHO, REACHING ST. CHARLES, IDAHO, LATE IN THE FALL, WHERE THEY SPENT THEIR FIRST WINTER IN THE WEST. CARMELIA, AS WELL AS OTHERS OF THE NEWCOMERS, HAD A BAD ATTACK OF MOUNTAIN FEVER. IT WAS DURING THIS ILLNESS THAT NEWS CAME TO HER OF GRANDMA ANDREWS' DEATH. CARMELIA'S ONLY BROTHER, MARION HAWLEY, WHO HAD BEEN WITH THEM ON THE TRIP, WENT BACK TO IOWA THEN, LEAVING THE YOUNG WOMAN MORE LONELY THAN EVER.

IN THE SPRING OF '82, THE CONDITS JOURNEYED ON, REACHING CASSIA COUNTY LATE IN THE SUMMER. IN THIS COUNTY, THEY MADE THEIR HOME FOR THE NEXT THIRTY YEARS.



IN THE FALL OF 1884, THE CONDITS TOOK THE JOB OF TENDING STAGE STATION---TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF TODAY, THAT WOULD BE LIKE TAKING CARE OF THE BUS TERMINAL--BUT IN 1884 THAT WAS A VERY DIFFERENT PROPOSITION. THE STAGE COACH, THE ONLY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN KELTON, UTAH, ON THE SOUTH, AND THE DALLES, OREGON, NORTH AND WEST OF BOISE, IDAHO, A DISTANCE OF SEVEN OR EIGHT HUNDRED MILES, WAS A VEHICLE DRAWN BY FOUR, SIX OR EIGHT HORSES, AND A STATION ABOUT EVERY THIRTY-FIVE MILES WAS NECESSARY FOR A CHANGE OF HORSES, AND FOOD FOR DRIVER AND PASSENGERS. THE CLEAR CREEK STATION, BETWEEN KELTON, UTAH AND ALBION, IDAHO, TOOK CARE OF TWO STAGES DAILY AND FED FROM ONE TO TWELVE PASSENGERS.

MANY INTERESTING INCIDENTS HAPPENED DURING THE EIGHTEEN MONTHS THEY LIVED THERE. ONE DAY THE "UP STAGE" CARRIED A YOUNG MARRIED COUPLE. THEY ATE DINNER SAYING THEY WOULD SPEND THE NIGHT IN ALBION. SOME TWO OR THREE HOURS LATER AN ELDERLY MAN ON HORSEBACK STOPPED FOR A FRESH HORSE AND A MEAL, INQUIRED IF THE STAGE HAD CARRIED ANY LADY PASSENGER, SAID HIS DAUGHTER HAD ELOPED AND THOUGHT THEY MIGHT COME THAT WAY. TWO DAYS LATER THE "DOWN STAGE" CARRIED THE BODIES OF BOTH MEN, THEY HAD SHOT IT OUT, AT THE LIVERY BARN IN ALBION, AND BOTH WERE KILLED. THE YOUNG BRIDE RETURNED HOME TO BE WITH HER WIDOWED MOTHER.

ANOTHER DAY THE NORTHBOUND STAGE CARRIED A GENTLEMAN WHO INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS ELDER R. J. ANTHONY, AND HE SAID HE WAS ON HIS WAY NORTH, BUT WOULD STOP OFF ON HIS WAY BACK.

DURING THE WINTER OF '84 AND '85, LEONARD'S TWO SISTERS, JULIA ADA CONDIT AND SARAH CONDIT SECOR, AND BROTHER, SILAS DANA CONDIT, WHO HAD TAKEN UP HOMESTEADS ON CASSIA CREEK, RECEIVED A PERMIT FROM THE UNITED STATES POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, TO NAME AND ESTABLISH A POST OFFICE, AND JULIA ADA WAS APPOINTED POSTMISTRESS. THE POST OFFICE WAS NAMED MALTA. UP TO THAT TIME THE PEOPLE BETWEEN CLEAR CREEK AND ALBION HAD GOTTEN THEIR MAIL FROM OPEN BOXES SCATTERED ALONG THE STAGE ROUTE. "FIRST COME FIRST SERVED." WAS THE PRINCIPLE BY WHICH THEY GOT THEIR LETTERS. IN THE FALL OF '86, LEONARD CONDIT WAS APPOINTED POSTMASTER OF MALTA, WHERE THEY MOVED AND BEGAN FARMING.

THERE WAS NO CHURCH AT MALTA, BUT A UNION SUNDAY SCHOOL WAS HELD IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE. SOON LEONARD BECAME TEACHER OF THE BIBLE CLASS, AND CARMELIA TAUGHT THE PRIMARY; SHE ALSO LED THE SINGING. THEY HAD ONE GOSPEL HYMNBOOK (WITH MUSIC), THE REST OF THE BOOKS CONTAINED WORDS ONLY. CARMELIA HAD A CLEAR SWEET VOICE, AND THE NEIGHBORS SPENT MANY AN EVENING AT THE CONDIT HOME LISTENING TO HER SING. IN 1888, ELDER R. J. ANTHONY BROUGHT HIS DAUGHTER LENORE, (NOW MRS W. L. CHRISTY) WITH HIM TO MALTA TO TEACH SCHOOL. A BRANCH OF THE CHURCH HAD BEEN ORGANIZED. A SUNDAY SCHOOL AND A "MITE" SOCIETY SOON FOLLOWED. IN ALL THESE MISS ANTHONY WAS A WILLING WORKER. SHE MADE HER HOME WITH THE CONDITS DURING HER THREE MONTHS TERM OF SCHOOL.

A GOOD MANY OF THE OLDER MISSIONARIES WILL REMEMBER STAYING AT THE CONDIT HOME. FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS THE BRANCH GREW AND PROSPERED, THEN THE MEMBERS BEGAN MOVING AWAY, UNTIL ONLY THE ONE CONDIT FAMILY WAS LEFT. FOR A FEW YEARS THERE WAS NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OF ANY KIND, THEN CARMELIA STARTED A UNION SUNDAY SCHOOL. SHE WAS DETERMINED THAT HER CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE SOME RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

AS THE COUNTRY DEVELOPED AND SETTLED UP, LEONARD ENTERED THE MERCHANTILE BUSINESS, AND FOR TWENTY YEARS OPERATED A GENERAL STORE THERE.

IN AUGUST, 1905, LEONARD, CARMELIA AND THE TWO YOUNGEST CHILDREN (TWO GIRLS AND ANOTHER BOY WERE BORN IN IDAHO) MADE A VISIT BACK TO THE OLD HOME IN IOWA. ONE OF CARMELIA'S AUNTS, EMMA BALLANTYNE WAS STILL ALIVE, BUT MOST OF THE OLDER AUNTS, UNCLES AND FRIENDS HAD PASSED ON.

LEONARD M. CONDIT PASSED AWAY OCTOBER 8, 1912, AND SOON THE HOME AT MALTA WAS SOLD, AND CARMELIA TURNED EASTWARD AGAIN, TAKING HER ONLY UNMARRIED CHILD WITH HER. FOUR YEARS LATER, HOWEVER, SHE RETURNED TO IDAHO, FEELING THAT SHE HAD A WORK TO DO IN THE WEST. SHE MADE HER HOME WITH TWO DAUGHTERS NEAR RUPERT. A UNION SUNDAY SCHOOL WAS BEING CONDUCTED IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE, AND CARMELIA OFFERED TO BUY THE LITERATURE NECESSARY, IF THEY WOULD CHANGE TO THE REORGANIZED LATTER DAY SAINT. THIS WAS DONE, AND THOUGH THE LITTLE SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTED IN THE BIG BEND SCHOOLHOUSE, NEAR RUPERT HAS BEEN MOVED, IT HAS NEVER BEEN DISORGANIZED. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ELDER R. C. CHAMBERS, A BRANCH WAS ORGANIZED AT MINIDOKA, IDAHO, WITH THE MEETING PLACE AT RUPERT.

CARMELIA SPENT THE NEXT TWO YEARS MOSTLY TAKING CARE OF SICK FOLKS, SPENDING SOME TIME IN ARIZONA AND IOWA, AS WELL AS IDAHO, AND IN 1920, WHEN THE DEATH OF HER OLDEST SON'S WIFE, LEFT MOTHERLESS SEVERAL SMALL CHILDREN, SHE FELT IT HER DUTY AS WELL AS HER PRIVILEGE, TO TAKE CARE OF THEM. THIS SHE DID FOR EIGHT YEARS.



RUPERT BRANCH WAS HOLDING SERVICES IN THE I.O.O.F. HALL SUNDAY AFTERNOONS, AND CARMELIA ASKED BRANCH PRESIDENT CHAMBERS IF A CHURCH COULD BE BUILT. "WE WILL ASK THE LORD," HE SAID. AT THE NEXT LADIES' AID MEETING, BROTHER CHAMBERS SAID THE HOUSE COULD BE BUILT IF EVERYONE WOULD HELP. THE EDIFICE WAS FINISHED IN 1922, AND DEDICATED IN AUGUST 1923, BY BISHOP J.A. BECKER. IN THE BUILDING OF THIS CHURCH, THE LADIES' AID UNDER CARMELIA'S LEADERSHIP PLAYED A VERY IMPORTANT PART.

MOVING TO OREGON WITH HER SON AND HIS FAMILY, SHE AGAIN HELPED TO ORGANIZE A SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND ELDERS FROM PORTLAND, CAME ONCE OR TWICE AND HELD SERVICES.

MRS CONDIT MOVED BACK TO IDAHO IN THE FALL OF 1925, MAKING HER HOME IN RUPERT FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS. THE MARRIAGE OF HER SON RELIEVED HER OF THE CARE OF THE CHILDREN, AND IN THE FALL OF 1928, SHE WENT TO CALIFORNIA WITH HER YOUNGEST DAUGHTER, LIVING AT VAN NUYS, SAN JOSE AND STOCKTON. WAS AN IDAHO DELEGATE TO THE CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH IN 1930. AFTER A FEW MONTHS' VISIT IN IOWA, SHE RETURNED TO IDAHO, MAKING HER HOME WITH HER OLDER DAUGHTER, AND ATTENDING CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL AT RUPERT. SHE WAS GIVEN THE SAME CLASS SHE HAD TAUGHT BEFORE GOING TO CALIFORNIA.

MRS CONDIT LIVED TO SEE NEARLY ALL OF HER CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND GREAT GRANDCHILDREN, MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, THE GREAT GRANDCHILDREN MAKING THE SEVENTH GENERATION ALL CHURCH MEMBERS.

SHE PASSED AWAY JANUARY 8, 1933, ATTENDING CHURCH FOR THE LAST TIME ON CHRISTMAS DAY, AFTER THE SERVICES SHE ASKED TO CHOOSE A TEACHER FOR HER CLASS. THE REQUEST WAS GRANTED, AND SHE FELT THAT SHE LEAVING HER CLASS IN GOOD HANDS. SHE FAILED VERY RAPIDLY AFTER THAT, SUFFERING TERRIBLY AT TIMES. THE DAY BEFORE SHE PASSED AWAY, SHE SAID, "THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO! SO MANY MORE TO WARN!

NO EFFORT OR SACRIFICE WAS TOO GREAT FOR HER IF SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD BRING THE GOSPEL INTO ANOTHER'S LIFE. ELDER WILLIAM GLAUNER OF HAGERMAN, PREACHED THE FUNERAL SERMON, AND SHE WAS LAID TO REST IN THE MALTA CEMETERY, BESIDE HER HUSBAND.