

The History of James Radford Millard and His Wife Catherine Richards

Chapter 6: Morgan Richards Emigrates to Utah

In the midst of the Civil War in the United States, in 1864, Catherine's younger brother Morgan decided to leave Wales with his young family. By this time Morgan had married Elizabeth John, who had been baptized into the LDS Church in 1855. Even though Elizabeth walked with a cane since a childhood accident, they felt sure they could safely undertake this journey to Utah. They traveled to Liverpool where they boarded the ship *General McClellan*, joining eight hundred Welsh, English, Scottish and Danish converts. With them were their two children, four-year-old Alice, and William, a toddler. Their first child had died the previous year. In addition, Elizabeth was a few months pregnant. Mormon emigrant ships had been sailing to northern ports in America since 1855, one reason being to avoid the cholera which seemed so prevalent along the Mississippi River. The *General McClellan*'s destination was New York City.

Apostle George Q. Cannon, the British Mission president, boarded the *General McClellan* to organize this large group into twelve wards. Four returning missionaries were placed in leadership positions. Elder Thomas E. Jeremy, a Welsh convert who had taken his large family to Utah in 1849, was named president of the company. At one point during their voyage, a fire on board burned a sail, but the crew was able to put it out before it spread.

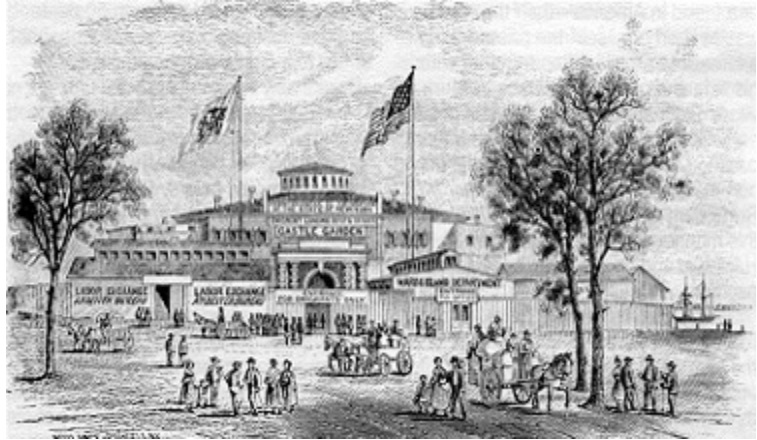
Sailing on the Atlantic during the Civil War required the captain to exercise extreme caution. Because the British financially endorsed the Confederate cause, their ships were often targeted by Union vessels. The captain took his ship as far north as possible to move her out of the common shipping lanes, but as a result, the ship encountered large icebergs, which one passenger described as "mountains floating in the water." One night the ship hit an iceberg, although no serious damage occurred.

The passengers also saw a large whale, and once while the ship was becalmed, they were fascinated as the ocean appeared to be an enormous sea of glass. Then they noticed the heads of dolphins poking out of the water. The next morning, a terrible storm arose and kept the passengers off the deck for an entire day. Mary Daybell, reaching into a wooden box to get some food for her children, fell inside. At that moment waves stirred up by the storm hit the ship. The box was set loose and Sister Daybell fell into the box, which then skidded across the lower deck. Another wave hit the ship and the box brought Sister Daybell back to her family where they grabbed the box, rescuing their mother, none the worse after her terrifying ride.

Christopher Alston, a young boy on this journey traveling with his brother, later wrote about the storm, which possibly was an Atlantic hurricane. "It was a fearful experience. Everything that was not lashed down tight was thrown from side to side – people, utensils and luggage in one great pile. The rattle of pans, dishes and baggage and the cries of women and children, the shouts of men, the commands of officers, the banging and bumping of the ship . . . made it seem as if two monsters were trying to beat each other to pieces. . . . But it was not to be so; we were in the hands of the 'master of ocean and earth and skies.'"

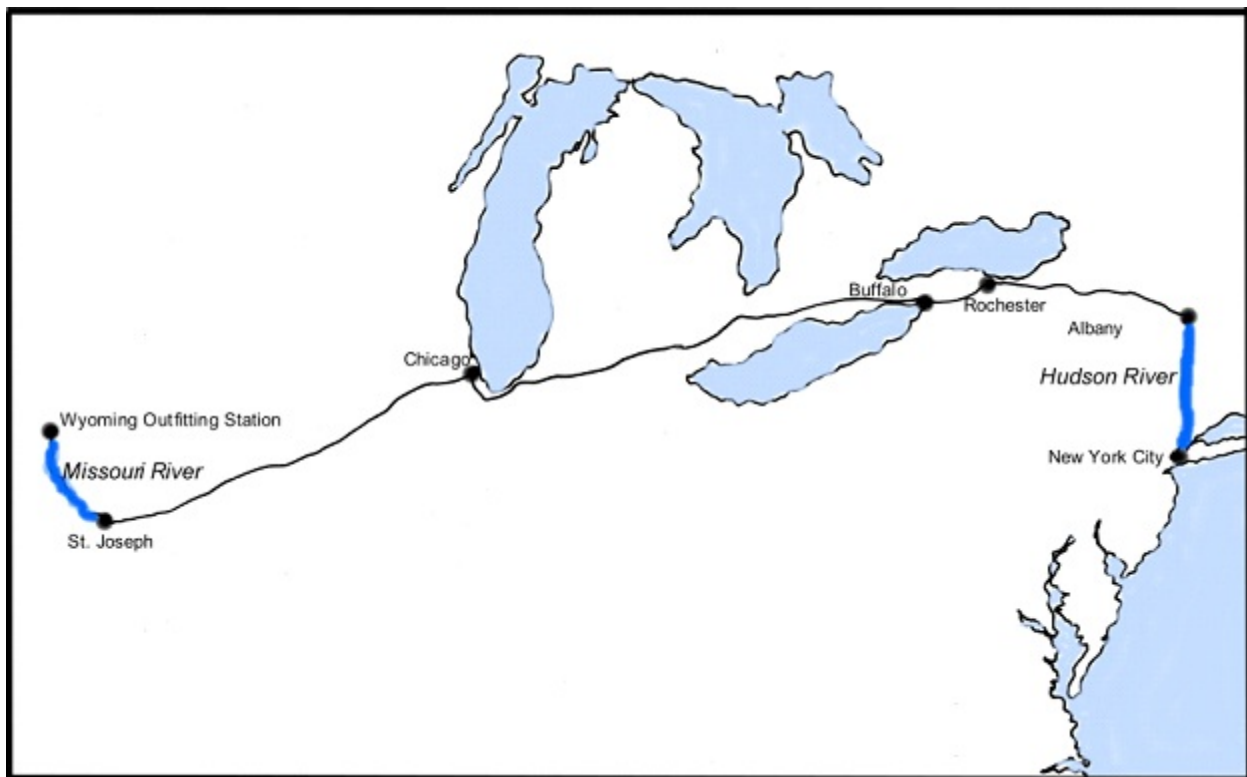
David Coombs also described the storm. Although the crew had ordered the passengers to stay

below, David decided to venture to the deck after hours of being tossed around below. “Getting as far as the gangway, my courage failed me for never had such a scene greeted my eyes. The sea in its fury whistling through the rigging and the rain descending in torrents! Such a scene I do not wish to witness again. The water came surging over the decks in large dashing waves, almost sweeping the sailors from their post.”



Castle Garden was the New York immigration center from 1855 until 1892, when Ellis Island became the national gateway.

After five weeks at sea, the ship docked at the port in New York City, where LDS Church agents boarded the vessel and greeted the saints. Two of these men were sons of Brigham Young, Joseph and Brigham, both newly ordained apostles. They expressed their pleasure in seeing the company in good health. Much later the passengers learned that during her passage back to England, the *General McClellan* was sunk by a Union vessel. The Union crew likely suspected that the *General McClellan* had purchased and was carrying contraband cotton from Confederate states to Europe.



In 1864, Morgan and Elizabeth Richards, with their two children, traveled with hundreds of immigrants to the United States. First landing in New York city, they cleared Customs and then traveled north on the Hudson River. From there, they traveled by various trains to St. Joseph, Missouri. Traveling up the Missouri River, they were met at the Wyoming Outfitting Station in Iowa by wagons and their drivers from Utah.

The immigrants cleared U.S. Immigration at Castle Gardens and then traveled through the night up the Hudson River on a beautiful steamer, the *St. John*. At Albany, they continued west on cattle trains to Rochester and by the next evening, late in June of 1864, they arrived in Buffalo.

From there, they traveled a thousand miles on a series of cattle cars and passenger trains along the Canadian Grand Trunk Railway, which was built during the Civil War to protect Canadian interests. Learning of the large influx of immigrants, Canadians approached the train and gave their fellow British citizens sandwiches in the hopes of learning news of their homeland. The sandwiches were greatly appreciated by the weary travelers.

The passengers had been alerted to “sharpers,” con men who tried to fleece unwitting passengers. The immigrants made diligent efforts in guarding all entrances to the train and prevented any fraud. On occasion their travel was delayed by issues with soldiers and skirmishes ahead, having been alerted via telegraph. In Chicago, their train was met by Apostle Parley P. Pratt, who had recently returned from a European mission but had been waylaid in the States while visiting his in-laws. He joined the passengers for the remainder of their journey to Utah.

At St. Joseph, Missouri, the immigrants boarded a steamship which took them up the Missouri River to the outfitting station named Wyoming, fifteen miles south of Winter Quarters. There, they joined hundreds of other emigrants who had traveled to the Wyoming station that year. Wagons from Utah, captained by experienced men and sometimes older boys, were waiting with oxen and supplies to take the immigrants to Utah.

These wagons had come east to the Wyoming post with merchandise to sell, including cotton from southern settlements in Utah, and were ready to return with immigrants. Some of these captains had brought fresh peaches which the British immigrants had never tasted before, filling their stomachs and their hearts with delight. David Coombs wrote, “Here we saw the oxen and wagons that were to haul us across those broad plains and here we saw the Mormon boys with their big bull whips and their wide rimmed hats which seemed rather odd to us, as we had never seen the like before.”

Twelve Mormon emigrant trains headed to Utah that summer from the Wyoming station, plus five freight trains. These latter wagons carried supplies for the three thousand emigrants traveling that summer, but they also carried merchandise purchased in the East for use in Utah, such as farm equipment, iron stoves, or other items for general stores which could not be fabricated in Utah.

William S. Godbe, a well-known Salt Lake City merchant, shipped pharmaceuticals and other merchandise for his stores. Various Utah merchants had ordered twenty or even fifty wagon loads of supplies, all which had to be pulled by the lumbering oxen across the thousand miles of plains from the Missouri River to Utah. Some of the wagons were so heavy that they required fifteen yoke of oxen to pull them. Captains of the freight trains looked for hardy immigrants they could engage to travel with these trains, often with a meager salary. In some cases, Danish immigrants fit the bill, even though they spoke no English and had never driven oxen.

Andrew Christian Nielson, with the Sharp and Spencer Freight Train, wrote, “Here was between 400 and 500 wild fat 4 or 5 year old steers bought up—only a few had ever had a yoke on and

still worse very few of the boys had ever seen an ox. Some were tailors, some sailors and every kind of tradesmen, mostly colliers [coal miners]. While we fitted out we had stampedes galore. I should wish very much if I could show the young generation now living some of the scenes of that trip. Think of a condition here: one forenoon in July [we had] a tremendous struggle in getting those wild animals yoked up and hitched to the wagon—three to six yoke to each wagon loaded with goods from 3500 to 8000 [pounds] on each wagon—then think of the teamsters just as wild and ignorant about their business as the oxen. And then most of them could not understand a word of English, so the captain hollering and commanding only caused confusion.”

Morgan Richards, a strong stone mason, was separated from his wife and children as he worked with a freight train carrying farm implements, including a heavy thresher. His family traveled with the William S. Warren train, which had four hundred emigrants. Bishop Warren was an experienced teamster who had left his family in southern Utah while making this trip east to retrieve immigrants. He chose Elders Thomas Jeremy and George Bywater, both of whom had served leadership positions on the *General McClellan*, as company leaders. Since Elizabeth could not walk, she rode in the wagon and helped with driving the teams. David Coombs and the Daybell family were among those from the *General McClellan* in this company. Most of the other ship passengers traveled with the Joseph S. Rawlins Company, which had left the Wyoming station a week earlier.

Their journey was difficult, which was expected, but there were surprising incidents. When the company reached Fort Laramie, they came upon a band of minstrels of former slaves who sang and played their instruments for the travelers,. After enjoying their music for some time, the immigrants proceeded on their journey. Later in the day a Native American on horseback rode swiftly among them, waving a gun and shooting it into the air. The hearts of the pioneers were filled with fear and then with dread as they saw more natives, (which they called, “Warriors of the Plains,”) heading toward them. This second group shouted at the pioneers not to shoot. They explained their friend, the first native, was inebriated. They retrieved him and removed him from the camp, to the relief of all.

Farther along the trail the company heard news of a massacre. Travelers on the trail coming east told Captain Warren that a Utah-bound freight train had been attacked by Indians. These travelers had been misinformed. Those killed had been part of a wagon train heading to Oregon, but at the time, no one knew the truth. That night, guards in the camp saw natives in the moonlight. As Captain Warren’s company passed by the site of the freight train massacre the next day, the immigrants were terrified. A trader’s home had been set afire and the company walked around bodies on the trail, being told not to move them by Captain Warren until soldiers from the Fort Laramie arrived.

Elizabeth Richards’ heart filled with fear. As they passed through the massacre site, she saw the blood, which she described as “ankle deep,” and she became certain Morgan had been killed, although she could not see his body. For the next five hundred miles, she wondered how she would ever get along as a crippled widow with two children and a baby on the way, so far away from her home in Wales.

Bishop Warren’s company arrived at Emigration Square in Salt Lake City on Tuesday, October

4th. Before Elizabeth climbed down from the wagon, she saw Morgan running toward her! It was a joyous reunion, and that was soon followed by another reunion, when Morgan saw his sister Catherine for the first time in ten years. Surely James Millard met them with a wagon and took them to his home in Farmington.

Morgan and his family settled nicely into Farmington life. In January a healthy son, William John, was born. A few months later, on April 9th, 1865, the Confederate army surrendered to General



Morgan Richards, Catherine Richards Millard's brother, emigrated to Utah in 1864 with his wife Elizabeth. They ultimately settled in Escalante.

Ulysses S. Grant at the courthouse in Appomattox, Virginia. Celia remembered that she was playing outside in a sand pile and saw her father walking to their home from town. He called out to a neighbor, "The war is over." Celia wrote, "He sounded so glad that I stood up and looked all around to see if I could see the war clouds like were in the pictures."

Catherine Richards Millard Has Her Last Child

Four months later, when Catherine was forty-two, she went into labor with her last child. That morning eight-year-old Alice took little Celia to the home of a friend of Catherine's. Celia got homesick so she ran home and was saddened when Jane Hadfield kept Celia from her mother's room. When she began to cry, Sister Hadfield told Alice to take Celia to her nearby home and let Celia eat all the currants she wanted. Celia remembered that her parents had

black currants in their yard, but Sister Hadfield had sweet yellow currants, and she ate all she wanted. Many years later Sister Hadfield told Celia that Catherine nearly died during that labor. Everyone was relieved when William Joseph arrived safely into the world. This was James and Catherine's last child. Two years later Catherine's sister-in-law Elizabeth Richards had her fifth child, a boy she named Thomas.

Morgan and Elizabeth Richards Leave Farmington

In early 1868 Morgan and Elizabeth were sealed in the Endowment House. Later that year, President Young sent Thomas Sasson Smith, who was by then a judge in Davis County, to head a mission to a disputed area in southern Utah which was called 'The Muddy.' Nevada also claimed this land, and President Young believed that if colonists settled there, the land could remain in Utah hands. Morgan and Elizabeth were among those pioneers from Farmington called to follow Brother Smith. Some of Thomas Grover's older children and their spouses were also called, and they made this long trek together. However, this "Mission to the Muddy" did not last long. Nevada prevailed in court, so most of these colonists moved elsewhere. Judge Smith and his family returned to Davis County. Some of the colonists settled in nearby Washington County in the St. George area. Morgan also looked back to Utah for a place to settle his family.

Panguitch is a beautiful but desolate area in the central part of southern Utah, built near the edge

of a freshwater lake. Panguitch had been settled in the previous decade, but the residents had deserted the town during the Black Hawk War fought between the pioneers and the Native Americans. This war disrupted life in southern Utah for several years. By 1870, President Young had determined that it was safe enough to resettle pioneers in Panguitch and asked for volunteers. Morgan and Elizabeth, now with four children and a new baby, were among them. Morgan put his masonry skills to use, and he and the other men literally built the town from adobe bricks they made from the dirt they walked on.

In 1876 many of the men in Panguitch looked for more land for their cattle. With others, Morgan moved his wife and his now seven children farther east into the center of southern Utah to



Morgan Richards was the stone mason who built the Escalante Tithing Office in 1876.

Escalante, situated on a plateau with good grazing and mild weather. Again, his skills as a stone mason were invaluable, and many of the early homes and public buildings built at this time still stand.

Morgan was one of the builders of the tithing office, with rock walls three feet thick. This building was constructed so well that it was later used as a high school. Today, it is used by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers. Morgan and his wife Elizabeth remained in Escalante, faithful in the LDS Church, for the remainder of their lives. Ultimately parents of ten children, they both died in 1912.