

Four Brief Histories from the *Pioneer Heritage Library*

1 John Pack, Pioneer

Veldon R. Hodgson, 5 Nov 1996

Ancestry, *LDS Family History Suite 2, Pioneer Heritage Library*

Kate B. Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West*, Vol. 7, pp. 374–378.

It was in New York that John Pack first became acquainted with the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the fall of 1833 he outfitted his parents who had already joined the Church and sent them to Kirtland, Ohio. On the eighth of March, 1836 he and his wife were baptized into the Church by James Blakesley.

In the early springtime of 1837, he disposed of his farm at Houns-field, and in April of the same year he and his wife moved to Kirtland, Ohio. He purchased a farm on the Chagrin River, not far from Kirtland. At this place he also began the construction of a saw mill, thus fulfilling a desire which he is thought to have entertained from his early youth at Saint John and possibly at Wattertown.

In common with other members of the Church, John Pack was not to remain long in Kirtland. In the springtime of 1838, under pressure of mob violence, he sold his farm at a great loss, and, with his family, including his parents, traveled by team to Missouri, a distance in excess of five hundred miles. They first went to the Far West, then to Adam-ondi-Ahman, and finally to the Grand River, where a farm of one hundred sixty acres was purchased, twenty miles from Far West and thirteen miles from Adam-ondi-Ahman. This was in Davies County. Here he was joined by several of his brothers and other relatives. Aunt Julia records that they were present in Far West at the celebration of the Fourth of July, 1838. She says that because of the laying of the corner stone of the temple on that day, the Saints had a time of great rejoicing.

In September of that year mobs began to gather against the Mormon people. Many houses were burned and other acts of violence committed. Because of this John Pack and his family moved into Far West, and a little later, when persecution was less violent, he went back to the farm. While at the latter place a company of immigrants brought word to Father that Levi Wood had died at Huntsville, and that his wife, Phoebe Pack, John's sister, was herself extremely sick. The nature of John's experience while going to his sister's aid is well told in the words of Aunt Julia, as follows: "My husband and I started the next day to go and look after them. Our first day's journey took us within five miles of the Grand River ferry. We slept all night at a mobber's house. There was but one room in the house. The landlady made our bed on the floor. About the middle of the night the man of the house came home; he complained of being tired, stating that he had not had his boots off for several nights. He had been in the mob camp that had gathered against the Saints.

"We continued our journey the next morning, and had nearly reached the ferry when a company of about thirty armed men met us. About half of them passed by, when the head man wheeled about and rode up to our wagon. He inquired if we were Mormons. My husband told him we were. He then said we would have to go with him to their camp, and ordered us to wheel about. They took us five miles across a new rough road to their camp.

"The leader came up to our wagon and ordered my husband to follow, saying, 'We take you for a spy!' He then said to me 'You can bid your husband goodbye; you will never see him again; you can go to that house,' pointing to a log house across the hollow. I told him I would not go one inch; if my husband died, I would die with him. Then I stepped my foot on the wagon wheel and was about to jump to the ground, when my husband took me by the hand and whispered, 'Stay with the wagon and take care of the horse; I am not afraid. I will be back soon.

"They took him through a patch of brush to an open place covered with grass. Sashael Woods told him, 'Here will be your grave. We are going to kill you unless you deny Joseph Smith.' My husband told him, 'Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; you profess to be a preacher of the Gospel; so do I, and I will meet you at the day of Judgment.'

"There were five or six in the immediate party. They talked with one another as to who should shoot him, but no one really seemed to be willing to do it. Finally one of the men standing by our wagon called to the others, 'Let

that damned Mormon go.' Soon they came back with him and ordered him into the wagon, saying that if we were ever seen in that country again, it would be at the peril of our lives. They sent the same company back with us to the ferry that took us. They saw us across the river, and we went on to our sister in Huntsville.

"We found her very sick. She was completely salivated with calomel, and near death. Then we put a bed in our wagon and placed her upon it; together with her six month old child. We left her three older children at Huntsville at the home of a Mormon family by the name of Amos Herrick. We started on our journey home, and eventually got as far as Carlton, a small town forty miles from our home. At a shop in this town were several of the mob that took us prisoners. They knew us and said, 'There are the ones we took prisoners; let us go for Sashael Woods.' A man jumped onto a horse and went full speed for some place.

"We went a short distance through a piece of timber. We then left the road and started for home across the prairie. In that country the ground is very slick; in times of storm the water cuts deep narrow gullies. During the night we came to two or three such places. My husband would unhitch the horse and get it over the gully; then he would draw the wagon across by hand, it being a light wagon, something like the delivery wagons we have nowadays. We reached our home shortly after day light and found my husband's brother, Rufus Peck, there with chills and fever."

This was in the latter part of September, 1838, when John was twenty-nine and Aunt Julia twenty-three. A few days later George Pack, John Pack's father, became seriously ill and died shortly thereafter. Although he was only sixty-eight years of age and a comparatively robust man, yet he was unable to longer endure the hardships heaped upon him. The day following his death his body was taken to Far West, and, after a short funeral service, was buried at that place. John and his family returned to their home on the farm that evening and stayed up all night loading whatever of their belongings they could into wagons. The next morning they bade their home goodbye and started for Far West. All this was done under the constant menace of a mob.

Shortly after reaching Far West, John bought some logs and hurriedly made them into a one-room house. He chinked the cracks with wood, and without further preparation immediately occupied it as a dwelling. Julia describes its position as the "last house out of Far West towards Goose Creek." Twenty persons lived in this poorly lighted and heated room during the greater part of the following winter.

About this time John aided William Bosley, who had married his sister Eleanor, to escape from some Missourians who were seeking him on a false charge of murder, said to have been committed at the so-called battle of Crooked River. This occasioned father's absence from his family for nearly two weeks. Julia relates that while John was away, the family supply of flour became exhausted, and that by means of a spring pole and mortar they pounded corn with which to make bread. They also ground wheat in a hand mill for the same purpose.

At this time twenty people were living in John's one room house. Among those was Rufus Pack's wife, about to become a mother. While John was absent with William Bosley, she became ill. Julia obtained permission to move into a small one-room building which Parley P. Pratt had

constructed as a stable, and in which his own wife lay sick with a child. Julia Pack's bed was placed in a small space at the foot of Sister Pratt's bed, and she was lying in pain upon it when Elder Pratt was brought into the house, under guard, to bid his wife good-bye before he was taken to prison. Shortly after this, John and other of the brethren were forced to sign a paper, at the point of a bayonet, relinquishing all right to their property for the purpose of paying the expense of the Missourians, incident to their driving the Saints from the State. According to the same enforced understanding, the Mormons agreed to leave Missouri before the first of April, 1839, or subject themselves to extermination. During the short respite that followed, John and his family moved to Log Creek, probably into more commodious quarters, and remained there until the 8th of February, 1839, when they joined the general exodus of the Church from Missouri to Illinois.

In this connection the following document is particularly interesting, signed January 29, 1839, at Far West, Missouri. "We whose names are hereunder written do each for ourselves individually hereby covenant to stand by and assist each other, to the utmost of our abilities, in removing from this state, in compliance with the authority of the

state; and we do hereby acknowledge ourselves firmly bound to the extent of our available property, to be disposed of by a committee who shall be appointed for that purpose, for providing means for removing of the poor and destitute, who shall be considered worthy, from this country, till there shall be not one left who desires to remove from the state: With this provision, that no individual shall be deprived of the right of the disposal of his own property for the above purpose, or of having the control of it, or so much of it as shall be necessary for the removing of his own family, and be entitled to the overplus, after the work is effected; and, furthermore, said committee shall give receipts for all property, and an account of the expenditure of the same." (Signed by John Pack and 213 others.)

The distance from Far West to the Mississippi River, along the route travelled by the fleeing Saints, is in excess of two hundred miles. In February of 1839 the weather was severely cold, and the roads were muddy and otherwise in bad condition. Scores died from exposure and fatigue. John and his family crossed the river at Atlas, some forty miles below Quincy. A little later they settled on a farm four miles west of the town of Perry, Pike County, sixty miles southeast of Nauvoo. This was in the early springtime of 1839.

Here, according to John's record, "I was compelled to labor with my hands most of the time to support my family, in consequence of having been robbed of my property by the mobs in Missouri; but in the course of the year, I took a mission to the southern part of the state (Illinois)."

In the springtime of 1840, John moved from Pike County to Nauvoo. On the 16th of December, 1840, Governor Carlin, of Illinois, signed a bill authorizing the incorporation of the city of Nauvoo, also the formation of an independent military group to be known as the Nauvoo Legion, the officers of which were to be commissioned by the Governor of the State. Subsequently, when the organization was effected, John Pack was commissioned a Major.

After numerous attempts to have Joseph Smith returned to Missouri, to answer various charges made against him, Governor Reynolds of that State issued extradition papers for the return of the Prophet June 13, 1843. Governor Ford of Illinois, issued a warrant for his arrest. The Prophet, at the time, was visiting with relatives in Lee County, some two hundred miles north of Nauvoo. Two sheriffs, Reynolds and Wilson, promptly placed him under arrest, and immediately started away with him, meantime treating him with the utmost cruelty. Their purpose was to carry him back to Missouri, where he would fall into the hands of his former enemies.

Hyrum Smith, at Nauvoo, upon hearing what had been done, called for a group of volunteers to go to the rescue of the Prophet, and if possible to frustrate the unlawful scheme of those who

held him in custody. John Pack immediately responded and rode off at the head of twenty-four horsemen, who were determined to protect their leader at any and all costs. Meantime the officials of Lee County, at the instigation of Stephen Markham, issued a warrant against Reynolds and Wilson on the ground of their having threatened the life of the Prophet, also on the grounds of false imprisonment. Reynolds and Wilson thus became the prisoners of Sheriff Campbell of Lee County. At the time of the Prophet's martyrdom, June 27, 1844, John was doing missionary work in the state of New Jersey. Immediately upon receipt of the news, he and his companion, Ezra T. Benson, returned to Nauvoo and joined the sorrowing Saints. Julia relates that after the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum were brought to Nauvoo, she saw them in the Nauvoo Mansion, where thousands gazed upon them in silent grief.

In 1845, upon advice of President Young, John rented the Nauvoo Mansion and he and Julia kept tavern there for six months. The President then counselled him to purchase the Lomas Tavern, to prevent the gathering there of enemies of the Church. He kept this place until shortly before the eighth of February, 1846, the time of his final departure from Nauvoo. As soon as the Prophet was slain, it became apparent that the Saints would be forced to abandon Nauvoo. Yet in the face of this widely recognized fact, they industriously completed the temple and dedicated it. This had scarcely been done, when, under orders of the mob, they left practically everything that they owned and moved out into the wilderness. The exodus from Nauvoo began in February and continued for several weeks until the city was practically depopulated. Under date of February 8, 1846, John Pack wrote, "I took leave of my comfortable dwelling and crossed the Mississippi River, and took my shelter with my family and the Saints in the open air on Sugar Creek, where we were exposed to the cold storms of the winter. The cold was so great while we were there encamped, that the river froze sufficiently for loaded teams to cross on the ice. But notwithstand-

ing, there were several thousand souls in camp for three weeks, and not a single death occurred, neither was there much sickness." At this time Julia's youngest child was only four months old. The courage expressed in the foregoing statement is emphasized by the words of the historian Bancroft, as follows: "There is no parallel in the world's history to this migration from Nauvoo. The exodus from Egypt was from a heathen land, a land of Idolaters, to a fertile region designated by the Lord for his chosen people, the land of Canaan. The Pilgrim Fathers in fleeing to America came from a people making few pretensions to civil or religious liberty. It was from these same people who fled from old-world persecutions that they might enjoy the liberty of conscience in the wilds of America, from their descendants and associates, that others of their descendants, who claimed the right to differ from them in opinion and practice, were now fleeing."

Principally because of the demands of their enemies at Nauvoo, the Mormon people decided to leave Sugar Creek as early as possible. Accordingly, on the first of March, 1846, after a temporary organization was effected, the company moved forward, largely as a single body of five hundred wagons or more. But because of the inclemency of the weather, the poorness of the roads, and the insufficiency of teams, movement was extremely slow. Father says, "The snow and rain were so severe, and the mud so deep, that we made little progress."

From the Life of John Pack by his son Dr. Frederick J. Pack.

The LDS Family History Suite 2 was published in Provo, Utah by Infobases in 1999 and is available at the Family History Library on compact disc no. 205, pt. 1. When searching for LDS ancestors there are two useful databases in this CD-ROM collection. Each database is word searchable. When you find a name, you see the actual entry in the context of the book. The two databases are

1. Pioneer Heritage Library
2. LDS Vital Records Library.

2 John Pack

Wanda Pack Jewkes, "History: Ancestry," *LDS Family History Suite 2, Pioneer Heritage Library, Our Pioneer Heritage*, Vol. 2, pp. 590–591.

John Pack was born in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, May 20, 1809, the son of George and Phylotte Green Pack. When John was six years of age his parents moved to Watertown, Jefferson County, New York. There he grew to manhood on his father's farm and it was in Watertown that he was married to Julia Ives on October 10, 1832. Latter-day Saint missionaries visited their home, and on the 8th of March, 1836, he and his wife were baptized. In the spring of 1837 John Pack sold his holdings in New York and moved to Kirtland, Ohio. The next year he joined a group of Saints in the long journey to Missouri. Here he purchased a farm and established himself; but within a year he was forced to leave the state and move to Illinois. In 1840 he settled in Nauvoo and while there served in the Nauvoo Legion and was commissioned a major.

John spent the winter of 1846-47 in Winter Quarters. When President Young selected the men who were to accompany him on that pioneer journey to Salt Lake Valley, John was among the number. In the military organization that was formed for the expedition, John was designated as a major. He was among the first to enter the valley and returning to Emigration Canyon on the evening of July 23rd, reported to Brigham Young that the companies ahead had cut their way through the mouth of the canyon, entered and explored the valley and made selection of ground in which to sow some seeds.

After taking part in the activities pertaining to the founding of Salt Lake City, Mr. Pack began the return journey to Winter Quarters, arriving late in October. The following year, 1848, he returned to the valley and established a home in the 17th Ward, where later the first classes of the University of Utah were conducted.

The following information was taken from *The Founding of Utah by Young*: "The old Pack home was located on the corner of [p.591] West Temple and First North Streets. Sessions of the school were held in the parlor and immediately across the hall was the first mercantile store in Utah, where the students were able to purchase copies of the Lindley Murray English Reader. It was at this place that Livingston and Kinkead deposited their stock of goods in 1849 which had been hauled over the plains from Independence, Missouri and which was valued at \$20,000. There were boots, shoes, grain, bacon, molasses, shirts, hats, calicos and many other items used in those days. They also advertised for sale pencils, ink and writing materials. Orson Pratt, Cyrus W. Collins and Orson Spencer formed the first faculty. This "Parent School" continued to meet in the John Pack home until the spring of 1851. The University of Deseret was opened November 11, 1856.

In 1856 Mr. Pack was asked to assist in the founding of a Mormon colony in Carson Valley, Nevada. He loyally responded and labored there until 1858 when he was called back to Utah. He died at his home in Salt Lake City April 4, 1885 after a long and distinguished career.

3 John Pack

Andrew Jenson, "Ancestry," *LDS Family History Suite 2, Pioneer Heritage Library, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, p. 714.

Pack, John, one of the original pioneers of Utah, was born May 20, 1809, at St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada, a son of George Pack and Philotte Green. He removed with his parents at the age of eight years into the State of New York, where he married Julia Ivies Oct. 10, 1832, and together with his wife was baptized March 8, 1836, by Elder James Blakesley. He was ordained an Elder in the same year under the hands of Orson Pratt and Luke S. Johnson, and was an active member of the local Priesthood. While residing in Nauvoo, Ill., he performed several short missions to the Eastern States, and at the time of the martyrdom of the Prophet and his brother, was laboring with Ezra T. Benson on a mission in New Jersey. After the exodus of the saints from Nauvoo he was chosen as one of the pioneer company and arrived in Great Salt Lake Valley in July, 1847. Later the same year he went back to Winter Quarters and returned in 1848 with his family. He built a home in the 17th Ward, Salt Lake City, helped to build Chase's mill in Liberty Park, built the first dancing hall in Utah, in which Livingston and Kincaid opened the first store. In 1856 he helped to settle Carson Valley (Nevada) and was a member of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society. He died in Salt Lake City, April 4, 1885, being survived by a large family.

4 John Pack

Orson F. Whitney, "Ancestry," *LDS Family History Suite 2, Pioneer Heritage Library, History of Utah*, Vol. 4, pp. 50–52.

John Pack, a prominent member of the Pioneer company, was born of American parents in St. Johns, New Brunswick, Lower Canada, May 20, 1809. His father was George Pack and his mother, before marriage, Philotte Greene, second cousin to General Nathaniel Greene of Revolutionary fame. They were farmers, fairly well-to-do, and their children numbered twelve, five sons and seven daughters.

When John was about eight years old the family moved to Rutland, Jefferson county, [p.51] New York. There he worked on his father's farm, clearing off timber and doing general farm labor until he was twenty-one. At intervals he attended school and received the rudimental education common at that time. His natural inclination was towards farming and stock raising, and he succeeded to that degree that he finally purchased from his parents the old homestead, managed the farm at a profit, and provided for his father and mother in their declining years.

His early manhood was passed at Watertown, near Rutland, where on the 10th of October, 1832, he married Julia Ives of that place. On the 8th of March, 1836, he and his wife were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Father and mother Pack had previously been baptized. John sent them to Kirtland, Ohio, in 1836, and the next year, as soon as he had sold his property, followed them, his wife and her mother, Lucy Paine Ives, accompanying him.

He purchased a farm near the Kirtland Temple and partly built a saw-mill, which he sold at a great sacrifice when he moved, in the year 1838, to Missouri. His parents, as well as his immediate family, settled with him on a farm in Caldwell county, eighteen miles from the city of Far West.

They were barely established in their new home when the mob troubles began. One day Mr. Pack, having received word from his sister Phoebe, residing at Huntsville, some distance away, that her husband was dead and she and her children sick, started with his wife for that place for the purpose of bringing the afflicted family to his own home. When near the crossing of Grand river, a mob of twenty-five men on horseback came from a side road, formed a line in front of and behind them, and demanded to know if they were Mormons. They answered in the affirmative, and were then told that they were prisoners. They were taken by their captors several miles out of their road to a camp in the timber, where were five hundred armed men, under the command of Sashiel Woods, a Presbyterian minister. His men yelled like demons when their comrades rode into camp with the two prisoners. Woods ordered Mr. Pack to go with him, and others through an opening in the bushes, at the same time telling Mrs. Pack that she could go to a grog shop near by. She, however, was about to follow her husband, saying she was willing to die with him, when he requested her to remain with the horse and wagon, assuring her that he would be back soon and that he did not fear the mob. Seated on the ground in a circle around him, they first examined the contents of his valise, but finding nothing by which to condemn him as "a Mormon spy," the mob leader next demanded that he deny that Joseph Smith was a Prophet. The prisoner refused to do so, whereupon Woods asked some one to volunteer to shoot him. Mr. Pack then arose and addressed the crowd in such a way as to cause them one by one to go, away, leaving him alone with their leader. A voice from the camp called out "Let the d-d Mormon go." He and his wife were then marched back to the point where they were arrested, and there released, the mob jeering and yelling after them as they crossed the river, and threatening to kill them if they returned that way. They heeded not the threat, but returned with their sick relatives along the same road; and though again threatened by some of the mob, they were not otherwise molested; perhaps for the reason that Mr. Pack, after dark, left the main road and taking the stars for his guide, proceeded by another way to his home, where he arrived a little before daylight.

Subsequently he and his family were driven by the mob into Far West, and were there when the Prophet with others was court-martialed and sentenced to be shot. After the surrender of the city, John Pack helped William Bosley to escape, the latter being wanted by the mob on a trumped-up charge of murder, he having been present at the Crooked river battle.

In the Mormon exodus from Missouri Mr. Pack proceeded to Pike county, Illinois, where he resided near the town of Perry until 1840, and then moved to Nauvoo. When the Prophet was kidnapped by Sheriff Reynolds of Jackson county, Missouri, John Pack, at the head of twenty-five men, was among those who went to his rescue. He was on a mission in New Jersey, with Ezra T. Benson, when the Prophet and the Patriarch were murdered.

An Elder since the year 1836, he had spent three months in the ministry in Pike county, and subsequently had filled a short mission to the State of Maine. On the 8th of October, 1844, he was ordained a Seventy and became senior president of the Eight Quorum, which had just been organized. Later he was ordained a High Priest. In a military capacity he was major in the First Regiment, Second Cohort, Nauvoo Legion, taking rank July 21, 1843. He was commissioned by Governor Ford on the 28th of the following October.

In the exodus from Illinois, he traveled in Heber C. Kimball's company to the [p.52] Missouri river, and in the spring of 1847 left his family at Winter Quarters while he accompanied President Young as a pioneer to the Rocky Mountains. He was appointed major in the military organization of the camp, and with the vanguard entered Salt Lake valley on the 22nd of July. Next day he returned with Joseph Matthews to meet President Young and report that the other divisions of the company had entered and partly explored the valley. He returned with the President the same season to the Missouri river.

Early in the spring of 1848 he made a small farm on Pigeon Creek, Iowa, but abandoned it the same year in order to come to Utah. He was captain of a company in President Kimball's division, which left the Elkhorn early in June. While camped on the Horn, the Indians raided their cattle, killing one of Mr. Pack's oxen in the river. The savages were followed and a skirmish ensued, in which Thomas E. Ricks was shot and left for dead, Howard Egan wounded in the wrist, and two horses shot under William H. Kimball. Mr. Pack tried to yoke in a small cow in place of his dead ox, when a strange ox came and tried to get into the yoke. As no owner could be found for the animal, he was yoked in and driven to Utah, doing excellent service all the way. Afterwards, the ox having shed his hair, the brand U. S. was found upon him. Mr. Pack entered Salt Lake valley (for the third time) on the 19th of October.

He settled in the Seventeenth Ward, Salt Lake City. He labored in the canyons, and hauled logs to a saw-mill in City Creek canyon and to Chasers mill upon the site now known as Liberty Park, thus procuring lumber with which to build. He erected the first dancing hall in Utah, and in this building Livingston and Kincaid opened the first store. Later it was used by the University of Deseret. Mr. Pack also kept a boarding house, most of his guests being gold hunters on their way to California.

In the spring of 1849 he plowed new land in Farmington, Davis county, and raised a crop of corn, making a water ditch on the mountain side to ward off the crickets, which he fought daily. Later he procured eighty acres of new land in West Bountiful where he built another home. Before this was finished, however, he went upon a foreign mission, and it was his eldest son, Ward E. Pack, then but fifteen years old, aided by the women and children, who fenced the land, plowed, drove team and sustained the family during his father's three years absence. The latter started upon his mission October 19, 1849, accompanying Apostle John Taylor and Elder Curtis E. Bolton to France. He returned home in 1852.

During the year 1855 he lost most of his crop by grasshoppers, but unselfishly shared the scanty remainder with his brethren and sisters who had none. In 1856 he helped to settle Carson valley, which was then in Utah, and was absent upon this mission from April till September. While crossing the desert, at the Sink of the Humboldt river his horses tired out, and his company having gone ahead, he and his animals nearly perished for want of water; but by dint of perseverance he succeeded in saving all. In 1857 he assisted in detaining Johnston's army at Fort Bridger, and in "the move" of 1858 camped with his family on Shanghai Bottom, south-west of Battle Creek, now Pleasant Grove.

In 1861-2 he procured quite a large piece of land, at Kamas, Summit county, where he built another home. From 1861 to 1865 he was engaged with his son Ward E. Pack and Charles L. Russell in the manufacture of lumber; also carrying on the dairying business with his sons from 1863 to 1868. From November, 1869, to March, 1870,

he was absent upon a mission to the Middle and Eastern States. He was greatly interested in agriculture and stock raising, and from the time of the organization of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, was identified with it, doing much to promote its interests and its exhibitions, especially in the live stock department.

John Pack died at his home in Salt Lake City on the 4th day of April, 1885. His death was quite sudden, being due to heart failure. He left a numerous family, being the husband of six wives-namely, Julia Ives, Nancy Boothe, Ruth Mosher, Mary Jane Walker, Jessie Sterling and Lucy Jane Giles-and was the father of forty-three children.