

## JOHN PACK

John Pack, one of the original band of Utah pioneers, and one of the few who entered Salt Lake Valley on July 22, 1847, two days ahead of the main body, was born in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, on May 20, 1809. His father was George Pack and his mother was Philotte Greene, second cousin to General Greene, the American Revolutionary hero.

John Pack was reared on a farm, but he received a common school education. In 1832 he married Julia Ives, and in 1836 he and his wife heard the Gospel. They were baptized into the L.D.S. Church on May 8, 1836. Soon after this they moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where John purchased a farm near the Kirtland Temple, and later built a saw mill there. In 1838 he sold his Kirtland property at a great sacrifice and moved to Missouri, settling 18 miles from Far West. His family went through all the persecutions sustained by the people there, and he was more than once in danger of death at the hands of the mob. His courage, however, affected his captors and he was released. John Pack was in Far West when the Prophet Joseph was sentenced to be shot.

After the exodus from Missouri, he resided in Pike Co., Illinois until 1840, when he moved to Nauvoo. When the Prophet was kidnapped by Sheriff Reynolds of Jackson Co., Missouri, in 1842, John Pack was leader of twenty-five men who went to his rescue.

On Oct. 8, 1844 he was ordained the senior president of the Eighth Quorum of Seventy, and later went with Ezra T. Benson to fill a mission in the state of New Jersey. They were still in New Jersey when the Prophet was murdered.

At one time he had a patriarchal blessing given him by Hyrum Smith. In this blessing he was told that he would be placed in a position to command the Indians. Coming across the plains he was assigned to be one of the advance guard. One day a band of Sioux Indians came galloping toward the train of pioneer wagons. John Pack immediately stepped out in front of them and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, stop!" The Indians were frightened and turned and went off in another direction. On the journey across the plains he held the office of captain of fifty.

Arriving in the valley of Salt Lake he founded the old Pack homestead in the Seventeenth Ward and helped to build Chase's mill which now stands in Liberty Park. He built the first dance hall in Utah and this building that Livingston and Kincaid, in 1849 deposited their \$20,000.00 stock of goods which they had hauled across the plains from Independence, Missouri, and opened the first store in Utah. "There were boots and shoes, caps, hats shirts, and calicoes, and this first mercantile firm in Utah also advertized pencils, ink and writing materials." The Pack home was also known far and wide as a boarding house, the guests generally being gold hunters on their way to California.

The University of Deseret, or the Parent School, as it was first called, and later University of Utah, was opened Nov. 11, 1850, at the home of John Pack in the Seventeenth Ward, under

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the direction of Professor Orson Spencer. Sessions of the school were held in the parlor of the home which was located on the corner of West Temple and First North Streets.

In 1849 and until 1852 John Pack aided Pres. John Taylor, then an apostle, in establishing the French Mission. This was one of the four missions that he fulfilled for the Church.

At his home in Salt Lake, John Pack took an active part in all of the local industries and was a member of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society.

In 1857 he aided in detaining Johnston's Army at Fort Bridger.

A year before his death he passed through a severe illness. One day those in attendance thought he was dead. He lay as tho dead for about three hours and during that time he said that his spirit left his body and went to the spirit-world. He said that he travelled through the air for a long distance and finally came to a large building. Here a man came to the door and said, "John Pack, we are not ready for you to come yet. You are to go back to earth for another year." He said he did not want to return to earth but wished rather to stay, but the man at the door said, "No, you have work to do on earth, and when you return now you must say 'O, God the Eternal Father', three times". After he had been thought dead for three hours his family in the room heard him mumbling, "O, God the Eternal Father". He came to life, recovered from his illness, and lived for another year. During that time he worked at gathering his genealogy. This was before the Temple was finished. He died of heart failure, April 4, 1885, at Salt Lake.

He had six wives:- Julia Ives, whom he married in Canada, Nancy Booth of Salt Lake, Ruth Mausier of Kamas, Jane Walker of Bountiful, Jessie Sterling of Bountiful, and Lucy Jane Giles of Kamas. They were all living together at one time. They shared alike in his property and all of the children were treated alike. He was the father of forty-three children and had eighty-nine grandchildren and five great grandchildren at the time of his death. One very noticeable thing about the Pack family was their congeniality and affection. All of John's wives seemed to love each like sisters and all of the children showed the greatest love and respect for the different wives and for each other, also. The same feeling of love has continued to exist through the years.

*By his Grand Daughter*

*Mrs Inez Whiting Bush*

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