

MONS LARSON

by James Adkins

My 3rd great grandfather was a Swedish immigrant. His name was Mons Larson. He was born in Sweden in 1823. He was famous for being the strongest man in Southern Sweden. He was also a cabinet maker for the King and Queen. He married his wife, Elna, in 1852. Their first child was born in 1853, Their second child was born in 1855. Their names were Beretta and Caroline. The whole family was baptized into the Church on June 6, 1856. They decided to come to Zion and on April 1, 1859 they came along with Scandinavian saints.

They sailed from Denmark on the "L.N.Hvidt" They encountered a huge storm and the waves rocked the ship until everyone was sick even the Captain. The ship reached Grimdy, England on April 6. The same day they went by rail to Liverpool. On April 7 they went on board the ship William Tapscot. On April 11, 1859 they set sail for the United States. They arrived in New York May 14, 1859. They traveled by boat and rail to Florence, Nebraska. In June of that same year they were organized into three companies. The Church furnished most of the carts, but Mons being a mechanic built his own cart thinking that he would be able to use it at the other end. On July 9th they begin their journey in the 8th handcart company. George Rowley was their Captain.

Mons and Elna had three children: Beretta not quite six, Carolyn four, and Lehi was two. The Captain had a rule that Beretta because of her age had to walk. When she got tired her Mother would give her a crust of bread to encourage her to keep walking; and they walked a total of thirteen hundred miles Mons said the hardest part of the journey was not letting Beretta ride in the cart. They arrived in Salt Lake City on September 4th. The Church collected all of the carts and Mons who could not speak English lost his cart. On the trek their shoes wore out and they wrapped their feet in rags. They walked into Salt Lake with bloody feet.

They were called to settle Toole where they built a farm. They then went to settle Santaquin. Mons' also married my 3rd great grandma, Olivia Eklund, who was born in Gottland, Sweden in 1856. Mons and Olivia went through the Hole in the Rock expedition after he was called by the prophet to help colonize in Arizona. All the others in the group were going to Santaquin, Colorado. Olivia, who was pregnant, walked down the cliff with two small children, one on each arm. The road they had built down the cliff was more like a moraine than a road. When they reached the top on the other side, she gave birth to a baby boy while lying in the wagon during a blizzard They named the baby Reo because of his being born by the river.

After they left the people going to Colorado, they got lost in the desert trying to go to Safford, Arizona. They prayed and then were found by some ranch hands and were rescued. The Hole in the Rock expedition has been written about in several books and was one of the hardest things pioneers ever did. My grandparents established a big farm in Arizona and have many descendants besides me. My great great uncles had big cotton farms and became very rich in the Arizona valley. They settled Snowflake and Pima, Arizona. I am the 31d great grandson of Olivia's daughter Olive.

I am very proud of my pioneer ancestors for all they did to honor our religion and how they overcame hardships and trials and remained faithful. I hope to be strong, brave and faithful like my Grandpa Larson.