

JOURNEY ACROSS THE SEA

by Anita Ritchie amended and condensed by Derek Heritage

John Tilby Joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in England by being baptized in Nov 1850 along with his wife, Mary Ann Tilby (maiden name Underdown). A few years later he made the decision to travel to Salt Lake City in America, where many Mormons had set up home.

At the time of leaving England John Tilby was 37 years of age, his wife Mary Ann was 35, she left behind her father Vincent who was by this time, 65 years old and twice a widower. Mary Ann's Mother Catherine (known as KITTY) Crumby had died in 1843. (she was the sister of my Gt, Gt, Grandmother Mary Crumby who is my link to the Tilby family. Anita.) Vincent remarried in 1850 to Catherine Friend. they had two children together Eliza (born 1846) and James (born 1851) but for whatever reason, Catherine, Eliza, James and also Vincent's youngest son with Kitty, Thomas... had all died in 1851.

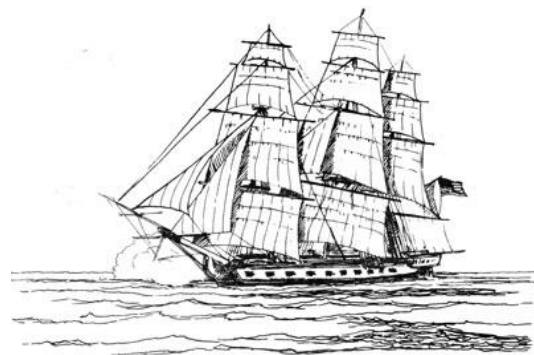
In 1857 Vincent was living alone. Mary Ann was the eldest sibling in the family and before her immigration to America, she had to say farewell to brother William born two years after her, who by this time had married Annie and had four young children Jane, Alfred, George and Rachel.

Farewell also to sisters Sarah (born 1833). John was about two years old when his mother, Mary passed away. He had 7 elder sisters, Catherine, Elizabeth, Caroline, Louisa, Mary Ann, Charlotte and Frances some of which, I am sure, helped to raise him. The 1841 Census show him living with his father Robert. Both worked as agriculture labourers...knowing about farming would be useful and important also when he settled with his family in Utah...by 1856 his father had passed away.

So, in 1857 John, his wife Mary Ann and their daughter Mary Ann aged about 9, made the journey from Faversham Kent to Liverpool. There they boarded the ship 'the George Washington at Liverpool docks and set sail to Boston on March 27 1857

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or 'Mormons' as they are nicknamed) formed its own Emigrating company to provide the lowest cost for travel. It was operated by "Called" agents, set apart by General Authorities to arrange block bookings, purchase contract tickets, exchange money from English pounds to American dollars and to secure religious discounts for missionaries and clergymen, rail fare discounts, bulk purchase of supplies, and the sale of animals and equipment for cash on reaching their destination. Orson Pratt was at that time, the LDS agent in Liverpool and looked after the welfare of the emigrating saints. The passenger contract ticket was very important and the form was given to every passenger on the ship. the allowance for luggage was 10 cubic feet for each ticket holder and families were instructed to tie their boxes with rope and secure them with nails.

The passengers were encouraged to board the ship almost as soon as they arrived in Liverpool. By doing this they avoided high prices at local hotels and from being robbed of their tickets and goods by local thieves.



28th March 1857...about 5 a.m.... The George Washington weighed anchor and started for America...those on board sang many hymns and were merry, joyful and light-hearted. The day was glorious and the saints crowded the rails watching the land disappear.

29th March 1857... " This morning the winds began to blow a gale and the sea began to roll and the waves ran high and sea sickness was very bad. the winds continued to blow hard all night and the boxes were rolling about the ship all night."

Another account of the storm stated that the conditions below top deck were awful ... the ship moaned and creaked, the wind howled... the waves roared...luggage etc broke loose and rolled from side to side along with the motion of the ship... people too were sliding around trying hard to grasp at something to stop from falling...water, food clothes were scattered everywhere...there were cries from the women and children which were heart-rending; some were praying others weeping bitterly, as they saw their provisions and clothes destroyed, things continued in this way until the fourth day, when the storm abated, and the hatchways were opened. Most of the passengers were so eager to get on deck that they pushed each other off the ladder; several were severely hurt.

Day to day living on the 'George Washington' for the saints was strict and disciplined. 'the centre of the ship was reserved for Married couples with single men in the bow and single women in the stern. Passengers arose at about 5 or 6 a.m. Cleansed their respective portions of the ship, and threw the rubbish overboard. This attended to, Prayers were offered in every ward, and then the passengers prepared their breakfasts. during the remainder of the day they occupied themselves with various duties. They also took time during the day with constant exercise on deck. At 8 or 9 p.m. Prayers were again offered and all retired to their berths.'

19th April "We arrived this day in Boston harbour." the George Washington had a speedy voyage of 23 days with only 4 deaths and 1 birth on the ocean, however the passengers were unable to go ashore because of a violent storm which arose. The captain used a double anchor to keep the ship from being cast onto the rocks.

22nd April. Docked into Boston. Health authorities came on board to certify that the company was free of Communicable disease.

23 April. After getting off the Ship "The George Washington" members of the Church boarded a train to Albany, then to Buffalo, took another to Cleveland then Chicago finally taking a train to Iowa.... the journey took from 25 April 1857 to 30th.

At Iowa City on 1st May 1857 a supply of provisions was bought and the tents were more permanently arranged. The bulk of the Immigrants' luggage arrived in the evening of that day, after which everybody set busily to work preparing for the journey across the plains. John Tilby was an Agricultural Labourer in the UK so the family would have been quite poor. So, it is likely that they travelled the cheapest way to Utah and that was using a handcart.

The 'Mormon' open handcarts varied in size and made of wood and generally six or seven feet long and carried about 500 pounds (total). they could be pushed and pulled by hand.



That spring turned unseasonably hot in Iowa; some passengers had fleas to deal with and often plagued with mosquitos...Torrential rains fell. Streams and rivers were high and flowing swiftly when crossed by the Mormon companies...Mud Holes, left behind by thunderstorms, were filled with brush and branches so the wagons could travel over them. Some of the companies had to endure anti Mormon hecklers along the route. There was a code of rules for crossing the plains. Some of which were :- lost property, when found shall be brought to the captains...all dogs tied up at night, to prevent annoyance...no man leaving the camp by himself without the permission of his captain...the captains were in charge of

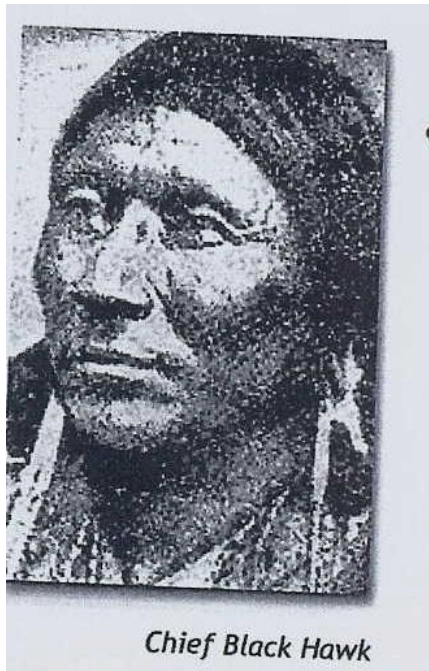
sounding a horn which signalled attendance for all for prayers, guards were placed round the camps at night from 8.30 ..members of the camp were required to be at their quarters at night by 9 p.m. When the horn was sounded in the morning it was the signal for all in the camp to arise and attend to their duties of the morning... they had to be ready to start each morning by 7.30' There were to be weekly halts for washing and baking and Sundays were set aside for rest and worship

The Wagon Train company and the Handcart company often took turns as to who was in the lead to reach The Salt Lake valley first...they both reached it the same day.

Upon arrival in The Salt Lake Valley Utah, the people, as a rule, at this time, were in poor circumstances, short of clothing and food, but happy and contented. The men then commenced to find employment. The settlers were re-baptized. This was required of emigrants at this time.

6 September 1858. Daughter Frances Margaret Tilby born at Spanish Fork Utah..... Spanish Fork is 59 miles south of Salt Lake City. As a result of the U.S. Army's arrival in the Salt Lake Valley in 1858, Spanish Fork became the temporary home of about 400 families.

21 November 1860. Son John Robert Tilby born in Moroni, Sanpete, Utah.



Chief Black Hawk

9 April 1865... 'Official commencement date of The Black Hawk War... But tensions had been mounting for years. On this date bad feeling were transformed into violence when a handful of Utes and Mormon frontiersmen met, to settle a dispute over some cattle killed and consumed by starving Indians. An irritated Mormon lost his temper and violently jerked a young chieftain from his horse. The insulted Indian delegation, which included a dynamic young Ute named Black Hawk, abruptly left, promising retaliation. The threats were not idle- for over the course of the next few days Black Hawk and other Utes killed five Mormons and escaped to the mountains with hundreds of stolen cattle. Naturally, scores of hungry warriors and their families flocked to eat 'Mormon beef' and to support Black Hawk, who was suddenly hailed as a war chief'..", encouraged, Black hawk continued... stealing more than two thousand head of stock and killing approx.. 25 more whites that year.... Cattle were the main objectives of Black Hawk's offensives but travellers, herdsman and settlers were massacred when it was convenient.... estimates indicate that there was as many as seventy whites killed during the conflict'.

(from Utah history encyclopaedia. John A. Peterson.)

In the Fall, 1867. Black Hawk made peace with the Mormons.

1868 peace treaty signed with the Indians, however, intermittent raiding and killing continued until 1872.

John Tilby died on 17th September 1895 at Chester, Sanpete Utah. aged 75

17 April 1908. John Tilby's wife Mary Ann (Underdown) Tilby dies aged 85 in Fountain Green, Sanpete, Utah.