

## James Radford Millard

1827 - 1907

*by his daughter Cecelia Millard Grover*

[This biography combines two papers Cecelia Millard Grover wrote about her father.]



James Radford Millard, 1827 - 1907.

Just six months to the day before Joseph Smith received the golden plates from the Angel Moroni, James Radford Millard was born in Biddisham Somerset shire, England, March 22, 1827, the son of John Millard and Martha Radford. His mother at the time of his birth was nearly 52 years old and James was the youngest of fourteen children.

His childhood was a very pleasant one. His mother was very kind and so glad to get this little boy so late in life. It was customary in those days for all boys to learn a trade of some kind. That is, all but the oldest son who would inherit the estate, and as he was the youngest of many sons, he worked out as an apprentice at shoe making. He had a very dear friend, a young man by the name of Ebenezer Williams who came from Wales. It was through him that James Millard first heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and later he was baptized on January 4, 1852 by Samuel Savior, then preaching the gospel in Wales. James was 25 years old at this time.

Returning to England he expected to deliver the glad message he had received to his father's family. Instead of receiving him and his truths, he was driven from home because of the religion he had adopted. He worked for more than a year after he joined the Church to get funds to pay his passage over the ocean and the rest of the way to Utah. He sailed from Liverpool, England, February 5, 1853, on the "Jersey," a sailing vessel. There were three hundred and thirteen saints on board, two hundred and twenty-five adults, and seventy-four children, and fourteen infants. All the saints were under the command of Elder George Halliday.

What a strain it must have been on this lonely young man who had left not only his family, but a sweetheart to whom he had been engaged. Never again did he meet any of his relatives. Years after he had settled in Utah, he received a letter from a man who had been friends with him in England. On the bottom of that letter were a few words written in a feminine hand. The little passage was unsigned but the instant he opened the letter he said, "That is the girl I have told you of."

Prayers were always said at night with the saints by the President, Elder Halliday, or one of his

Councilors, and all lights, except the ship's lights were out at eight p.m. to prevent fires. The most scrupulous cleanliness was thought to be necessary. They had frequent fumigations and lime was sprinkled in every place where germs of disease could get, and on warm days all on board, sick or well, had to be on the deck in the sunshine. So the general health during the entire voyage was very good. Only one death occurred on the ocean and that was the death of an old woman who was nearly dead when she got on the boat.

History tells us how the people on those old sailing ships would watch for land. For weeks not a thing to see, only water and the sky above. So when they came in sight of Cuba, then a Spanish possession, it gave no end of joy to those land-hungry eyes. The ship then sailed up the Gulf of Mexico and when they got to more shallow water, the ship had to be towed by a tug boat to get through, and it took four days to make between ninety and one hundred miles to reach New Orleans.

The saints were told to look out for thieves that would come on deck and claim they had a room below, and then take anything they could lay their hands on. Guards were placed at all the doors that let to the rooms so when the thieves came they could not get through. They, the thieves, left the ship swearing vengeance on the Mormons. At New Orleans the saints were met by Elder John Brown, the Church emigration agent, who was to forward them on up the Mississippi River. Here the saints went aboard a steamship called the "John Simmonds." The passage for adults was two dollars and twenty-five cents and children from three to fourteen, half fare.

They were met at St. Louis by Isaac C. Haight and taken on to Keokuk, Iowa, where the saints make preparations to cross the deserts and the mountains to Utah.

James Millard came in the Joseph W. Young Company. They left Iowa July 11, 1853. His profession as a shoe and harness maker was very useful to the company of pioneers, for evenings on the long journey, after the teams stopped, he would get out his kit of tools and put half soles on shoes or repair harnesses. It was always a happy occasion when he began to pound on his wooden bench. The saints would sing in time with his pounding and he led them in their loved songs. beginning with "Come, Come Ye Saints" and closing with "Arise My Soul, Arise." In years after, when I was a little girl, I remember that if ever Father had occasion to use that kit of tools, he would always sing those two songs.

After settling in Farmington, he continued his trade as a shoemaker. He would go for one or two weeks to each of the large families of the town and make boots of new leather for all the men. Then taking the tops of the old boots which had been softened by a year of wear, he would work up shoes for the children and make dancing slippers for the young ladies. Those shoes would last the entire year.

In January 1855, James Millard was married to Catherine Richards in the Endowment House. October 23, 1855, a son, John James, was born. On March 15, 1857, a daughter Alice was born. That same year Johnston's Army was on their way to Utah. Brigham Young told the people to leave their homes and go south, leaving enough men to set torches to homes, orchards, and fields and leave a scorched earth behind. As the Saints had been driven from their homes before and

their enemies had taken possession of all their belongings, they knew this was necessary. Brigham Young said, "If they come, they will find the place a desert as we found it."

James Millard took a wagon load of wheat to Salt Lake to buy cloth to make extra clothing for the family. He went to every store then in the city and could not even buy one yard of cloth of any kind. He went into the Deseret News office and there he saw a lady's dress hanging on the door. He asked to whom it belonged, and the editor said an actress had left the dress to pay for some advertising. It took forty-seven bushels of grain to get it, an extremely high price even for such clothing as an actress would have. The dress was not made of silk but a light form of broadcloth of a dark blue shade with a gold colored thread of silk running through it. That dress was in use for many years and it proved well worth the price it cost.

At the time of the migration south, Brigham Young said that all who went south would profit by the move. James Millard took his wife and two babies and went into the south of the territory to escape the threatened raid. Thirty thousand people abandoned their homes, some hatless and shoeless but willing to obey their leader. They stopped in the south all the winter of 1857 and 1858, and in July they started back to their homes. Not very long after returning, the promise of Brigham Young came true and James Millard bought a whole bolt of cloth for less than the dress cost before they went. The men from the north left their wives in the fort at Salt Lake, still fearing possible invasion by the federal troops.

The Farmington settlers had buried their grain supplies in pits in the ground before leaving for the south. They had used furniture in place of boxes to hold the grain, burying the cumbersome pieces in the ground. This way they thought it less likely that either the grain or wood would be rotted. James Millard with several of the men went back alone to carry on the work on the farms and pioneer homes. It was during this time that an incident occurred that shows that the saints, serious and sincere as they were, could enjoy a good joke at the expense of their extremely religious companions. A group of young men including James Millard and a certain Brother Trapp were walking from Farmington to Salt Lake to conference. Brother Trapp was a bachelor who considered his church in a most serious way. It happened on this trip he was wearing his pants in which there was a considerable tear. Thread in those days was sold by the skein instead of by the spool and Brother Trapp was carrying eggs in each of his coat pockets with the intention of buying thread to repair the rip. Several times on the journey the group stopped to rest, and on each of these occasions Brother Trapp would begin preaching in great seriousness. Becoming over-enthusiastic on one of these rests, he slapped his hand down on his thigh and broke one pocket of eggs. The accident so amused the rest of the group that on the very next stop they deliberately started an argument. Again forgetting himself he whacked his other thigh by way of emphasis and crushed the rest of the eggs. There were no hard feelings, however, and the crowd threw in enough pennies to buy thread to sew up the rip before they went into conference.

When Father moved his wife and children back to Farmington, and the fear of any trouble from the federal troops had ceased, he went to farming and planting orchards and in winter times making shoes for those in need. Also, their family was increasing in number as on June 26, 1861, a daughter Mary was born, and on June 16, 1862, two years later a daughter Cecelia, the writer of this sketch, was born. That was in the days of the Civil War. Of course it was then as it is today

with the whole world at war; and all we hear now, in 1943, is war news. I never remember the war talk, but when I was a little over three years of age and as I was playing in the sand pile, my father came up from town and called to our neighbor and said, "The war is over." He sounded so glad, that I stood up and looked all around to see if I could see the war clouds like were in pictures.

Then that same year on September 3, 1865, another son, William J., was born. I remember that day and how terrible I felt because I was taken to the home of a friend of my mother's and not allowed to go into the room where she was.

On August 22, 1872, Catherine Richards Millard passed away leaving a sorrowing husband and five children. James Millard was one of the kindest of fathers and would read books and tell stories and always try to make his children happy when his own heart was so sad and lonely. He would take us to Salt Lake to see the good dramas at the Salt Lake Theaters, and all the big celebrations, and on excursions to Ogden and Logan.

After the death of James Millard's wife he received a letter from his sister, Elizabeth, who said she would like to come to Utah. James wrote her and told her he would do what he could for her if she was coming for the gospel's sake, but if she was coming for the loaves and fishes she had better not come. He didn't hear from her again for some time.

He was a member of the Utah Militia, holding the rank of Captain of Infantry until a federal governor abolished the organization. James Millard was called on a mission, but he thought he couldn't go and leave his children along, so he turned his mission down. He said he became very ill and was sick for sometime and two of his cows and horses took sick and died. Things just didn't go right. He said he got down on his knees and prayed to the Lord and told Him if He would only spare his life and heal him from his bed of afflictions he would go on his mission. In May of 1879 James Millard left for his mission, laboring in the Southern States. He was there until June 1880, when he was released.

He was a member of the 40<sup>th</sup> Quorum of Seventies, and served on a mission there, Laboring in Alabama from May 1, 1879 to June 1880, when he was released on account of poor health.

This mission followed the death of his wife in 1872, and of his eldest daughter, Alice, in 1878. During all these years until the time of his death in 1907, he was not only father but kindly "mother" to his family. He was set apart as a member of the High Council of Davis Stake by Joseph F. Smith on March 8, 1884. During the early days of the building of the Salt Lake Temple, he devoted several weeks to hauling granite blocks to the site, using the first team of oxen he owned.

One evening after James had gone to bed a person from the other world – a Brother Pollard<sup>1</sup>, who had died leaving a wife and daughter – made known to James that they were in want and need, and he wanted him to help them. Brother Pollard had put some money away which his wife didn't

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<sup>1</sup>This was possibly Joseph Pollard, 1819 - 1890, likely a friend from England.

know about, and he wanted James to get it and give it to her. This worried James, and he didn't get any sleep the rest of the night. The next morning James was taking his cows to the field and had just crossed the Bamberger tracks when Brother Pollard again came to him and told him he wanted him to go get the money to give to his wife. The next day James went to Salt Lake and went to Brother Pollard's Bishop and told him what had happened and where Brother Pollard had put the money and he wasn't bothered again.

He was a firm believer and had a testimony of the truth as taught by Joseph Smith and was a true and consistent Latter-Day Saint. During the latter years of his life he did temple work, both in Logan Temple and the Salt Lake Temple after it was finished. He traced his genealogy back through several centuries and did work for his ancestry. He kept up correspondence with friends in England, who, though did not join the church, were able to assist him in getting records of his people.

Later he was ordained a Patriarch by Apostle Francis Lyman. They used to hold cottage meetings at his home when speaking in tongues and the interpretations were given. It was a thrilling experience and many prophesies were given there and other meetings have been fulfilled. He gave many patriarchal blessings. The little home he lived in is still standing, and being used by different families. When he was very old he used to go to Big Creek just below his home, winter and summer, and later a dip in the creek. Everyone feared for him during the cold, icy days but he seemed to thrive on it. He used to walk a couple of miles to take his three milk cows to the pasture. The milk was placed on the old "dummy train," which it was called at that time. It was later called Bamberger Electric Railway.

He died March 17, 1907, just five days before his eightieth birthday. His children and many of his friends, including Ebenezer Williams who came from his home in Kaysville were with him when he passed away after only one week of illness. He was tired and just went to sleep. He had been a



James Radford Millard and four of his five children. L-R, James, Cecelia, Mary, John and William. His wife died in 1872 and their daughter Alice died after childbirth in 1878.

kind father, a good neighbor and was loved by all who knew him. James Redford Millard passed away true to the faith. What more could be said of any man? His funeral services were held in the Farmington Ward Chapel, and a dear friend of his, Mr. Charles Boylin, the florist at Lagoon, sent a whole truck load of growing plants from his green house to decorate the chapel. All the windows were filled with growing plants. He was buried by the side of his wife in the Farmington cemetery, March 20, 1907.