

The History of James Radford Millard and His Wife Catherine Richards

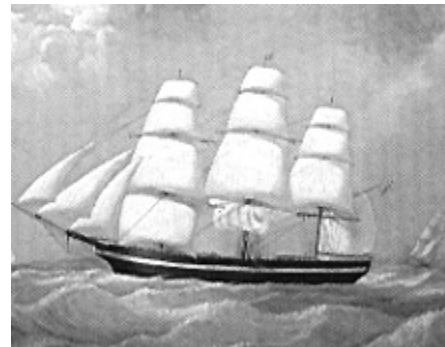
Chapter 4: William Richards with His Daughters Catherine and Cecelia Leave Wales

As James settled in Farmington, William Richards was making preparations to emigrate from Wales with his daughters. By this time his son William Howell had returned from his mission. He had married and was living in Swansea, a port city thirty miles west. Thomas and Morgan were gainfully employed and all three brothers intended to travel to Utah later, as did their cousin. William sold his home and all of its belongings except for a black walnut dining room table and chairs which his wife Alice had loved. He felt he could not part with this furniture and he determined to take it across the ocean and all the way to Utah.

In January of 1854, William and his daughters Catherine and Cecelia traveled to Liverpool with the table and a few of their earthly possessions. On the 30th they boarded the *Golconda*, a large sailing ship captained by George Kerr, and which had carried three hundred LDS converts to New Orleans the previous year. Captain Kerr waited a week for all the passengers to board and the ship to be stocked with provisions. They left the Liverpool port on February 4th. That year the *Golconda* was the first of nine ships to leave Europe and the British Isles with Mormon emigrants. Among the four hundred and sixty-four passengers on the *Golconda* were several returning elders, many of whom had served as conference and branch presidents in Wales.

Leading this company of converts was Elder Dorr Purdy Curtis who was completing a three-year mission in Great Britain. Waiting for him in Utah was a wife and young son. A daughter had died while he served his mission.

William Samuel Phillips served as a counselor to President Curtis. He had joined the LDS Church in his native Wales in 1843. At the end of his mission he was emigrating to Utah with his wife and three children. Another counselor was Thomas Squires who had recently served as a conference president. He had joined the Church in 1841 in his native England and was emigrating with his wife Mary and six children.



William Richards and his daughters Catherine and Cecelia left Wales on the *Golconda* in early 1854.

On the day of their departure, the presidency organized the Golconda Emigrating Conference and divided the conference into seven branches. The presidency met with each branch five times a week on their voyage. President Curtis wrote that during their meetings they were richly blessed of the Spirit, and all, “rejoiced exceedingly...that they lived in this day and age of the world when the God of Israel had set his hand the second time to redeem his people and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, to establish his kingdom, no more to be thrown down.”

John J. Davies, a Welsh convert emigrating with his wife and her parents, wrote that he was one of several men who organized themselves into a brass band which played for many occasions. A choir was also organized, as was a small stringed orchestra which played for dances. Brother

Davis wrote that Elder Curtis was a good president who appointed teachers to look after the saints. He said the journey was very pleasant except for one storm which lasted an entire afternoon. The waves were as big as mountains, but the ship's crew handled the situation well and that night the passengers rejoiced as the storm subsided.

Two weddings were held during the voyage, and the passengers enjoyed watching the crew share their traditions. In each case the bride was tied to a chair and then hoisted up the mast. Upon reaching the top, she waved her handkerchief to those watching below. The groom was also placed in a chair and then carried around the ship by four bachelors. Everyone seemed to enjoy these festivities, as well as other amusements during their six week journey. Only one death occurred onboard, that of an infant who died from an infection.

At the end of their voyage, President Curtis wrote, "The pleasantness of the voyage, the love and union amongst the Saints in general, the unremitting attention and kind regard paid us by our worthy captain, Captain Kerr, all combined to make our voyage across the great Atlantic what may indeed be very properly called, a pleasure trip." He added that the elders on board had taught the gospel to the ship's steward and many of the crew who then asked for baptism. Upon arriving in New Orleans, they were dismayed to see unscrupulous men attempt to get on board and rob the emigrants. Fortunately, police and church agents warned and did their best to protect the passengers and no harm was done.

President Curtis remained in New Orleans for several weeks to act as the Church immigration agent, assisting LDS immigrants as they arrived from Europe. He joined the last group and traveled up the Mississippi River with them to Missouri, where he embarked on his trek across the plains. Upon his return to Utah, he took a second wife.

Brother Davies wrote about their trip up the Mississippi River on the *John D. Simmonds*, the same vessel which had carried James Millard the previous year. "The steamboat a puffing and snorting and pushing hard against the stream, but oh, what a dirty water for us to use. We dip it up for to settle it but don't get much better. Never mind, we will do the best we can with it. I must drink it, anyhow, because I am very thirsty. And what a rackety noise, it makes me shudder. The captain a shouting and the water a splashing and the band a playing and some of us singing and some of the sisters a washing and the babes a crying. And the sailors a talking and many of them a smoking. And all of us trying to do something and the boat a tugging and snorting. When traveling up the Missouri River also the Mississippi indeed it was a great sight to us to see such a forest of timber and land. What a wonderful stream this is going in such a force taking down some very large logs. They sometimes strike the boat with tremendous blows but we got through all right."

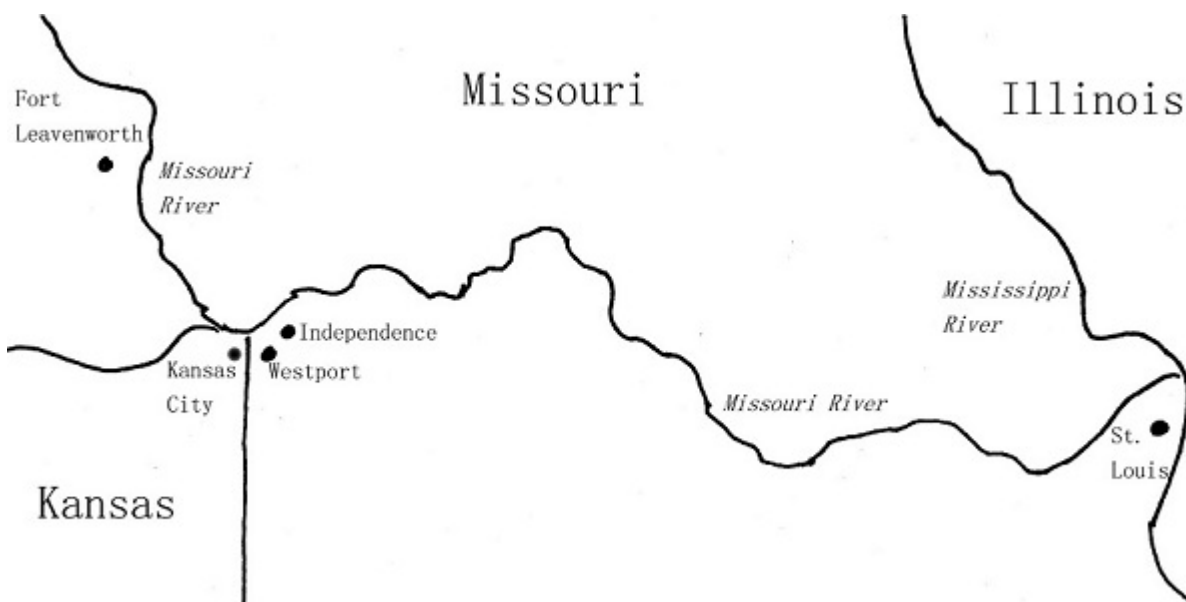
They arrived in St. Louis on April 10th where they stayed two weeks. Brother Davies was dismayed at how dirty the city was. He was also greatly saddened to see how poorly the black slaves were treated. Tragically, many of the passengers were struck with cholera en route to St. Louis and ten immigrants died, including Elder Squires' wife and two of his children. Brother Davies wrote about his own grief when he buried his in-laws. A few weeks later his wife gave birth to their first child.

After arriving in St. Louis, William Empey, the Church agent there, arranged for comfortable houses for the passengers, where they waited five weeks as other passengers arrived from Europe. Joseph and Jane Hadfield were two of these passengers and had married only a month before boarding the *Golconda*. Jane and Catherine Richards, close in age, began a friendship which lasted decades. Jane was soon expecting her first baby, and Catherine did her best to care for Jane, a pattern which continued throughout their lives.

At some point along this part of her travels, Cecelia became disenchanted with her journey. She met a British soldier and fell in love. He took her to New York where they married. William and Catherine never saw her again.¹

At the end of April, Church agents chartered a steamship and moved the passengers four hundred miles west to Kansas City, Missouri. At the Westport outfitting station in Jackson County, where the Mormons had been so severely persecuted just fifteen years earlier, William and Catherine and the other immigrants began their preparations to cross the plains.

William had enough funds to buy several oxen but couldn't obtain as many as he needed, so he bought cows to fill out the teams. It was at this point that William looked at the thousand mile journey in front of him and realized his dining room table was too big and heavy for the oxen to move across the plains. These British passengers had generally been dismayed at the poor behavior of many of the people in St. Louis and now felt the same about the Missourians who had a long history of animosity against the Mormons. It seemed to William that there were numerous people who would stoop to any behavior to fraudulently obtain goods from the immigrants. William Richards gave the chairs away, but he had no desire for his wife's beloved table to fall into the hands of men for whom he held in such low esteem. One night William and Catherine and a few of their friends, including the Hadfields, left the camp and quietly buried the table. The



In 1854, Catherine Richards and her father William traveled up the Mississippi River as far as St. Louis. Church agents moved the immigrants via steamboat 250 miles west along the Missouri River to the Westport outfitting station, ten miles from Independence in Jackson County where the Mormons were severely persecuted fifteen years earlier. From Westport, Catherine and William traveled 1000 miles west in a wagon train to Salt Lake City.

immigrants remained in Westport for three months while waiting for later emigrants to arrive. Cholera was still taking a toll, and the emigrants frequently moved their camp to find grounds which they hoped would be healthier. By 1854, Westport was along the farthest reach of the United States and was used as a shipping destination where goods were moved overland to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

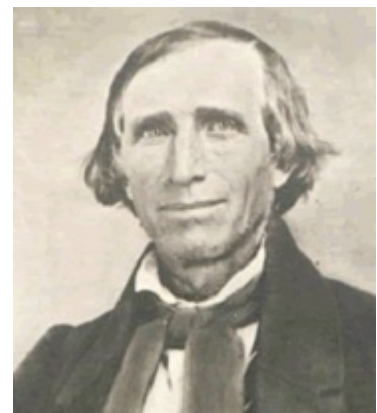
The close proximity of Westport to Kansas City and Fort Leavenworth should have made it easier to obtain oxen and wagons than pioneers in the earlier outfitting stations. However, that year many people in the eastern states chose to trek to California. As a result, the price of wagons and cattle drastically increased over previous years. The difficulty in obtaining supplies forced some of the wagon trains to leave a few weeks later than desired. About fifteen wagon trains left Westport that season with thirty-five hundred Mormons. Some were small with just a few families, but six trains had hundreds of converts. Apostles Orson Pratt and Ezra T. Benson, great-grandfather to the 20th century president of the Church by the same name, led a company, and George Halliday, who had supervised the emigrants James Millard had crossed the Atlantic in the previous year, traveled in their company.

Cholera became deadly that summer, and some trains were hit particularly hard as they left Missouri. Joseph Hadfield contracted cholera and nearly died, but he was healed through a priesthood blessing. However, over two hundred Saints died from cholera during this immigration season. In one wagon train, the men were so sick that the women rolled the bodies into blankets and buried them without coffins. As the trains left Missouri, the cholera diminished and most companies had few problems after that. Church agent William Empey led one of the last trains that summer. Also leading late-leaving trains were Dorr P. Curtis and Robert L. Campbell. Their trains left in mid-July, arriving in Salt Lake at the end of October. Ira Eldredge traveled with the Apostles Pratt and Benson. He had completed a mission where he served as the branch president over the Saints still in St. Louis.

William and Catherine Richards joined the Daniel Garn Company which left Westport in early July, barely two weeks ahead of the Empey and Campbell trains. Captain Garn had completed a mission in the British Isles earlier that year and had sailed back to the United States on the *Windermere*. This ship had left Liverpool three weeks after the *Golconda* and carried almost five hundred LDS converts.

Elder Garn was president of the ship company and presided over the marriage of four couples during his voyage. Age fifty-one, he had ten children by his first wife who had died as his family entered the Salt Lake Valley in 1846. While he had remarried, his second wife had not borne any children. A faithful and diligent convert, he would later take two plural wives and have twelve more children.

John J. Davies, who had accompanied the Richards family on the *Golconda*, was also in the Garns Company. He wrote about the difficulties the British immigrants had in learning how to handle cattle and described it as nothing less than a circus. Captain Garns taught them how to use a whip and when to say, “gee” and “haw,”



Returning elder Daniel Garn led the 1854 company in which William and Catherine Richards crossed the plains.

and Brother Davies wryly stated that after only five hundred miles they could drive an ox team as well as anyone. He wrote a poem about this:

In memory of our driving
Indeed we had a verry tuff time.
The first few days we drove our teams
The Captain he did laugh some times
At us driving yes on the Plains.

Also traveling in the Daniel Garn Company was the family of Elizabeth MacDonald. She described the British drivers who had no experience with cattle, but she also mentioned the inexperience of the oxen, who didn't know what was expected of them. "The oxen were not at all particular to keep to the road, for in the first of our experience with them, they several times ran away and upset the wagon. Daily practice, however, brought driver and cattle to better understand each other, and our wild team became so docile that they could come to us at our bidding. They would eat bread and bacon out of my hand, and they became so domesticated that I became quite attached to them." Catherine Richards was grateful for their cows because they produced milk during most of their journey. They put the cream in tight containers and hung them from the wagon. The jostling during the day was enough motion to churn the cream into butter. They also enjoyed buttermilk.

Watkin Rees, another member of the Garns company, mentioned that, "the start we made was anything but elegant." As they left Westport, some of the oxen ran, pulling their wagons and the occupants behind them. "There was an aged sister riding in one of those wagons and considerable anxiety was felt for her, but she was not hurt."

Captain Garns had divided his company into small groups of ten with each group having responsibility for a wagon. Brother Rees wrote, "This driving oxen was a new business to most of us emigrants, many of us having never seen a pair of oxen yoked together before we came to America....One lady looking at a bunch of oxen asked how they milked them cows, they [being] different to the cows she had seen milked . . . We had to learn as well as the cattle."

Brother Davies mentioned the bison on the plains, which they watched cross ahead of them by the thousands. Again, he wrote a poem:

The Great Plains.
And what a wonderful country.
Is this Great Western Prairie
Where Indians and Buffalo roam
Without fear all over the Plains?

Brother Rees wrote, "These great prairies look to us, the people from Little England, like the open sea; there is not a mountain, or a tree in sight in some places; there is plenty of grass, and the cattle are doing well. Buffalos are frequently seen in sight, and seemed to have become somewhat tamed. A small herd of about twenty buffalo passed right through our train going back from the water, and some of our hunters gave chase and managed to kill one cow."

While on the plains, William Richards saw his first prairie dog. He was able to catch it and pet it, but before he put it down, it sprayed him with a horrible smell. It was not a prairie dog at all, but a young skunk! Fortunately, because the weather was warm, William was not wearing his best English broadcloth suit coat and vest, but his trousers were filled with the scent. Sister Hadfield suggested they tie the slacks in a bundle and hang them underneath the wagon. They all agreed that as the wagon made the numerous crossings across the Platte River, the scent would wash away. However, that was not to be. The trousers never lost the odor and were unusable.²

Brother Davies described a terrible incident with another wagon train traveling ahead of them as they passed Fort Laramie, as did Apostle Ezra T. Benson in a letter to Brigham Young. This train was comprised of over five hundred Danish converts. One of their cows strayed into a large Sioux camp with thousands of natives. They were “merry-making,” and upon seeing the cow, butchered it and enjoyed the resulting feast. The Danes asked for compensation. U.S. troops stationed at the fort intervened. The natives ultimately offered payment for the cow, but this was not a satisfactory response to the general. The army opened fire with a cannon, killing the chief and his brother. The natives shot at the army, killing thirty soldiers.

Fear spread throughout the entire area, the fort’s gates were locked and even seasoned traders fled. The Mormon pioneers were extremely concerned that an uprising would jeopardize their safe arrival in Salt Lake City. The Garn company reached Fort Laramie the day after the incident. Sister MacDonald wrote, “We saw signs of the fatal contest; it had been so recent that some of the fires of the camp were still burning.”

Brother Rees wrote, “We passed that way the following day. The Indians were all gone [and] the ground they camped on, an extensive grassy flat, was smoothly tramped as if many people had camped there.” Brother Rees happened upon two English-made pistols which he found in the brush, which he found nothing short of amazing. He kept one gun and gave the other to William Carter, a returning elder. However, war did not break out, and although afraid, the remaining wagon trains passed Fort Laramie without incident.

Because of the late start, there was concern in Salt Lake that some of the trains would still be on the plains when snow fell, but letters from the company captains continued to arrive apprising President Young of the situation, and while help from Salt Lake to get the trains into the Great Basin before was anticipated, it was not needed.

Brother Davies’ testimony was strengthened as he crossed the plains and he felt that their company was divinely protected, especially as they passed Fort Laramie.

Many years later he expressed the sentiments he felt at this time:

The Glorious Plan

And when I think of the glorious plan
God has reveled unto fallen man
It gives me joy within my mind
To think that God has been so kind,

For the Gospel plan will save the world
If they will obey the laws of God
And also them that's now in prison
For they must hear the laws of heaven
Our Savior went there to unlock the door
Also did preach to them that was there.
Joseph and Brigham and Heber as well
They have gone there, the glad tidings to tell.
And our ancestors and friends are there
Looking to us their way to prepare.
Then let us go and work for the dead.
This we can do in the temples of God.
And this will be, yes, a glorious time
When friend and relations will meet again,
And when they do meet how happy they be
In peace and love through all Eternity.

William McMaster, traveling in the Garn company with his family, wrote brief notes along the way about his experiences. Their company had quite a few interactions with the trains along the plains, and often men from their company would assist the other companies. Occasionally natives would travel with the camp for a day or two. One time a Sioux with a knife in his hand approached William and grabbed him by the wrist, demanding to know what was in his pockets. William carefully pulled out a toothbrush and gave it to the native, who then let William go.

Joseph Hadfield had a few encounters with the natives. In one incident, some oxen had strayed in the night, leaving a sick girl in a wagon which couldn't be moved. As the camp moved on, Joseph offered to stay with her while others looked for the oxen. Natives approached, but Joseph put two fingers in his mouth and elicited a piercing whistle. Men from the train heard him and returned in time to see no harm was done. As the natives departed, one threw a short-handled iron fork at Joseph, who dodged before the fork hit the wagon. Joseph pried the fork loose and kept it with him, later using it in Utah to dig potatoes.

Brother McMaster noted that there were two births during their journey, both to women whose husbands had died after leaving England. Only one of the babies did survive. Seven other deaths occurred on the plains, including his infant son. Jane Hadfield struggled with the thousand-mile journey during her pregnancy. Captain Garn felt it important to protect the strength of the cattle and he discouraged anyone from riding in the wagons, but one day Jane was too weak to walk. Captain Garn and Joseph Hadfield exchanged a few words, but Captain Garn backed down and let Jane ride that day.

Brother Rees recorded that by the time they reached Fort Bridger, about one hundred and twenty miles from Salt Lake City, their flour supplies were very low. Captain Garn inventoried the entire camp, and those with flour gave it all to him. He reapportioned that flour and then was able to buy sufficient flour at the fort. At this point, several family members from Salt Lake City reached the train and took their relatives, moving them along quickly to the valley.

Brother Davies wrote about the landmarks they passed, but nothing compared to the joy his company felt as they reached the top of the mountains and looked down into the Salt Lake Valley. Again, he expressed his feelings in poetry:

In Memory of the Journey

And when we left our native land
To go to the promised land
We felt so bad to leave behind
The dearest friends that were so kind.
I know that we were glad to see
The waters of the inland sea
And the great city of the west
Where the pilgrims shall have a rest.

The Garn company reached Salt Lake City on the first of October. They wove their way through Emigration Canyon down into the valley and camped that night in Emigration Square where the City and County Building now stands. Brother Davies concluded his journal by writing, “I can say that the Lord did bless us on our great journey.”

Sister MacDonald wrote, “On the 30th of September we arrived in sight of Salt Lake City. What a pleasing sight. This was indeed a haven of rest after a tiresome journey.” While camped in the public square many friends already in the valley visited the new arrivals, who learned they had arrived in time to attend the 1854 October General Conference.

William and Catherine Richards settled in Farmington where William was able to buy a small adobe house on the east side of town.³ The Hadfields did not move to Farmington immediately. They remained in Salt Lake where at the end of October Jane gave birth to a son. The family later quipped that this baby was so tiny that they could have put him in a quart dish and the lid would still fit tightly. Within a few weeks the Hadfields also settled in Farmington, finding a home to rent in the center of town. Their nearest neighbor was James Millard, who lived across the street.⁴

Endnotes for Chapter 4:

1. In writing her mother’s biography, Cecelia Millard Grover inserted this sentence in context with the Utah War, “My mother’s sister, Cecelia Richards, had married an officer in the English Army and went to New York to live where they raised a large family. My mother never met her again.” However, while Cecelia Millard was listed on the *Golconda*’s manifest, she was not shown in the list of pioneers with Daniel Garn’s company. It is easier to believe she met a British officer in New Orleans or St. Louis than in Salt Lake City, so that is what I have assumed. I was unable to learn any more about her. In 1875 Catherine’s daughter Alice performed the proxy baptism for her aunt Cecelia in the Endowment House. She recorded in her records “Nov 1860” as her death.

2. Jane Hadfield told this story to Cecelia Millard Grover as Cecelia was writing a biography of her mother.

3. Cecelia Millard Grover wrote that her grandfather bought an adobe home on the east side of town. In *My Farmington*, page 32, Margaret Steed Hess wrote that Joseph Walker lived in a home near Thomas Grover built by William Richards, the grandfather of William Millard. Whether these homes were one and the same is unknown

today.

4. Margaret Steed Hess wrote, "Across the street [from Joseph Hadfield] on the east side of 2nd West north of State was the home of James R. Millard, the Patriarch."