

Trek Vignettes

Schedule:

- Thursday: Trek Morningside in Chapel (Iowa City, Iowa)
Morningside at Trek Departure site (Florence, Nebraska)
Traveling Elders (At Crossroads after lunch)
Kindness/Sacrifice/Food Rations (Just before dinner)
- Friday: Women's Pull
Rocky Ridge pull/ Rootbeer Traders
Prayer Vignette/ Activity (Just before dinner)
- Saturday: Grave Vignette (Just out of camp and before officially starting for the day)
Fireside/ Solo Experience/ Testimony meetings
Welcome to the Valley

Trek Morningside in the Chapel

Captain Willie: The first Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ has issued the following General epistles—"To all Saints in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and the adjacent islands and countries, we say emigrate as speedily as possible to this vicinity . . . "(December 29, 1955).

Even so, "let all things be done in order, and let all the Saints who can, gather up for Zion and come while the way is open before them; let the poor also come, whether they receive aid or not from the [Perpetual Education] Fund, let them come on foot, with handcarts or wheelbarrows; let them gird up their loins and walk through, and nothing shall hinder or stay them . . ." (Oct 29, 1855).

As you may know, my name is Captain James Willie. I'd like to introduce you to 15 people who will represent members of a few of the 500 people who will be traveling with our Handcart company:

1. My name is Ole Madsen, and I am 41 years old and am a farmer and laborer from Denmark. While in Denmark, we often held meetings for our branch in our home. Once while studying with the missionaries a mob formed outside our home and started throwing rotten eggs at the windows. Unfortunately, we could not let our children go to school because of the persecution. I am traveling with my wife, Anna and four of our children, ages 5-15. Our oldest daughter, Karen, traveled with us to Copenhagen,

but she had a dream that her aunt had died, so she turned back. Sure enough, my wife's sister had died, so our daughter stayed in Denmark to help with the burial and to help the children. We can only pray that someday we will all be together again.

2. My name is Elizabeth Bailey (age 52). My husband James and I are coming from Worcestershire, England and are traveling with our 17 year old daughter, Mary Elizabeth, her friend Sarah Steed, and Jacob and Ellen Jones, ages 13 and 6. Sarah's uncle, Thomas was a friend of mine in England and sent money for her passage.

3. My name is Nils Anderson, and I am 41 years old. I was a farmer in my native land of Denmark, but I left behind my home and extended family in Copenhagen when I joined the church. I will be traveling with my wife, Metta, my 14-year old step-daughter, Anna, and my 8 year old son, Anders.

4. My name is Anne Olsen, and I'm also coming from Denmark with the Danish saints. In fact, I come from the same branch of the Church in Denmark as Brother and Sister Anderson. As we were approaching the New York harbor, Elder Ahmanson spoke to the Saints. "He prayed that everyone [would] show benevolence and helpfulness to each other and be orderly in all their undertakings. An appeal was given to the brothers who had temporal means to help the brothers and sisters who did not." I stepped forward and gave what I could to help the other Saints. I am 46 years old and am a widow, so I am the only one left to care for my 12-yr old son, Lorenzo. I pray that we will make it to Zion together in safety.

5. My name is Samuel Gadd and I am 10 years old and from Cambridgeshire, England. I am the fifth of eight children and am named after my father, who is also Samuel. My brother Alfred is 18 and is the oldest and I have twin brothers who are just one year old, so they'll probably need lots of help on the trail. My mom always likes to say that of all her eight children, I am the most anxious to get to Zion—I can't wait!

6. My name is James Gibb, and I'm a sailor who is 67 years old. My wife, Mary, and I were some of the first converts to the Church from our native land of Scotland. We left our grown up children in Scotland and went ahead to prepare a place for them in the Valley.

7. My name is Chesterton Gillman, and I am 66 years old. I was a coal miner and a sailor in my native land of England. My wife Mary Ann and I are the parents of eleven children. Our son James was called as the President of the Greenwich branch of the church in England. Less than a year later my dear wife passed away. I did not want to wait for my son to be released from his calling, but decided to come to the Salt Lake Valley on my own, even though my children wanted me to wait for them. My greatest desire is to join with the body of the Saints and do the temple work for my beloved wife.

8. I am William James, (age 46,) and am a farm laborer from Worcestershire, England. My wife, Jane, and I joined the church two years ago and have eight children. At least, we did have eight children—our precious baby Jane died near the end of our six week journey across the ocean. It nearly broke my wife's heart. She begged the captain to let her keep the baby so she could have a proper burial on land, but he felt it wasn't wise, so we had to bury her at sea. She was just 8 months old.

9. I am James Kirkwood and I am 11 years old. You might recognize my name since my family are well-known fabric designers in Glasgow, Scotland. My mum was disowned from her family when she joined the church, but our home was always opened to the missionaries. I got baptized just 6 days before we got on the ship to come to America. My father and two sisters died four years ago, but my mother was determined to take me and my 3 brothers to Zion so we can all be sealed together. My older brother Thomas had a carriage run over his foot when he was 6 years old, so he's always had ulcers in his legs and cannot walk. My mom and oldest brother will pull him in the handcart, and it will be my job to watch over my four year old brother, Joseph Smith Kirkwood.

10. My name is Bodil Malene Mortensen, but my parents combined my first and middle name and call me Balena. I am almost 10 years old and am the fourth of five children. My father is a weaver and a well-digger, but did not have enough money for the whole family to travel to Zion together, so first they sent my older sister, Anne Margaret. Now it is my turn, and though I'm excited to see Margaret, I'm sad to leave my parents and siblings behind in Denmark. I can't wait until we're all together in Zion next year. On the ship we saw many huge icebergs and a wrecked ship floating in the water. I even saw dozens of sea horses, or I guess you call them dolphins. The sailors caught one boy from England who stowed away. They usually punish stowaways by making them wear a wooden jacket or barrel, but this boy was a member of the church so the captain collected 2 pounds to pay for his passage. The Danish Saints gave three dollars to help pay for his ticket. I am traveling with the Nielsen family,

and it will be my job to take care of their little son, Niels, who is five years old. Here he is now—

11. (Niels Nielson) Actually, I'm almost *six* years old. I can't wait for my birthday on October 29th—maybe we'll already be in Zion! I'm a little sad that we sold our farm in Denmark, but Dad says the money we got will help lots of families go to Zion, not just ours. We were on the boat for **forever**. I was really sad when my friend Thomas Pedersen, who was almost my same age, fell down from the top deck to the bottom deck. I wanted him to get better but he died four days later. They wrapped him in an American flag before they buried him at sea. We even had a fire in between the two decks, but we all prayed and prayed. We were really glad that they were able to put the fire out.
12. My name is Lollie Neilson and I'm also from Denmark, though I'm not related to little Niels. I am now 21 but will also have my birthday on the trail—probably in Iowa City while we're getting the handcarts ready. I left my home in Denmark with my dear grandparents, but I unfortunately lost them in the first part of the journey before we even made it to Liverpool. I am traveling with the Wicklund family so I can help with their four young children. Sister Wicklund will certainly need my help when she delivers her baby, which should come sometime in October. I hope I will be a help and a comfort to her and her young family.
13. I am Lars Wandelin, and I am 60 years old and from Sweden. I was a watchmaker who joined the Church in Denmark. I don't have many worldly possessions and couldn't carry them in a handcart if I did, but I do have a treasured silver watch. I've asked the Saints to be sure that if something happens to me along the way, they should not bury my watch with me. I want it to be turned over to the Perpetual Emigration Fund to be used to assist others in coming to the Valley.
14. My name is Thomas Girdlestone and I am 62 years old. I am from Norfolk, England, where I was the overseer of a large farm. My wife, Mary, and I have eleven children, but we're only traveling to Zion with our daughter, Emma, who is 21 years old.
15. My name is William Groves. I am 22 years old and am a laborer from England. My parents did not have enough money to travel to Zion together, so my family sent me ahead. Though I'll be traveling by myself, I'm hoping to prepare a place for my family in Zion and await their arrival next year.

William James: You may ask yourselves what was it that gave us the strength and courage, against all odds, to remain faithful. We had never met the Prophet Joseph. The good news of the restoration reached most of us in far-away lands, long after the martyrdom, carried to us by those who knew and loved him.

Yet we knew he had been called of God and was truly His Prophet. We knew that this is the Church of Jesus Christ. We knew the Savior in our hearts and souls and we knew where to turn for peace and comfort. He will dry every tear, He will heal every wound.

We go to Zion to be obedient to the commandments of the true and living God, and with the assurance of an eternal reward—an exaltation to eternal life in His kingdom. We pray that our posterity will stand firm and faithful to the truth, and be willing to suffer, and sacrifice all things they may be required to pass thru for the Kingdom of God's sake. We pray that we may go with 'Faith in Every Footstep.'

All youth will sing "Faith in Every Footstep."

Morningside at Trek Site

Florence, Nebraska

Captain Willie: Brothers and Sisters, We've gathered you together to discuss whether we should continue our journey of over 1,000 miles to the Valley or stop here in Florence, Nebraska for the winter. We have been asked by a prophet of God to gather to Zion. We know that it will not be easy.

There are certainly challenges ahead, but Brothers and Sisters, I exhort you to go forward regardless of suffering, even to death. There are some who may not share my determination to follow the counsel of our prophet, but want to wait here until spring. Levi Savage, will you speak?

Levi Savage: If I speak I must speak my mind, let it cut where it will.

Captain Willie: You may certainly do so.

Levi Savage: As we ascertain who wishes to go on this fall and who wishes to remain here I must speak my mind. Many are going to stop. Others are faltering and I myself am not in favor of, but much opposed to, taking women and children through when they are destitute of clothing, when we all know that we are bound to be caught in the snow and severe cold weather long before we reach the valley.

If we proceed, there are many hardships that we should have to endure. We are liable to have to wade in snow up to our knees and shovel at night, lay ourselves in a thin blanket and lie on the frozen ground without a bed. It is not like having a wagon that we could go into and wrap ourselves in as much as we like and lay down. No-- we are without wagons, destitute of clothing and could not carry it if we had it. We must go as we are.

The handcart system I do not condemn. I think it preferable to unbroken oxen and experienced teamsters. The lateness of the season is my only objection to leaving this point for the mountains at this time.

Captain Willie: The God that I serve is a God that is able to save to the uttermost. That is the God that I serve, and I want no Job's comforters with us.

Levi Savage: What I've said is the truth. Elder Willey, if you do not want me to act in the place where I am, you are at full liberty to place another man in my stead. I would not think hard of you for it, But, I do not care what you said about Job's comforters. I have spoken nothing but the truth and you and others know that.

Captain Willie: We'll now hear from another of our sub-captains, Millen Atwood.

Elder Atwood: I must confess that two nights ago, Brother Savage and I discussed this matter. Since I have been a member of this Church and with all my experience, I have never been placed in a position where things seem so dark to me as it does to undertake to take this company through at this late season of the year.

Nevertheless, I have listened today to what has been said. I exhort you to pray to God and get a revelation and know for yourselves whether you should go or stay, for it is your privilege to know for yourselves.

Captain Willie: Those in favor of proceeding on our journey, raise your hands. Brother Savage, will you stay behind?

Levi Savage: "Brethren and sisters, what I have said I know to be true, but seeing you are to go forward, I will go with you, will help you all I can, will work with you, will rest with you, will suffer with you, and if necessary I will die with you. May God have mercy bless and preserve us."

Captain Willie: Those of you who are willing to go—let's move out!

Traveling Elders

President Moore will represent Elder Parley P. Pratt and London Tasker will share experiences from his recent mission to Peru.

Sacrifice/Kindness/ Food Rations

After the vignette, each Trek Family will be given Ziploc bags containing 4 ounces of flour. Plastic spoons and water will be available for the youth to make a flour/water gruel or 'skilly.'

Patience Loader: My name is Patience Loader, and I was 29 years old when I crossed the plains with the Martin Handcart company. My father got sick and died fairly early on our journey, leaving my mother, four younger sisters and younger brother to finish the trek alone.

As the weather became colder and provisions became scarce, our rations were reduced to 4 ounces of flour per day, and even less for the children. Instead of mixing the flour with water

for gruel like most people did, my mom made these scant rations into little biscuits to eat throughout the day. That way the younger children could have a bite or two to eat when they were tired and faint.

One day we came across a man lying by the roadside. We asked him if he could get up and he said he could not, but if he had a mouth full of bread he could. My younger brother Robert, who was 10 years old, watched as our mother gave the man some food, which strengthened him enough that he got up and went on. In Salt Lake some time later, this man stopped my mother and thanked her for saving his life."

I later wrote in my journal that "We did not get but very little meat as the bone had been picked the night before and we did not have only the half of a small biscuit as we only was having four oz. of flour a day. This we divided into portions so we could have a small piece three times a day. This we ate with thankful hearts and we always as[k] God to bless to our use and that it would strengthen our bodies day by day so that we could perform our duties. And I can testify that our heavenly Father heard and answered our prayers and we was blessed with health and strength day by day to endure the severe trials we had to pass through on that terrible journey before we got to Salt Lake City. We know that if God had not been with us that our strength would have failed us . . . I can say we put our trust in God and he heard and answered our prayers and brought us through to the valleys."

Women's Pull Devotional

Nathan Hunting: My name is Nathan Hunting. I was 18 years old when I joined the rescue party to help the stranded Saints. I was assigned to help under the leadership of Elder Cyrus Wheelock, who had just finished serving a three year mission to England. He traveled with the other missionaries on ahead of the Handcart companies to let Brigham Young know of their trouble. Then he turned right around and joined the first rescue team to leave the Salt Lake Valley. After reaching the Willie Company as one of four express riders, Brother Wheelock continued on to help the Martin Company.

One night, Brother Wheelock woke me up at 2:00 in the morning and told me he'd had a dream where he'd been shown exactly where one of the stranded handcart companies was. We were having a terrible blizzard, and though my hands were 'numb with cold, I managed to hitch up the wagon and we started' out to find them.

We found them in terrible shape and struggled back to the Valley. On the way we hit another severe storm. "Brother Wheelock knew [we] could not make it with the sick and weary, so he stopped and prayed, asking for help and that the course of the storm be changed. No sooner were [we] started again than the wind blew from [our] backs, cutting a path for [us], and [we] went easily on into Salt Lake."

After listening to Brother Wheelock's prayer, I "never doubted the power of revelations nor the restoration after that night, [even though I had] no testimony before that time." Brother Wheelock wrote the words to this hymn while on the first of three missions to England:

We will sing the first verse of "Ye Elders of Israel" and would like to ask you to join us on verses two and three. The lyrics are on the last page of the hymn section in your journals on page 19.

1. Ye elders of Israel, come join now with me
And seek out the righteous, where'er they may be--
In desert, on mountain, on land, or on sea--
And bring them to Zion, the pure and the free.

(Chorus)

O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell;
We're going to the mountains of Ephraim to dwell.

2. The harvest is great, and the lab'ers are few;
But if we're united, we all things can do.
We'll gather the wheat from the midst of the tares
And bring them from bond-age, from sorrows and snares.

3. We'll go to the poor, like our Captain of old,
And visit the weary, the hungry, and cold;
We'll cheer up their hearts with the news that he bore
And point them to Zion and life evermore.

(Chorus)

O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell;
We're going to the mountains of Ephraim to dwell.

Captain Willie: There were many 'elders of Israel' like Cyrus Wheelock who reached out to "visit the weary, the hungry, and cold." There were also many courageous women who carried on in the face of great trial without men, in situations where they were unmarried or when their husbands or fathers became sick or died.

Though there are hundreds of examples of faithful women who drew strength from the Lord and did incredible things, we'd like to introduce you to two sisters, Emily and Julia Hill, who were members of the Willie Handcart company.

Emily: My name is Emily Hill Woodmansee. I am the youngest of 11 children born of "honorable, hard-working" parents in England. I was introduced to the Church when I was 12, and though I desperately wanted to join, my parents did not let me until I was 16.

Julia: I am Emily's older sister, Julia. One day "one of the elders brought Brother John Halliday to our house. [He] bore such a powerful testimony to the divine mission of Joseph

Smith” that I said, “If ever there was a man of God I’m sure he is one, and I’ll be a Latter-day Saint, too!”

Emily: “From that time on I had a friend in the family, and we were both determined that cost what it might we would be true to the light within us.” “Brother Halliday blessed me and confirmed upon me the promise that I should write in prose and in verse and thereby comfort the hearts of thousands.

Julia: I was baptized with my sister at the age of 19. Emily and I wanted to go to Utah to be with the Saints but our parents were opposed. I went to work in a distant city as an apprentice to a milliner making hats, and Emily convinced our parents to let her come visit me. Emily and I ran away to Zion on the ship *Thornton*. I was 23 and Emily was 20 when we became a part of the Willie Handcart Company. Emily and I volunteered to help a new widow and her five small children along the journey.

Emily: During the journey I remember asking myself footsore and weary with the first week of walking and working if it was possible for me, faith or no faith, to walk twelve hundred miles further. I [was determined] to try, and by the blessing of God I pulled a handcart a thousand miles and never rode one step.”

Julia: While traveling we received “Anonymous letters and warnings from outsiders . . . telling us how hard and impossible the journey would be and offering us reasons to stay. . . . Once we reached Fort Laramie, the soldiers there also tried to persuade us to stay, but we were determined to press forward to Zion.’

The “long and wearisome journey” was especially difficult for me, and at one point Emily and our friends had to carry me in the handcart. In October raging winter storms caught our Company on one of the most exposed portions of the trail. We were “entirely out of provisions [and didn’t have the] strength to proceed.” As we climbed Rocky Ridge in a howling blizzard, I was unable to go further and collapsed in the snow on the verge of freezing to death. Emily picked me up and encouraged me to go on. Thirteen of our brothers and sisters died that night. I would have been among them without the love and help of my sister.

Emily: “Never should I have beheld (with mortal eyes) ‘the city of the Saints’ had not the compassionate people of Utah sent out a number of brave-hearted brethren with food and clothing to our relief. May they be everlastingly blessed.”

Three men came ahead of the rescue wagons to tell the Saints that help was on the way. One of these rescuers was Joseph A. Young, who we had known in England as a missionary. He burst into tears when he saw me, so I asked, “Why do you cry Brother Young?”

He responded, “Oh, because you look so starved and the provision wagons are miles away.” With that he reached into his pocket and gave me a small onion, saying “Eat this.”

Julia: Emily did not eat the onion but held onto it. That night she saw a man near the fire who appeared to be dying. Emily gave the onion to him, and it saved his life.

Once we got to the Valley and recovered our strength, the blessing that had been given to Emily years earlier was fulfilled. She did indeed ‘write in prose and verse and thereby comfort the hearts of thousands.’ She wrote many poems and songs, including the lyrics to this beloved hymn, ‘As Sisters in Zion:’ We would like to sing the first verse for you, then have you join in singing the second verses. The lyrics are on page one of your journals. Those words in parenthesis show Emily’s original words but should not be sung.

1. As sisters in Zion, we'll all work together;
The blessings of God on our labors we'll seek.
We'll build up his kingdom with earnest endeavor;
We'll comfort the weary and strengthen the weak.
2. The errand of angels is given to women;
And this is a gift that, as sisters, we claim:
To do whatsoever is gentle and human,
To cheer and to bless in humanity's name.

Captain Willie: Today the women will have the experience of pulling handcarts without the men. During this pull we would ask that the men walk with the women but do not help pull the carts. We would like to have the entire company remain silent and that you each open your hearts to the messages the Spirit will teach you as the women pull the handcarts over this section of the trail.

Rocky Ridge/ Traders

Levi Savage: You all know me as Levi Savage, and I served as a sub-captain in the Willie Handcart Company. I know that today is a hot summer day, but when the original Willie Company reached a section of the trail that looked like this, the conditions were very different.

When we reached the high plains of Wyoming temperatures dropped suddenly and our clothing and tents proved inadequate for the freezing weather. Provisions ran short and there was no way to replenish them. Heavy snowstorms began and sleet and ice pounded upon us. The snowfall finally brought us to a freezing halt. By October 20, 1856, we were camped not far from the base of Rocky Ridge. The cold was intense. Frostbite could be seen as small black spots on exposed parts of our bodies.

What lay ahead for us was the treacherous ascent of Rocky Ridge to the summit, and then the trek on to the camp at Rock Creek Hollow. The distance was about 12 miles, including a two-mile stretch in which the trail rose more than 700 feet in elevation. The snow was already more than a foot deep, a blizzard was raging, temperatures were far below zero, ice and sleet cut through our threadbare clothing and pierced our skin. We were weak, sick and dying. Those who had shoes and boots had bottoms that were full of holes and sides that were broken and torn. Many in the Company had their feet wrapped in rags. Flour had been reduced to 4 ounces per adult, per day.

The morning of October 23rd dawned as usual. We buried our dead, got up our teams and about nine o'clock a.m. commenced ascending the Rocky Ridge. This was a severe day. The wind blew hard and cold. We became weary, set down to rest, and some became chilled and commenced to freeze. We had to keep moving. It took 27 hours to get to our camp as we struggled through the snow, making an average of less than one-half mile per hour. While adults wrestled the handcarts up the steep trail, children fought their way through the snow, wind and freezing temperatures by themselves. Exhausted and weak, we finally reached the camp.

I stayed back to help those at the rear of the Company, where two groups were bringing up the rear. Just before daylight we entered camp, bringing all with us, some badly frozen, some dying and some dead. It was completely heart-rending to hear children crying for mothers and mothers crying for children. By the time I arrived in camp, but few tents were pitched. Men, women, and children sat shivering with cold around their small fires. When I finished helping them get as comfortably situated as circumstances would admit (which was not very comfortable), day was dawning. I had not shut my eyes for sleep, nor lain down. I was nearly exhausted with fatigue and want of rest.

Instructions can then be given for how to climb the section of the trail, and could go something like this:

It shouldn't take you all night to climb this section, but it is pretty steep so you're welcome to take as much time as you need. The ropes are in place only as a last resort to prevent the handcart from slipping backwards down the hill—not to help pull the handcart up. It will take

your united effort and teamwork . You might also want to pray together as a family for strength and safety.

At the top of the hill there will be ‘traders’ offering the youth cold rootbeer (possibly in exchange for knowledge—or having completed the Trek Trivia or some portion of their Guided Study Journals.)

Prayer Vignette/ Knotted bracelet activity

Betsy Smith: My name is Betsy Smith, and I was 13 years old with my mother, three sisters, and younger brother when I crossed the plains with the Willie Company.

“I will not dwell upon the hardships we endured, nor the hunger and cold, but I like to tell of the goodness of God unto us. One day, especially, stands out from among the remainder. The winds blew fresh, as if its breezes came from the sea. It kept blowing harder until it became fierce. Clouds arose; the thunder and lightning were appalling. Even the ox teams ahead refused to face the storm. Our captain, who always rode on a mule, dismounted and stepped into the middle of the road, bared his head to the storm, and every man, as he came up, stood by him with bared head—one hundred carts, their pullers and pushers, looking to their captain for counsel. The captain said, “Let us pray.” And there was offered such a prayer. He told the Lord our circumstances. He talked to God, as one man talks to another, and as if the Lord was very near. I felt that He was and many others felt the same. The storm parted to the right and to the left. . .

Another circumstance I remember clearly. My mother was taken very sick with cramp and cholera, a very fatal trouble in our weakened condition. We all felt bad about Mother. I remember thinking, “Many are dying. Mother may die, and what a dark world it would be without our dear mother.” As I gathered the sage to burn on our campfire, I couldn’t keep from crying. When I met Mother, she asked me what was the matter. I told her how badly I felt. She said, “Do not feel like that. Pray for me. I have been out yonder in the snow praying to the Lord to spare our lives, that we might get through to the Valley. I will never murmur or complain, whatever we pass through, when we get there.”

God heard our prayers and she kept her word. Even when, in years following, she went blind with age, she never murmured” (Allphin, 127).

Activity: The Ma’s and Pa’s should pass out lengths of leather cord (about 18 inches) and ask the youth if they can tie them in a knot if they don’t let go of the yarn. When they see that they cannot, they should suggest that the youth first fold their arms and then try again to

hold each end of the yarn. When they unfold their arms they should be able to easily tie the knot without letting go of the yarn. The Ma's and Pa's can then testify of the power of prayer, and remind the youth how important it is to exercise faith and to always start with prayer. They can help the youth make simple bracelets from the cords with two knots.

These knots can remind the youth of the Lord's counsel to Joseph Smith in D & C 6:36:

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt **not**, fear **not**.”

Grave Vignette

There will be 15 crosses as grave markers, with 13 clustered together and 2 a short distance away. We will show black and white photos of the people who portrayed each of the 15 people the youth were introduced to at the Morningside in the Chapel. Pictures will be enlarged as 8 X 10's, printed in sepia, and mounted on black foam board. The description of each person will be mounted on the back. Captain Willie will show the picture while talking about the person, then allow the picture to be circulated among the group. The pictures will afterwards be propped against the grave markers for the youth to view as they walk past. There can also be small bunches of wildflowers, small national flags, and simple symbols like a homemade doll for Bodil, a dolphin for Jens, and a pocket watch for Lars.

As the youth are gathering, Brother Sorensen will play “Taps” on the harmonica.

Captain Willie: The morning after the Willie Handcart Company climbed Rocky Ridge, they dug a mass grave for the thirteen people who had died the previous day and during the night. Two more men who helped dig their graves perished that same afternoon. We would like to pay tribute to each of these 15 faithful brothers and sisters. They were:

1. Ole Madsen had suffered great persecution for his membership in the church while in Denmark. Though he'd never hunted in Denmark, Ole shot a large buffalo in September. An Englishman also shot a buffalo, and it was enough to give each person about 2 pounds of meat. On the day he died, Ole carried his family, one by one, across a stream. He had not had anything to eat, having shared his rations with his family. Ole was buried with his boots on since they were too frozen to his legs to remove them. His death left his wife, Anna, to care for their four children ages 5-15, as well as her aged father-in-law, who were all sick. Anna's prayers and her singing of the hymns of the restoration helped encourage the family to press forward for the rest of the journey.
2. Elizabeth Bailey died here at Rock Creek and was buried in the common grave. Her husband John was so severely frost-bitten that his 17-year old daughter Mary Elizabeth had to carry him in the wheelbarrow. John died when he arrived in the Salt Lake Valley.
3. Brother Nils Anderson, a Danish farmer traveling with his wife and two children. Brother

Anderson often carried his weakened 14-year-old daughter, Anna, in his handcart.

4. Anne Olsen, age 46, was a widow caring for her 12-year old son. Sister Olsen generously shared her financial means with other Danish saints when they first arrived in New York and again when they were at the end of the railroad in Iowa. She was from the same branch of the Church in Denmark as Nils Anderson who also died at Rock Creek. After her death, Sister Olsen's son Lorenzo was taken in by others and arrived safely in the Valley.

5. 10-year old Samuel Gadd left England with his seven brothers and sisters, including twins who were just over a year old. One of the twins named Daniel died on October 4th, just a few days after the company left Ft. Laramie, Wyoming. Samuel's father, Samuel Sr., caught a cold while on guard duty in Iowa City, and died of pneumonia just five days later. This left Eliza to struggle on with her children as a widow. During the blizzard Eliza became snow-blind and had to be led by her 7-year old daughter, who only had rags to cover her feet. Though Eliza described her 10-year old son, Samuel, as being 'the most anxious to reach Zion,' he died at Rock Creek, thus joining his father and baby brother.

6. James Gibb , was a sailor and was one of the first converts to the Church from Scotland. Brother Gibb was buried at Rock Creek on his wife's 53rd birthday. She was sealed to him in the Endowment House six months later on March 6, 1857.

7. Chesterton Gillman was a coal miner and a sailor from England. His wife had died two years earlier in 1854, and he had come to Zion alone against the wishes of his eleven children. Brother Gillman was assigned to travel in a tent of 20 people, one of whom was Elizabeth Panting. She went to gather buffalo chips one day and met a man who seemed to appear out of nowhere, but led her to a cave where he filled her apron with dried buffalo meat. She went back and shared with the others. Brother Gillman would have been one of those blessed by this miracle. In spite of his age, he traveled over 1,000 miles before he succumbed to death. His greatest desire was to join with the body of the Saints and do the Temple work for his beloved wife, Mary Ann.

8. William James was a farm laborer from England. His death at Rock Creek left his wife, Jane, and seven young children without a husband and father. The youngest was only 3 years old. Their baby, Jane, age 6 months, had died during the ocean crossing on the ship

Thornton

and was buried at sea. Before the sixth crossing of the Sweetwater, Brother James and his 13-year old son Reuben helped bury the dead. Brother James collapsed several times and his wife helped him get up, but he could finally go no further. The younger children were waiting for their mother's help to cross the river, so he finally said, "Go to the children; we will get in if we can." They waited for them at camp and William's body was brought in, with Reuben badly frozen. Sister James put her disabled son in the cart with the baby and continued on. She and the remaining 7 children walked the rest of the way from Rock Creek Hollow to the Valley.

9. James Kirkwood , age 11, was from Glasgow, Scotland. He traveled with his widowed mother and three brothers. His older brother Thomas was crippled so his mother and oldest

brother pushed him in the handcart. It was James' job to care for his 4-year old brother, Joseph. When little Joseph became too weary to walk, James picked him up and carried him up and over the ridge. Moving slowly through the snowstorm, they were left behind the main group. When the two finally arrived at the campsite at Rock Creek Hollow, James placed his little brother down beside the campfire and collapsed. He died from exposure and exhaustion.

10. Bodil Mortensen, age 10, was from Denmark. Bodil was traveling to be with her sister Margaret in the Salt Lake Valley. She had been assigned to care for younger children, including Niels, during the ascent and had then been sent to collect anything she could find for firewood. She was found frozen to death leaning against the wheel of their handcart, clutching sagebrush. Bolena's parents and two other siblings came to the Valley a year later, hoping to be reunited with both daughters. Her mother was heartbroken at the loss of her child.

11. Once the winter storms hit, Bodil and Niels struggled in snow that was sometimes knee-deep, suffering greatly from exhaustion and exposure. Niels died at Rock Creek just five days before his 6th birthday. His father's feet were frozen so badly that he asked his wife to leave him. Sister Nielsen refused to leave her husband, but helped lift him into the handcart and pulled him toward the Valley.

12. Lollie Nielson, age 22, was also from Denmark. She traveled with the Wicklund family and their four children. Sister Wicklund delivered her fifth child, a baby boy named Jacob, on October 16th—just before the severe blizzard struck. Lollie helped with this delivery and with the other young children in the family. While crossing Rocky Ridge in a blizzard, Lollie was too exhausted to go on. Brother Wicklund wrapped her in a buffalo robe and left her to rest on the trail while he helped his family to the camp at Rock Creek. Brother Wickland then went back for Lollie, carrying her to Rock Creek. He had his 8 year old daughter, Christina, sleep next to Lollie to keep her warm, but Christina woke in the morning to find Lollie frozen to death. Her hair was frozen to the ground and had to be clipped from the ice beneath her body.

13. Lars Wandelin was a watchmaker from Sweden who joined the Church in Denmark. At his request, his treasured silver watch was not buried with him, but was turned over to the Perpetual Emigration Fund to be used to assist other Saints in coming to Zion.

The two who dug the graves for the above 13 and who died the afternoon after the burial were:

14. Thomas Girdlestone, age 62, from Norfolk, England. He was the overseer of a large farm and the father of eleven children. His wife, Mary, died five days later, leaving his twenty-one-year-old daughter, Emma, to travel to the Salt Lake Valley alone.

15. William Groves, age 22, was a laborer traveling by himself from England. His parents did not have enough money to travel to Zion together, so his family sent him ahead to find them a place in Zion and await their arrival the following year. It would take months for the news of

William's death to reach his family in England.

We pay tribute to these faithful Saints and to hundreds of others who sealed their testimonies of our Savior, Jesus Christ with their lives. Please join me in singing the final verse of "Come, Come ye Saints" on page 3 or your journals.

(This information was adapted from <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/LDS-WARD-CONSULTANT/2005-11/1132114104> and from Jolene S. Allphin's book, *Tell My Story, Too*).

Fireside by President Cutler, Solo Experience and Testimony Meeting

Welcome to the Salt Lake Valley

All the parents and staff waiting to serve the youth lunch at the conclusion of trek will line up and wave white handkerchiefs to welcome them to the Valley. They might also sing pioneer hymns like "Carry On"--? President Cutler will briefly welcome them as Brigham Young before offering a prayer for lunch.