

BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF
KAREN MARIE CHRISTIANSEN RASMUSSEN

a hand cart pioneer of 1857

Karen Marie Christiansen, the daughter of Christian Nielsen Christiansen and Anna Margaret Jensdatter, saw the light of day for the first time in the town of Lunge, on the island of Frjen, Denmark. She was the only daughter of her mother and the first of her fathers children. She was born July 26, 1842.

Soon after the Mormon Missionaries brought the gospel to Denmark, these people became interested in their message and Karen Marie was baptised by her father on the 23rd of April, 1854 while yet eleven years old. Joining the Mormon Church brought troubles to the young girl. In spite of the fact that her school teacher was kind to her she was subjected to insults from children and others so much that her parents kept her out of school and she got no more schooling at all. She became a fairly well educated woman anyway. Young as she was, she became a help to the missionaries by attending the meetings and helping with the singing. She had a good voice and sang the hymns of Zion well.

All the saints of that land longed to go to "Zion" and this family arranged their affairs and left Denmark early in the year 1857, taking a boat to Hull, England then rode the train to Liverpool and sailed from there April 25, 1857 on the ship, Westmorland, arriving in Philadelphia, USA, May 31. Elder Matthias Cowley had charge of this company.

Again they took a train as far as Iowa City where they arrived June 9. Here another difficulty arose. A shortage of teams to take so many immigrants over the plains to Utah, caused some of the saints to organize companies of handcarts. It fell to the lot of this 14 year old girl to join Christian Christiansen's company. This company reached Salt Lake City September 13, 1857. They were glad for their safe arrival as this girl became ill and was forced to ride the hand cart much of the way; the cart being drawn by her parents. How kind the travelers were to each other is shown by the fact that Andrew Hansen, who led a cow across the plains gave the sick girl a pint of milk each day.

At their journeys end, the girl became well and tho very young she was married two years later to Morten Rasmussen, a young immigrant who had come to Utah three years earlier. They were the first settlers of Mt. Pleasant. She lived to rear a large family, was propered, and respected and loved by all who knew her. Her posterity number many more than a hundred, all of whom should learn about this remarkable woman.

Written by her son, Daniel Rasmussen