

HISTORY OF

CHRISTINA HOWIE

by William Lindsay (son)



Christina Howie Lindsay was the oldest child of William Howie and Jane Blackwood. She was born on the 3d day of July, 1923, at Craighall, a very small village close to the banks of the clear winding river Ayr, that Burns mentions so often in his poems and songs. It is indeed a very pretty part of the country, more of a farming district than anything else. The nearest school was at St. Quivot three miles away, so mother did not get much school learning when she was very young. It was too far to go and when she got older like most of the children in Scotland at that time, she was put to work in the home of some other family.

Quite early in life she went out to service on different farms. Women farm servants in those days in that country had to milk the cows and oft times they fed them as well as cleaned the barns. They also had to churn the milk by hand and make butter and cheese, and in harvest time they helped to cut the grain with a hook or sickle,

While at this kind of work she got cut in the little finger of her left hand, which left it stiff and crooked as long as she lived. As they cut the grain with the hook they laid it in bundles and bound it with straw bands.

When father, William Lindsay, got first acquainted with her, she was dairymaid at a farm called Crawfordstone. I went and saw the little farm house in 1907 when I was in Scotland. Mother was the only one of the Howie family to accept the Gospel as taught by the Latter-Day Saints. This was some four years after she was married, but she was just as firm in the faith as father was up to the end of her life.

They moved about a good deal from place to place after they were married and most of the time they had to walk from three to four miles to attend meetings and nearly always she had a baby to carry. She would get it in her big shawl and get the baby on her back and carry it there and back and this was kept up as long as we lived in Scotland. I am sure she did this hundreds of times. I remember when us boys first went into the mines to work. Of course we were less than ten years old, some of us, and the work was hard and the hours long. When she would wake us up to go to work I have seen the tears in her dear eyes as she would try to get us roused and dressed to the coal mine. But conditions were such that it could not be helped and so this scene continued from year to year. First it was Robert and I, then later it was Jim and Sam.

When I was about seven years of age, Uncle John Lindsay came to visit us. He had been married several years, and his wife had no children. He got father's and mother's consent for to have me go home with him to stay a while. So I went but soon found the lack of a Mother's care. Aunt Annie was a good singer and was away from the home a great deal and I was left to go to school or not as I pleased. Uncle John, of course, was at work in the mine and often I did not get much attention from her in any way. But it was not for long. Mother felt that I was not being properly cared for and she took the train and came some 24 or 25 miles to bring me home. I was mighty glad to see her and she cried bitterly when she saw me ragged and dirty as boys of that age are likely to be.

We went right back home to Kilmarnock station and my father was there to meet us. They brought me some clothes and I went home with them to Gatehead and I was a happy little boy to be home under their kind and loving care again.

At the time of our dear Father's death she acted the part of a real heroine instead of giving way to despair as many women would have done. She put her trust in the Lord and said to us children, "Never mind, boys, we will get to Zion yet" and on the very first ship in the spring, her words proved true. We did come on the first ship bringing Mormon emigrants and it certainly took a great faith and courage to say these words.

We boys worked in the mine from a day or two after our father's death until about the 16th of April, 1862. A letter came to mother from the church office in Liverpool saying the arrangements had been made for our family to sail on the ship John J. Boyd, which would leave Liverpool about the 21st. This caused great rejoicing in our home. I remember of brother Sam saying, "Boys, that's the best letter ever came to our house." We very soon sold everything we had for just what we could get for them and on the 9th of April we got on the train for Glasgow and from there we went to Liverpool on a small steamboat and had our first taste of seasickness.

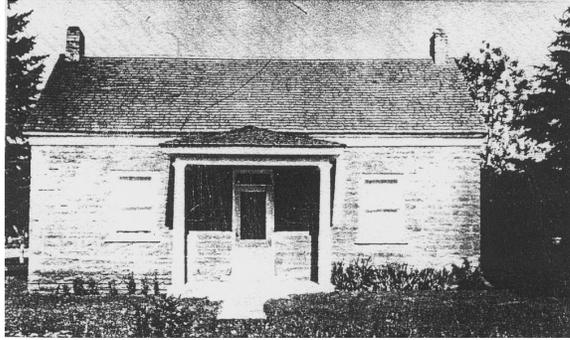
Arrived in Liverpool on the 20th and went on board the sailing ship John J. Boyd with 700 passengers bound for New York. This was surely a great undertaking for a woman to start on such a journey with 8 children, none of them able to take much of a responsibility on their shoulders. But dear old Mother proved equal to the occasion. Her faith and courage was strong and steadfast and she felt sure the Lord would help her bear the burden, which he did.

We crossed the sea in safety. Had one severe storm. Landed in New York June 1st. It took ten days then by railroads and boats to get to Florence, near Omaha. We had very little to eat on the way. Had to lay over at Florence 7 weeks waiting for the ox teams to come from Utah to take us over the thousand miles of dreary plains and mountains. We fared much better than many others while crossing the plains. Mother, back in Scotland, was an expert in the art of baking soda "scones" on a griddle, so she could manage the skillet and frying pan all right and we boys could generally find something to make the fires with.

Of course we had many unusual things to contend with. The sun was very hot. The dust from the oxen's feet was almost blinding at times. The wind blew the tents down sometimes and we got wet with rain and in wading rivers. But we were on the way to Zion and quite often we would sing that good hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints, nor toils nor labor fear, but with joy wend your way."

So we all got here, but poor little Elizabeth was not well and died October 4, 1862, just two weeks after our arrival in Heber.

The next question to solve was getting a home to live in and goods to eat and clothes to wear. Mother had brought some extra shawls and dress patterns with her from Scotland, part of which she traded for a log cabin and moved into it. Robert and I hired out for a year, for which each of us were able to get \$100.00 paid in wheat at \$2 per bushel. In this way the family was to get provided with bread, and Mother soon bargained for some chickens and a pig.



House built for Christina Howie Lindsay
by her sons William, James and Andrew

There were four families of emigrants that had come to Heber that fall, and William M. Wall, in a meeting, made a motion that those who had homes and cows should donate enough to furnish a cow each for the four emigrant families, and that motion carried, but mother would not take a cow in that way. She said, no, when we get a cow it will be "oorain". So she sold a shawl or dress pattern to Alex Session's wife and got her first cow and she was proud of it too.

There was a grist mill on Snake Creek that had been built that summer but it had no smutter and the flour we got from it was very dark. But people had to use that or go to a mill at Provo. Even after she was married to George Muir, Mother helped bind the grain at harvest time. She was always very independent and would not be a burden to anybody if she could help it. [Christina was a polygamous wife to George Muir. She was a cousin to George's first wife, Margaret Hannah. See *How Beautiful Upon the Mountains*, p. 1073.]

In the fall of 1868 when the Union Pacific Railroad was being built, I took her out on the head of Echo Canyon to cook for some 20 men from Heber who were working there. I also took my intended wife to help her. I took Mother's stove and all the cook and utensils. They earned about \$90 each while there. She had two children by George Muir: John, born May 24, 1864, and George L. born Feb. 16, 1866.

She also got one of the first sewing machines in Heber and she did sewing for other families. Then she went out to Evanston and a stone house built where the old log cabin stood. She got us boys to quarry the rock and haul it, dig the foundation and all other work necessary around the buildings. Then we got old Elisha Averett to take charge of laying up the walls and some of us helped lay stone. In this way her stone house was built. She kept sending money and other things that we could use to help us along while working on the building.

Later she came back to Heber and took up a homestead and lived on it, getting the title and turning it over to her sons John and George. The land was on Center Creek.

For quite a number of years she acted as midwife and was very successful in helping to

bring many children into the world.

She also visited the Salt Lake Temple a number of times and did work for all of her dead relatives that she had the necessary data to work on.

A few years before her death, she lived in her own home in Heber and was quite spry and active and did her own housekeeping until within a short time of her death at the age of 83 years and 22 days.

Although she never held any high public office in the church, she was a firm believer and a staunch supporter of all the doctrines of the church and did all she could to encourage her children to work in every way possible for the upbuilding and rolling on of the work of God in the earth. She surely deserves great praise for the great work she performed in bringing her family to Utah.

She was a wonderful mother to us all. God bless her memory.

The following lines were written by me while in England on a mission.

On Hearing of My Mother's Illness

It grieves my heart to learn you are so ill
And that I am so far away but still
I know you've good true friends on every hand
No better can be found in any land.

I thank the Lord that though I'm far away
Your sons and daughters are with you each day
To cheer and comfort by words and deeds
In every way attending to your needs.

I pray to God that if it be his will
That he with health and strength may bless you still
That we might all be spared to meet again
In Utah's peaceful vales free from all pain.

On July 3d you will be eighty-three
A good old age that only few do see
And few have e'er excelled you in your life
As Mother, constant friend, or faithful wife.

I feel to honor you for all you've done
To teach and train your daughters and your sons
In honor, virtue, truth, and all that good
I'm sure you did your best and all you could.

God bless our Mother dear in life and death
And keep us all like her, firm in the faith.
That when our race upon this earth is run
We all may meet in our eternal home.
Dudley, England, July 1st, 1906

Another few lines written a few days later

My mother dear, though I am far away
I think of thee quite often every day
And wish within my heart I had the power
To soothe your suffering in your trying hour.

At morn and night when I bow down in prayer
I ask that God may keep you in his loving care
And still preserve your life if he thinks best
Till I shall meet you in the golden west.

But if it be his will that you should be
Called from this life unto eternity
I feel to bow submissive to his will
Knowing that I shall meet Dear Mother still.

If true and faithful which I hope to be
I shall both you and my dear Father see
Where pain and sickness and all sorrows cease
And those who've overcome find sweet release.

Many times when I used to call at her home she would say, "William, I thank the Lord every day I live that I got you boys all here to Utah and away from the coal mines." And then she would say, "I am very glad to see you all settled down in comfortable homes with right good wives. I could nae hae got ye better anes if I had a picked them mysel!"

No person ever left her door hungry, if she knew it.
Your affectionate Brother,
William Lindsay