

Minute Memory

-My Grandpa was a Pioneer-

When I was a girl, there were still people alive who came to Utah as pioneers. Our teacher told us to talk to one and bring a report.

"I don't know who to talk to" I told Papa.

"Why don't you ask your Grandpa Freshwater?" my father said "He was a pioneer."

I was just a little bit afraid to talk to him. He was so business-like. I guess that was because he owned a hardware & sporting store. He sold hammers and nails, fishing poles and guns and had big pictures all over of geese flying, deer in the mountains. He was always giving me brown horsehound candy. It was bitter and I didn't like it, but he did.

When I asked Grandpa about being a pioneer, he nodded and said "yes, I came across the plains when I was twelve years old."

"Did you come in a covered wagon?"

He shook his head, "We couldn't buy a covered wagon. So we pushed a hand cart."

"All the way?" I asked

He laughed a little and said "No. First we had to come across an ocean on a boat. Then we traveled on a train. There was a war going on, the Civil war, and the fighting was all around us. There were lots of cannons and guns and noises. One time we got so close to the battle our train got hit by a cannon. It made a big bang and shook the whole train. The cannon ball made a big hole on both sides, going in and going out, but nobody got hit and the train kept going. We were glad to get away from there!

but by then we came to the end of the tracks.

"But Grandpa," I asked, "Didn't they make the railroad tracks clear across, later?"

"Yes" they did" he said, "That was still when I was young. They started to build on the other side and came together in the middle, only they were too far apart and had to do part of it over. They had a big celebration and took pictures of the two trains meeting. I am in the picture" He got out his picture and showed me where he was.

"Grandpa" I said "did you see Indians?"

"Yes" he said "but they didn't hurt us. Our leader Brigham Young told us to always be good to them, and share our food. We did."

"What was it like, Grandpa" I asked "walking across the plains" --

"It was dry" he said, "and hot, and we walked so long we'd get so tired. There was sagebrush everywhere and rocks and dirt. But the nights were cool. It was good to make a fire. We'd burn sagebrush - Sometimes we'd hear coyotes howling. We were tired so we slept good, even on the hard ground. In the morning it was cool and we felt rested. Sometimes we'd hear a bird sing, or see a bird flying. Sometimes we'd find a creek and the water was cool. It was good to put my tired feet in the cool water" --

After we traveled many days we started to see a few log cabins. This really made us feel happy. Now at last we were coming home and we could build our own log cabin!"