



SKETCH OF THE LIVES OF JACOB AND SARAH STRONG

(Taken from notes of a stepson, John Walsh, as assembled by Erma Strong Turner).

Jacob Strong was born October 9, 1799, York County, Pennsylvania. In the year 1819, his father purchased four hundred acres of land in Indiana County in the same state and moved his family to that part of Pennsylvania. About this time, James Hill and his family moved from the same place to this section of the country. Later the heads of these two families drew cuts to see who should have the honor of naming the town site, which they were about to lay out. James Strong who won, gave the place the name of Strongstown.

Jacob Strong married Sarah Hill, daughter of James Hill, February 28, 1822. Five children were born to them while they were living in this town. During this time Elder Erastus Snow was preaching the gospel in that vicinity and they were converted, baptized and confirmed members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Jacob and Sarah with their family came west to Missouri. Here they joined the Saints on their march Westward. These good people went through all the trials of Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, where their last two sons were born, James Thomas, born 2 September 1841 and Hyrum, born 28 September 1845. While they were at Winter Quarters, Jacob was called to enlist in the Mormon Battalion. He was ill at this time and could not go. His eldest son, William, went in his place. He was only eighteen at the time. Jacob and his family arrived in Salt Lake Valley in the year 1849. Here they made their home in the Tenth Ward.

Jacob Strong was a natural genius. He was able to adapt himself to any condition, although he was a farmer by trade. It is reported he arose at daybreak and set a dozen bundles of wheat in

shock before he had breakfast. For many, this was considered almost a day's work. There was very little machinery to be had, therefore, the planting, harvesting and threshing of grain was all done by hand. They thrashed the wheat by spreading down a wagon cover and then when the wind blew. Great Grandfather Strong would get up on a stool with the milk pan and stand and shake it out; the wheat would fall on the wagon cover and the wind would blow the chaff away. These are some of the conditions they had to endure in the early days.

Flax and Hemp were among the things grown. From these Jacob and Sarah made their own thread and rope. Jacob also made shoes for his children from the boots, which were discarded by the older people. Because there were no nails to be had, he manufactured pegs from maple wood. He also made hinges in the same manner. It has been said that Jacob and Sarah were "the man and woman of the hour" because they were able to master any situation. Nothing seemed impossible to them. They did their own spinning and weaving. They made their own wearing apparel and bedding. As time progressed, the family accumulated a few cows, oxen and sheep. From the sheep they clipped the wool, washed, dyed, carded and spun it. At the time when the order came for the Saints to move south to Springville, because the approaching army they feared was coming to destroy them, the Strong family did not even have a wagon cover. Sarah then spun the flax and wove it into cloth for this purpose. Later it was used for sheets on the bed. Just before the move to the South, the Martin Handcart company arrived in Salt Lake in destitute circumstances, having suffered many hardships from heavy snows and cold winter weather. About one hundred and fifty members of this company of six hundred died en route. President Brigham Young allotted a certain number of survivors to each ward to be taken care of during the rest of the winter. Bishop David Pettigrew of the Tenth Ward went to Jacob and Sarah Strong and told them it would be necessary for them to care for one of these families; they readily consented to do so. They both went to the old school house where the people were living for the time being. Upon entering the building, Sarah noticed a woman with two small children aged one and four years, respectively. The woman's feet were badly frozen. She had lost her husband who died on the journey. Jacob and Sarah took them into their home to share what they had with this young mother and children. This woman was Alice Walsh who later became the wife of Jacob Strong by order of Patriarchal marriage. This good man and his wives lived very useful lives and proved themselves equal to all tasks before them. They never complained about trials and sacrifices. They lived to be a good age.

Sarah was a natural nurse and understood the use of herbs with which she made medicine. Much of her time was taken up among the sick. In Nauvoo she cared for an expectant mother who died later in childbirth. Even though she had a small baby of her own, she took the woman's infant and nursed it, weaning her own because it was healthy and strong. After seven months this motherless baby died.

Jacob Strong was the father of ten children; seven children by Sarah and three by Alice Walsh Strong. (It should be noted these three children were subsequently sealed to Mrs. Walsh's first husband). This family enjoyed many pleasures and shared many sorrows together, and at all times had time to help others. In doing so they laid a sound and splendid foundation for their posterity to build on.

Jacob Strong died February 18, 1872, at the age of 73 years. His wife Sarah Strong died May 9, 1884, at the age of 78 years.

Sarah was the first Relief Society president of the Tenth Ward, which was organized in 1867. Her name was also on the records of the Relief Society in Nauvoo.

John Walsh, the son of Alice Walsh, has related what a fine, upright, honest and faithful man Jacob Strong was. He was also very good natured and pleasant to be around.

The sons of Jacob Strong also helped in furthering the settlement of the Utah territory, serving in the army when needed and carrying on the work their father started.

(The above was read at the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Jacob Strong Family Genealogical Society by President Elias J. Strong, March 7, 1966). Note: A grandson of Jacob's, Alvin Charles Strong stated that Jacob Strong was a splendid character, gentle, kind, big-hearted and charitable. He was a man of few words, never bothering his neighbors about his business or family affairs.