

Jonathan Ostler

Jonathan Ostler was born at Pool, Dorset, England, 23 February 1831. He was the oldest child in the family of John and Sarah Ostler.

Jonathan spent most of his early life around Bridport, Dorset, England, with his parents and other members of his family. Jonathan could have spent time sailing the sea as a young fellow as it was required by the king of England that all able-bodied men serve in his navy. Other members of this family did but we have no record that Jonathan did. I am sure that he was very familiar with the sea as Bridport, where they lived, was a small port on the English Channel.



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The LDS missionaries came to Bridport when Jonathan was only 16 and taught the gospel to his family. Jonathan was baptized on 4 November 1847 by George Kendall. He was ordained a priest 31 July 1850, also by George Kendall.

In this new branch at Bridport was a family by the name of Croom. William Croom, the father, and his wife, Sarah, had been baptized on the 25th of October, 1847. Their three daughters, Eliza, Harriet, and Ann were also baptized that same day. Ann was only 13, but she grew up in the little branch and I am sure that it was here that Jonathan and Ann met.

Jonathan and Ann married at Bridport 29 July 1853, and only the Church of England and the Civil Registrar were recognized as having authority to marry, so Jonathan and Ann were married in the same Parish Church his parents had used when they were married.

Jonathan and Ann left Bridport and lived in Pool and Yeovil, Somerset, for a time. When his parents and the family moved to Southampton, they followed.

After Jonathan's family emigrated to Utah, he and Ann moved to Covely in Essex. Jonathan became very interested in doing missionary work and he spent much of his time in teaching the gospel to the people. There was a great spirit to emigrate among those who accepted the gospel, so Jonathan and Ann made preparations to join their family in Utah. They disposed of all that they had and with four little children (two having died) they set sail on the ship "Carolina" for Zion.

I should like to quote from the Millennial Star, Vol. 28:313, some of the facts regarding this trip: Saturday, May 5, 1866 the Ship Caroline sailed from London for New York City. She left her mooring at 3:30 P.M. with 337 adult passengers aboard.

On the 5th inst, from London, the ship Caroline was cleared by the Government officer, having on board 34 Swiss, 17 Hollanders, and 286 English making a total of 337 adult passengers, and they sailed with every prospect of a pleasant voyage. The officers, so far as we had an opportunity to

judge, were gentlemanly, and in faithful discharge of duty, equal to the best that sail from these ports. The vessel itself being 8½ feet between decks, and possessing many other conveniences and comforts which the people seemed greatly to appreciate.

The provisions, as usual, were selected with care, and due regard to the health and comfort of the passengers. What struck us as of far greater importance than these things, was that the people were inspired with the spirit of confidence in their God. One and all looked on the trials and dangers of a sea voyage with unflinching courage, having an assurance that God was their friend and that his hand would guide them over the trackless deep safe to the promised land of Joseph.

What blessings the Saints enjoy, compared with those who enjoy not the whisperings of the Spirit of God, to guide them through the gloom which has been gathering for ages over the minds of the people. Other emigrant ships are returning to these ports almost daily, with the cholera, raging in the midst of the hundreds of passengers who are crowded between decks in an almost suffocated condition; death in its most terrible form, surrounding them on every hand, and they are compelled to endure this living grave for weeks, until the dread disease has fully run its course.

The Saints who have sailed this season were promised that if they would live their religion, retain the Spirit of the living God in them, they should have power over the destroyer, which has carried off so many of the Gentile Emigrations and which is creating such a panic on the Continent of Europe, and in this land.

As we are sending two vessels from London, it was unknown to us on which one the Saints expected from the continent desired to sail. We telegraphed brother Nebeker, that this vessel would sail from London on the 5th of May, and if he could possibly have his people in the latter place a day or two previous to that, it would be well for them, as they would be permitted to take passage on board this vessel.

It was a short notice, giving many of the Saints only three days for preparation, but with the blessing of the Lord and their own exertion, Elders Nebeker and Spencer, having charge of the saints from the Swiss, German and Italian Mission and Elder Weiler having charge of the Saints from Holland landed in London on the morning of the 2nd in good health and in fine spirits, this being all the emigration expected this season from the continent.

We were pleased to meet with these Saints, but did not realize what the Lord had done for us and them, until two or three days had passed away, when we saw announced in the London papers, that the Cholera had made its appearance in Rotterdam, it having previously appeared in Hamberg and that emigrants from both of those ports would be compelled to content themselves in quarantine for several days previous to being permitted to land in England. Had our people arrived three days later, they would undoubtedly have been obliged to comply with these restrictions.

We may safely conclude that God will continue to manifest his power in the preservation and

prosperity of these His Saints. It seems to be a fact that there is a line drawn across the Atlantic, where for weeks, past, emigrants have been attacked with the cholera, scores of them dying each day, and the doctors, who sought by human wisdom to stay the plague, were themselves among its first victims.

Those of our people who have recently left these shores in compliance with the command of God, are under his divine protection, and they through faith, will pass the rubicon, the power of the destroyer be checked, and even the wind and the waves lend their aid in wafting the sons and daughters of God towards the land of Zion, the goal of their long cherished hopes.

The voyage was accomplished in 37 days, during which three children died, and two were born. There were two marriages on board.

The ship arrived safely in New York 11 June 1866. The emigrants left the same day for New Haven, Connecticut, en route for Wyoming, Nebraska, where they arrived 26 June 1866.

From 1856 to 1858, Iowa City was the outfitting place for the saints crossing the plains with ox teams, mule teams and handcarts. In 1858, Florence Nebraska (winter quarters), became the main outfitting place and was until 1864 when the village of Wyoming, situated about seven miles north of Nebraska City, Nebraska, on the west bank of the Missouri River, was chosen as the place from which the Church trains and other trains started for the Great Salt Lake Valley. It was from this insignificant little village that the last church trains making the journey all the way from the village on the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains commenced their travels across the plains through the years 1864, 1865 and 1866.

There is no record of this family crossing the plains, so there is no way to know just when it was. There were two companies that left in August of 1866. One of the companies that crossed the plains that summer had a great deal of trouble with the Indians. This family could have been with them only one of the family says, "The company of Saints that had left before them had trouble with the Indians." One company arrived in the Valley on 26 September and the other on 4 October 1866.

Jonathan was appointed "Food Captain." The food being so scarce that it had to be rationed out. Think what this would mean. They must take advantage of every bit of food that they might gather along the way.

On arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, they found a Brother William living there. They made their home in Salt Lake till the fall of 1868, and then moved the next spring to Nephi where most of the family had settled.

In Nephi the saints were having trouble with the Indians and so we find Jonathan serving as an Indian War Guard under Captain James Pixton.

Jonathan was not in Nephi very long when he was called, with his family, on a mission to settle

Richfield. He labored there for sometime in building a meeting house, a school and an amusement hall. When he was released from this mission, he went back to Nephi to be with other members of his family and assist them in building up that community.

Jonathan tried all kinds of work but finally decided his old trade that he had learned in England, that of making shoes, was to his best liking. He built him a shop and commenced his trade and worked at it for the rest of his life. He made many trips to Spanish Fork to get leather for his little shop.

This great man had a wonderful way with young people. He was constantly being of help to them, to better their lives and to help them appreciate the gospel and to live its teachings. He had come a long way for the gospel and he dearly loved and appreciated it. He always lived a life of example to others.

He lost the sight of his right eye which never impaired his work until he became older. At 82 years of age, he finally had to give up his life long trade and business of shoe making, which he loved so very much.

Ann worked side by side with her dear companion and they raised a lovely family of ten children. Life had not been easy, but they loved the church and all that it meant and would never have turned back for some-thing else. They always taught their children to live and acknowledge the blessings of the Lord in all of their undertakings, pleasure or hardships through life.

Jonathan's family tell us that he never tired of relating early experiences of his life to them and giving them fatherly advice in rearing the future generation in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Oh, that we had some of those stories to print in this life history. Oh, if he had just kept a journal that others could read and experience by them now.

On 4 May 1907, Ann, the good wife and companion that he loved so dearly, passed away leaving Jonathan all alone. He went to live with his daughter, Susannah Mary, for the remaining years of his life.

Jonathan died on 12 April 1914, at Nephi, Utah, at the age of 83 years, having lived and died a true and faithful Latter-day Saint. He was loved by all that knew him.

This is from the book "John Ostler & Sarah Endacott Gollop Their Descendants and Ancestors" by Mary L. Teerlink, pages 29-32.